

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203
Phone (303) 866-2471
Fax (303) 866-2003

June 5, 2018

The Honorable Colorado Senate
State Capitol
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203



John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Dear Members of the Colorado Senate:

Today, I vetoed Senate Bill 18-156, "Concerning the Publication of Fiscal Information by a County" at 4:16 pm. Senate Bill 18-156 ("SB 18-156") relaxes requirements for counties to publish various financial reports in newspapers, changing the frequency and manner of how reports are published.

We always look for opportunities to streamline government and implement efficiencies. Senate Bill 18-156 is a laudable effort to do just that. The bill reduces the frequency in which county reports are published in a legal newspaper, driving residents to rely more on cost effective methods of publication such as county websites. According to the nonpartisan fiscal note for the bill, cost savings to counties would range from \$100 to \$500 per year per county.

The underlying law was enacted in a time when newspapers were the dominant, if not sole, form of public information in all communities. For some communities, this is still the norm. While we recognize that laws must be updated with the times, until all communities have full online access, we should not force Coloradans to the Internet to review public notices when some have no Internet access to do so. Additionally, creating a comprehensive plan to prepare the state for the change this bill seeks, including improving digital literacy, will help to avoid disenfranchising Coloradans from where they have traditionally received their information. We appreciate the bill's delayed effective date so that broadband may further reach rural communities. However, until more certainty exists when full buildout can be achieved and behavior has shifted, we cannot support legislation reducing transparency in one of the few mediums available to communities lacking broadband.

We certainly appreciate the desire of counties to find cost savings and rely more on cost effective online resources. However, SB 18-156 is premature. We continue to pursue full broadband buildout in all rural communities and recently bolstered this effort with Senate Bill 18-002 to shift major funding to support broadband deployment grants. However, the goal of full buildout has yet to be realized. We are persuaded that the sponsors' concept is sound and the bill's time is near. But that time must closely align with full broadband availability throughout the State. To that end, we encourage the sponsors to bring this bill next year with trigger language taking effect not at a date certain, but rather once full broadband buildout is achieved.

Until Colorado achieves full broadband access, we believe that SB 18-156 is ahead of its time. Accordingly, SB 18-156 is vetoed.

Sincerely,

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor