

In Support of HB21-1115

Dear Representatives,

My name is Michael Dobersen and I strongly support HB21-1115. I am a physician and full time resident of Grand County. Prior to my retirement 6 years ago, I was the Coroner/Medical Examiner for Arapahoe County for over 20 years. During that time, I also served on several governor-appointed committees including the Governor's Expert Emergency Epidemic Response Committee.

I represent a group of concerned citizens in Grand County who are advocating for a professional Board of Health. Even though Grand County has a population of only approximately 15,000, we have a number of qualified individuals who show interest in service. Currently, our Department of Health is controlled by the Board of County Commissioners, three individuals who, over the past year of the pandemic, have placed their political beliefs and biases over recommended science-based public health practices. Their unwillingness to implement state recommended/mandated mask-wearing and social distancing practices in county buildings has caused stress among county employees and resulted in the resignation of our respected long-time public health director. They have ignored the state's pandemic recommendations by declaring our county a sovereign entity, as they have done in the past with the Red Flag Law. Grand County unfortunately is not alone in this predicament.

Public Health policy, especially in small counties, is far too important to be in the hands of politicians with no public health experience. This is particularly true in view of the myriad responsibilities of a Board of Health. This is why we strongly support HB21-1115 and urge your support as well. Public Health means nothing without adherence to sound science-based principles.

Michael Dobersen, MD, PhD
Representing Concerned Citizens of Grand County