



**Please vote YES on SB 16-168**

**Local Government Authority to Allow Jurisdictions  
Outside of Colorado to Be Part of an Airport Authority  
Sponsors: Sen. Roberts/Rep. Brown**

Counties and municipalities in Colorado currently own and operate more than half of the 76 public use airports throughout the state. These facilities are an integral part of the regional transportation system and are essential to continued economic development in our communities. Local governments are authorized in statute to enter into agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to jointly acquire, construct, lease, maintain and operate these airports and landing fields. What is **not** authorized in statute is the ability to partner with a jurisdiction across state lines to operate an airport – even if that jurisdiction is a key user of that regional airport.

The City of Durango and La Plata County currently operate the Durango-La Plata County Airport in Southwest Colorado. This airport is the fifth busiest in the state, with almost 400,000 travelers flying in or out each year. A significant percentage of these travelers come from New Mexico – primarily in the Farmington area just across the border. Durango and La Plata County are seeking to partner with the City of Farmington and San Juan County (NM) to better plan for and finance future expansion of this critical regional airport. The state of New Mexico already allows these jurisdictions to partner across state lines with local governments in Colorado.

SB 168 would grant local governments in Colorado the authority to allow local governments across state lines to work cooperatively on the joint operation of an airport authority. **CCI and CML urge your support of this legislation to allow local governments to partner across state lines with neighboring jurisdictions to operate and fund regional airports.**

**CCI and CML ask for your YES vote on SB 16-168**

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La Plata County  
Colorado

Board of County Commissioners

Bradford P. Blake, Chair • Julie Westendorff, Vice Chair • Gwen Lachelt, Commissioner

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House Local Government Committee

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***SB16-168 Concerning the Expansion of the "Public Airport Authority Act" to allow a county or municipality from an adjoining state to be part of an airport authority.***

Dear Members of the Colorado House Local Government Committee, Rhonda Fields, Chair and Steve Lebsack, Vice Chair:

La Plata County Board of County Commissioners respectfully supports Senate Bill 16-168.

Counties in Colorado currently own and operate almost half of the 76 public use airports throughout the state. These facilities are an integral part of the regional transportation system and are essential to continued economic development in our communities. Local governments are authorized in statute to enter into agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to jointly acquire, construct, lease, maintain and operate these airports and landing fields. What is not authorized currently in statute is the ability to partner with a jurisdiction across state lines to operate an airport – even if that jurisdiction is a key user of that regional airport.

The City of Durango and La Plata County currently own the Durango-La Plata County Airport. This airport is the fifth busiest in the state, with almost 400,000 travelers flying in or out each year. A significant percentage of these travelers come from New Mexico – primarily the Farmington area just across the state line. Durango and La Plata County are seeking to partner with the City of Farmington and San Juan County New Mexico, to better plan for and finance future expansion of this critical regional airport. This bill allows counties such as ours to collaborate with important regional neighbors in adjoining states to address mutual needs for the good, reliable air service so critical to our local economies.

The state of New Mexico already allows these jurisdictions to partner across state lines with local governments in Colorado.

This legislation is follow-up legislation to SB16-063 passed earlier this session allowing local governments to enter intergovernmental agreements with out-of-state local governments to

provide critical public and emergency services. Similarly, this bill allows counties such as ours to collaborate with regional neighbors in adjoining states to address mutual needs for air service in our geographically isolated region.

Senate Bill 16-168 will allow La Plata County to define a path of healthy regional economic growth through a strong partnership with our New Mexico neighbors. We urge your support of this legislation to allow local governments to cooperate across state lines with neighboring jurisdictions to operate and fund regional airports.

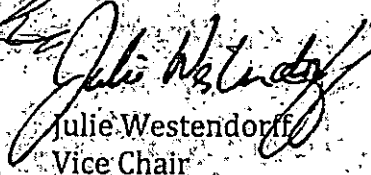
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

LA PLATA COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Bradford P. Blake  
Chair



Julie Westendorff  
Vice Chair



Gwen Lachelt  
Commissioner

Cc: Senator Ellen Roberts, Representative J. Paul Brown; Members of the House Local Government Committee, Rhonda Fields, Chair, Steve Lebsock, Vice Chair.