



HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 26-1018

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Richardson and Boesenecker, Bacon, Barron, Bradfield, Brown, Caldwell, Camacho, Carter, Clifford, Duran, Espenosa, Flanell, Froelich, Garcia, Garcia Sander, Goldstein, Hamrick, Hartsook, Jackson, Johnson, Joseph, Keltie, Lieder, Lindsay, Lukens, Marshall, Martinez, Mauro, McCormick, Nguyen, Paschal, Phillips, Rutinel, Sirota, Slaugh, Smith, Soper, Stewart K., Stewart R., Story, Taggart, Valdez, Weinberg, Willford, Winter T., Woodrow, McCluskie;

also SENATOR(S) Pelton R., Amabile, Baisley, Ball, Benavidez, Bridges, Bright, Carson, Catlin, Cutter, Danielson, Daugherty, Exum, Frizell, Gonzales J., Hinrichsen, Jodeh, Kipp, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lindstedt, Liston, Marchman, Mullica, Pelton B., Rich, Roberts, Rodriguez, Simpson, Snyder, Sullivan, Wallace, Weissman, Zamora Wilson, Coleman.

CONCERNING THE DESIGNATION OF STATE HIGHWAY 86 THROUGH ELBERT COUNTY AS THE PLAINS-TO-PINES SCENIC CORRIDOR.

WHEREAS, Featuring an average altitude of just under 6,000 feet-several hundred feet higher than that of the Mile High City-State Highway 86 through Elbert County offers Colorado residents, workers, westbound travelers, and tourists unrivaled views of the east-facing Rocky Mountains range, including:

- The magnificent Sangre De Cristo subrange in Southern Colorado;
 - The iconic Pikes Peak-elevation 14,115 feet-on which Katharine Lee Bates composed the lyrics to "America the Beautiful";
 - Mount Blue Sky-elevation 14,268 feet-which straddles the Arapaho and Pike National Forests; and
 - Longs Peak-elevation 14,259 feet-located prominently in the Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness of Northern Colorado;
- and

WHEREAS, The spectacular views of the Rocky Mountain Front

Range from State Highway 86 through Colorado's Eastern Plains, in all their rural, pastoral splendor, are worthy of state recognition; and

WHEREAS, State Highway 86 is the scenic high-plains thoroughfare between the Town of Limon on the east and the Town of Castle Rock on the west, with approximately 61 miles lying within Elbert County; and

WHEREAS, State Highway 86 is the functional main street through Elbert County's largest municipality, the Town of Elizabeth, which is also recognized as an official Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Colorado Main Street community; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth is home to over 3,000 people, multiple rustic, treasure-laden antique shops, the iconic Rambler Ranch, and the lovely Carriage Shoppes Tea Room located in a historic livery stable that serves as a cherished regional destination-a pastoral gathering place where women and their daughters, grandchildren, and out-of-town guests gather; and

WHEREAS, For the over 700 residents of the historic Town of Kiowa, another DOLA Colorado Main Street community, State Highway 86 also serves as the functional main street; and

WHEREAS, Kiowa is the official seat of Elbert County government and home of the Elbert County Historical Society and Museum, which occupies the historic Kiowa High School building built in 1921; and

WHEREAS, The Elbert County Historical Society and Museum's Spring 2018 issue of the "Smoky Hill Express" newsletter features a cover story summarizing the history of the Smoky Hill Trail and evolution of transportation in Elbert County, including the development of State Highway 86; and

WHEREAS, State Highway 86 is the primary access route for various tourist attractions in the Elbert County region, including abundant outdoor recreation and historically significant sites like Buffalo Groves, Inc., the Bijou Basin open space, Castlewood Canyon State Park, the Elbert County Fair-this year celebrating 92 years of cherished livestock and agricultural traditions and wholesome 4-H opportunities for young people-and a bevy of small, family-owned businesses that generate

essential tax revenues that benefit the people of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, The vast rolling hills and prairies of the eastern portion of two-lane State Highway 86 through Colorado's high-plains desert offer travelers serenely beautiful and unique vistas-frequently including falcon, hawk, eagle, pronghorn, and deer sightings-that serve as a pastoral alternative to the hullabaloo of four-lane I-70 and its heavy-duty truck traffic; and

WHEREAS, In the centuries before European settlers arrived, the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Ute, Comanche, and other First Nations peoples of the Great Plains were the first to break in barely discernible trails that later served as the basis for primitive wagon routes, like that of the fabled South Branch of the historic Smoky Hill Trail, segments of which later became the alignment for the landmark Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express stagecoach routes; and

WHEREAS, Prior to Colorado becoming a territory in 1861-and long before achieving statehood in 1876, when much of what is now Colorado was still part of the Kansas Territory-the 1858 Pikes Peak Gold Rush led to a massive, four-year migration of prospectors, adventurers, and, as prominent historian/professor/author Tom Noel described them: "gold grubbers, town puffers, prostitutes, gamblers, and journalists," who traveled on foot, on horseback, or by wagon or stagecoach through Missouri and Kansas toward the Pikes Peak area of the Rocky Mountains via the storied South Branch of the Smoky Hill Trail, large segments of which are State Highway 86 today; and

WHEREAS, The Elbert County Board of County Commissioners and the Mayors and Trustees of the Towns of Kiowa and Elizabeth support designating State Highway 86 as Colorado's "Plains-to-Pines Scenic Corridor"; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:

(1) That the entire portion of State Highway 86 through Elbert County, Colorado, be officially designated and branded the "Plains-to-Pines Scenic Corridor";

(2) That the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is authorized to accept and expend gifts, grants, and donations for the purpose of placing initial markers, signage, and xeriscape landscaping along portions of the route designated as state highway to aesthetically brand and establish the "Plains-to-Pines Scenic Corridor"; and

(3) That CDOT is authorized to enter into one or more intergovernmental agreements with the Board of County Commissioners of Elbert County, the Town of Kiowa, and the Town of Elizabeth for purposes of maintaining said markers, signage, and associated xeric vegetation for the "Plains-to-Pines Scenic Corridor".

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to Colorado Governor Jared Polis; CDOT Commissioners Diane Barrett, Barbara Bowman, Shelley Cook, Cecil Gutierrez, Terry Hart, Elise Jones, Juan Marcano, Todd Masters, Barbara McLachlan, Rick Ridder, and Hannah Parsons; CDOT Executive Director Shoshana Lew; CDOT Deputy Director Herman Stockinger; Elbert County Commissioners Mike Buck, Dallas Schroeder, and Byron McDaniel; Elbert County Clerk and Recorder Rhonda Braun; Elbert County Manager Shawn Fletcher; Elbert County Director of Communications and Public Affairs Wendy Manitta Holmes; Town of Kiowa Mayor Pro Tem Tammy Hart; Town of Kiowa Trustees Mona Schantz, Jonathon Shafer, Trevor Smith, Constance Stahl, and Baillie Wineland; Town of Kiowa Administrator Kimberly Boyd; Town of Kiowa Clerk Sasha Davidson; Town of Kiowa Planning Commissioners Wendy Frenzel, Todd Lane, Shannon Lane, Julie Mizak, Lori Rafferty, and Sandy Kalish; Town of Elizabeth Mayor Angela Ternus; Town of Elizabeth Mayor Pro Tem Tracy Hutchins; Town of Elizabeth Trustees Michael Schroder, Loren Einspahr, Dave Conley, Steve Gaither, and Cynthia Thye; Town of Elizabeth Administrators Michelle Oeser and Jeff Engel; Town of Elizabeth Planning Commissioners George Fick, Amy Schmidt, and Jim Santangelo; Elbert County Chamber of Commerce President Megan Gardner, Vice President Marjorie Engle, and Board Members John Gadenken, Steve Andreas, Jennifer Maxwell, and Erica Hulm; Elbert and Highway 86 Metro District President Karl Nyquist, District Manager Denise Denslow, and Board Members Bradley Johnson, Mark Harding, Jim Marshall, and Brent

Brouillard; Ranchland News Publishers/Editors Nikki Lister and Jenna Lister; and Elbert County News/Colorado Community Media Editor Scott Gilbert.

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