



# Legislative Council Staff

## Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 10/3/2016

### Bill Number

**Senate Bill 16-178**

### Sponsors

**Senators Lambert & Kefalas  
Representatives Young &  
Brown**

### Short Title

**Grand Junction Regional Center  
Campus**

### Research Analyst

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### Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill, which was signed into law by the Governor and took effect on June 10, 2016.

### Summary

This bill, **recommended by the Joint Budget Committee (JBC)**, directs the Department of Human Services (DHS) to vacate the Grand Junction Regional Center (GJRC) campus, within the parameters of certain guiding principles related to relocating individuals receiving services on the campus to home-like settings of their choosing, and to list the campus for sale no later than July 1, 2018. Additionally, the bill requires the department, no later than December 10, 2016, to submit to the Capital Development Committee (CDC):

- a plan for the disposition of the campus, including a plan to spend the proceeds of the sale; and
- capital budget requests associated with transitioning individuals receiving services on the campus to non-campus residences, based on the choices of these individuals.

The bill directs the department to create an advisory group to develop the disposition plan and capital budget requests. The bill also creates the GJRC Campus Transition Cash Fund to pay costs to provide adequate housing for each person currently receiving services on the GJRC campus and for costs associated with the transition from on-campus to off-campus housing.

Finally, the bill extends the prohibition on the sale of regional center facilities from May 30, 2016, to May 30, 2017.

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## Background

***Division of Regional Center Operations.*** The Division of Regional Center Operations within DHS operates regional centers in Grand Junction, Wheat Ridge, and Pueblo. Regional Centers serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have complex medical or behavioral needs, or require short-term stabilization so they can safely return to the community.

***GJRC campus.*** The GJRC campus dates back to 1885, when 160 acres was donated by a Grand Junction resident to the federal government for the purpose of operating the Grand Junction Indian School, which opened in 1886. By 1891, the school was known as the Teller Institute. The school was fully functional by 1892 and included orchards, an apiary, a working dairy farm, a blacksmith shop, a laundry facility, boys and girls dorms, and other large school buildings. After losing support and funding from the federal government, the school closed in 1911 and was transferred to the State of Colorado. In 1921, the State Home for Mental Defectives was opened on the campus. The name was later changed to the State Home and Training School. In the 1970s, the name was changed again to the Grand Junction Regional Center campus. In 2016, there are 28 residents on the campus.

House Bill 14-1338, recommended by the JBC, established a 15-member Regional Centers Task Force to study, make recommendations, and report its findings concerning the state-operated intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID), also known as regional centers. The task force was required to:

- conduct a needs assessment concerning the number of state ICF/IID beds;
- make recommendations on whether one or more regional centers should be closed;
- assess whether the state should operate beds licensed under the Home- and Community-Based Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities waiver program; and
- develop a strategic plan for the future use of regional centers, including identifying the most efficient use of building space and staffing.

The Regional Centers Task Force released its final report in December 2015.

The CDC followed the discussion about the GJRC campus with great interest in 2015 and 2016. In March 2016, based on its understanding that a decision was pending regarding how and where to relocate GJRC residents, and recognizing that the campus is costly to maintain because of its age and size, the CDC recommended to the JBC that the campus be sold, in its entirety, as soon as possible. In making its recommendation, the CDC stated that the well-being of the GJRC residents is the most important factor to consider when discussing the future of the GJRC campus. The committee also stated that the quality of resident care will be improved if residents are relocated from the GJRC campus to more modern facilities better equipped to meet their unique medical and behavioral needs.

DHS is in the process of forming the Grand Junction Advisory Group and developing transition plans for the GJRC residents, as well as its plan for the disposition of the GJRC campus.

## Senate Action

**Senate Appropriations (April 15, 2016).** Representatives from DHS and several members of the public testified on the bill. The committee adopted Amendment L.001, which made technical changes, including the number of individuals new facilities that may be constructed pursuant to the bill will be able to house. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee of the Whole, as amended.

**Senate second reading (April 22, 2016).** The Senate adopted the Senate Appropriations Committee report and passed the bill on second reading with no additional amendments.

**Senate third reading (April 25, 2016).** The Senate passed the bill on third reading with no additional amendments.

## House Action

**House Appropriations Committee (May 3, 2016).** The bill was referred to the House Committee of the Whole.

**House second reading (May 3, 2016).** The House passed the bill on second reading.

**House third reading (May 4, 2016).** The House passed the bill on third reading.