

3/1/2022

Senator Ginal,

You will find a list of the metro districts in your area as well as one found in Larimer County which I have used as an example of how the first thing done at the first MD election is to eliminate TABOR in order to freely authorize debt. It also shows how a debt limit and a maximum repayment limit is established in the first election. I have also included the Certification of Tax Levies for the MD for 2022. Some information on Water's Edge Metro District is also included with election results negating TABOR and establishing debt limits.

Please note the highlighted figures showing how much citizens in a MD pay significantly higher taxes than homes of the same value in non-metro district neighborhoods.

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## Testimony before the Local Government Senate Committee on March 1, 2022

In 1992, Coloradans voted to enact the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, aka TABOR which prevents you as elected officials voted into office by the citizens of this state from enacting tax increases to conduct the business of Colorado without approval of the voters. However, CRS Title 32 on Special Districts, inadvertently in my opinion, allows developers in this state to form a small government entity, known as a metro district to finance their building projects. They do this by presenting a Service Plan to a city council or county commission, where it receives rubber stamp approval and then is routinely certified by a district judge. Following this, they form a board of directors consisting of themselves and/or their employees or relatives. There is an immediate conflict of interest. In the very first election they authorize bond debt for the district without any liability to them but which will have to be paid by future residents of the development, without any input from those residents. The other thing they do in this first election is negate TABOR, voting to override it to give themselves a free hand in authorizing debt. They are not elected by we the people. They are self-appointed. I recently concluded a study of who currently sits on the boards of many of the metro districts in my county, Jefferson. Out of the 27 MDs with the highest mill levies for metro district taxes, 20 of them still have developer-controlled boards. That only scratches the surface.

Following this initial election, most elections are cancelled because the new residents in these districts don't know they can run for election to become a board member let alone know they have moved into a metro district.

For all of the above reasons, I strongly support the Special District Governance bill as it addresses the previously mentioned deficiencies in the current law by encouraging tax payer participation in metro districts and giving them a voice that they currently do not have.

I have included packets for each of you on the committee. You will find in each packet evidence and support for what I have said. Please look at the examples of a ballot in a metro district election where TABOR concerns are eliminated and future debt is authorized. Also, please note the highlighted areas on the Excel spreadsheet to see the high and hidden costs of living in a metro district.

Websites to research Metro Districts:

[Colorado Property Tax Entities | Colorado Department of Local Affairs](#)

[Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board::EMMA \(msrb.org\)](#)