



# Colorado County Clerks Association

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DATE: January 30, 2020  
 TO: House State Affairs Members  
 FROM: CCCA  
 RE: **Technical Testimony for HB 20-1073-County Commissioner Districts  
 Gerrymandering**

This is technical testimony on behalf of the Colorado County Clerks Association. The Clerk's Association has not taken a position given that the vast majority of it does not directly impact our offices. However, there is one section of the bill that does impact our offices and that I am here to speak in favor of today, on behalf of myself and the county clerks.

Section 6, concerning the redrawing of county precincts, does not change existing law around the drawing of precincts every decade following the census. We are required now, and we continue to be required under this bill, to draw precincts once a decade that have no more than 1500 active voters within them – or 2,000 active voters if approved by our commissioners.

What section 6 does do, is it limits how frequently we are required to redraw those precincts within the decade. As the law currently stands, if a county is divided into hundreds of precincts with fewer than 2,000 people, and then any number of those precincts grows larger than 2,000 voters, I must divide those precincts up before the next election.

It is no secret that Colorado is experiencing substantial population growth. In counties like Jefferson County, Chaffee County, and many others, that growth and this law have meant that after we drew this past decade's precincts in 2011, we had to redraw those precincts 4 additional times throughout the decade. Re-precincting requires a substantial amount of work – for example, in Jefferson county it took elections staff members several weeks of full-time effort to redraw and relabel the precincts and then to replace every voter into the correct districts. It also brings a substantial amount of consternation from those local party officials tasked with finding new precinct committee people for the new precincts.

The Jefferson County Clerk and Recorder George Stern reports that in the first 13 months as Clerk and Recorder, no action he has taken has received as many complaints from local party folks – on both sides of the political spectrum – as when his team and he worked last March to redraw 49 Jefferson County precincts in order to bring us into compliance with the law. And when he says that nothing else has received as many complaints, I'll remind you that he also runs the DMV. Chaffee County has done this process twice in the last 24 months due to the rapid growth and placement of development.

Thankfully, this bill changes the law so that we do not have to redraw a precinct that has grown larger than 2,000 voters until it contains more than 4,000 voters. That small increase would have meant substantially less re-precincting in Jefferson County over the last decade, and substantially less work for the parties to fill new precincts.

To reiterate, while I and the Clerk's association are not advocating in favor of or against this bill as a whole, we do wish to express our support for section 6 as a step in the right direction on precincts. Thank you, and I am happy to take questions on this one technical section.