

February 12, 2019

Senator Ray Scott  
State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee  
Colorado Senate  
200 E. Colfax Ave  
Denver, CO 80203

RE: HB19-1062 Grand Junction Regional Center Campus

Dear Senator Scott and Committee,

The economic growth and corresponding prosperity that the state of Colorado has experienced over the past 10 years have been limited to 10 front range counties, leaving the remaining 55 counties struggling to keep up. Those 10 counties received 95% of the population growth, are the only counties to experience job growth above the state average and make up 85% of the state's GDP.

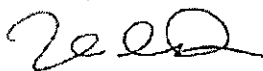
Having been successful in growing the Denver Metro area into a city that can compete in the global market, my hope is that the state will now shift their focus to the rural economies of the state. I believe the state of Colorado can achieve outcomes in transforming rural economies that would make us a national model at a time when the urban-rural divide has never been greater. As the only metropolitan area in western Colorado, the strength of Grand Junction's economy is vital to all of western Colorado.

Colorado is the number one aerospace employer in the country although the majority of that industry is located along the I-25 corridor where a high cost of living and doing business stress the small companies that support the aerospace industry. Between CMU's engineering programs, a robust advanced manufacturing workforce and our low cost of doing business, we are in a good position to attract aerospace companies to the western slope.

Having this land to help incentivize that industry and other advanced manufacturing industries will help our efforts as we continue to diversify and strengthen our economy. The location of the Regional Center to be used as either a commercial/manufacturing or industrial park fits perfectly into our Comprehensive Plan for growth. The establishment of a Foreign Trade Zone will also help us to maximize the benefit of this land.

Grand Junction is the responsible place for the state to focus its efforts on growth as we have the infrastructure and the workforce to accommodate new and expanding industries, as well as affordable real estate, and a high quality of life. And by doing so, we will prove to be a national model for expanding rural economies.

Sincerely,



Robin Brown  
Executive Director