

March 16, 2016

Dear Representatives:

As a society, the laws that we create are designed to guarantee the public's safety and establish rules that all of us should follow. When someone breaks the law, they are held accountable by a jury of their peers and our justice system — as it should be.

As District Attorneys, it's our job to achieve justice in every case, apply the law fairly to maintain public safety, and assure that everyone in our community is treated equally.

However, HB 16-1180 would undermine our laws and allow people to claim their religion gives them permission to ignore laws they don't like. This legislation creates great uncertainty for law enforcement and prosecutors across the state. The ways in which these proposed exemptions could undermine the rule of law are unpredictable.

Freedom of religion is one of our most valued rights as Americans; that's why the First Amendment in the Constitution already protects it. It is also important that everyone plays by the same rules, and we can't just create sweeping religious exemptions that encourage people to pick and choose which laws to follow.

HB16-1180 is not truly about so-called "religious freedom" as the proponents claim. It is about fundamentally rewriting our laws so that they no longer apply equally to everyone in Colorado. Regardless of whether one agrees with a certain policy, the law is the law.

These religious exemptions are bad for Coloradans. We respectfully urge a "no" vote on HB16-1180.

Sincerely,

District Attorney Stan Garnett, 20th Judicial District  
District Attorney Dave Young, 17th Judicial District  
District Attorney Sherry Caloia, 9th Judicial District  
District Attorney Todd Risberg, 6th Judicial District  
District Attorney Mitch Morrissey, 2nd Judicial District