

House Transportation, Housing & Local Government

02/07/2023 01:30 PM

HB23-1065 Local Government Independent Ethics Commission

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Tim Berg For themselves	I support this bill and efforts to support transparency, accountability and good governance. Our State is facing crisis with water supply, fire hazards and drought and we need good governance and ethics in our local governments including Special Districts to take action on important issues.
Charles Howell For themselves	<p>I am writing as a resident of a Metropolitan District in Douglas County. I live in the Fox Hill Metro District and have seen first-hand the abuses and taxing of residents in my community by a developer that has and continues to control the residents of this community. His power over the residents in this community is in direct conflict with the wishes of the residents. His power and authority come from establishing a postage stamp district (FHMD#1) that he controls as the board president, with his wife, daughter and two other business acquaintances. His postage stamp Metro District (about one acre in size) that does not allow residents of the 300+ acre community (FHMD#2) to serve on that board controls the community financially and governmentally. This is clearly taxation without representation to the residents that have no voice in their property taxing process and governance. The bad ethical practice ethics of a developer controlling the residents by his unethical practices of property tax control and not allowing the self-governance of the community is bad government. This legislation will hold the developer accountable for his actions. I ask you to support HB23-1065</p> <p>In our Fox Hill Metro District our developer purchased his own bonds that paid for our water system and other infrastructure. The developer sold us lots to pay for the infrastructure and then through the Douglas County property taxes with the Fox Hill Metro District as a taxing governmental agency collects again for that same infrastructure from those current and future residents over 30 years at 6% interest.</p> <p>Metro Districts policy continues to raise the cost of housing in Colorado for those that live in Metro Districts. This has been demonstrated over and over again. Metro District do NOT lessen the cost of home purchases within their district. Unwary homeowners through the Metro District property taxes will be paying those unscrupulous developers for up to 30 years at a guaranteed rate of at least 6% in most cases.</p> <p>Your help and those of your colleagues is needed to stop the abuses of many Metro District developers with common sense legislation to stop the abuses! Let me be clear not all Metro District developers are abusive to current and future homeowners, but many are. Action by the</p>

	<p>Legislature and Governor can help rein in those abusive developers who are driving up the cost of homeownership in Colorado.</p>
<p>Fayre Ruszczyk For Coloradans for Metro District Reform</p>	<p>Testimony on Tammy Story’s bill –HB23-1065 (February 7, 2023) My name is Fayre Ruszczyk and I am speaking to you as a private citizen and member of Coloradans for Metro District Reform. This bill is what is called a “no brainer”. If you believe as representatives of the taxpayers of Colorado that all levels of government, including school districts and special districts should be held accountable to the taxpayers for their behavior, then the only choice here is to vote yes on this bill. Since title 24- article 18-102(5), C.R.S. specifically states that the ethical principles and rules of conduct are applicable to special districts and school districts in addition to all other forms of government, it is odd that when the general assembly established the Independent Ethics Commission to investigate and enforce rules of conduct for public officials and the provisions of Article 26 of the State Constitution, they failed to include school districts and special districts to fall under their purview. Passage of this bill will resolve this oversight and provide a much needed avenue for taxpayers to relate their concerns to the Ethics Commission. In particular, I wish to single out metro districts, a type of special district, that should be held up to more scrutiny as taxpayers have been turned away by the ethics board when requesting such oversight. Private developers use CRS 32 to finance their projects but when ethical concerns of taxpayers have been presented to the Independent Ethics Commission, created under Article 18.5-Title 24, they have been turned away. The reason given was that special districts do not fall under their jurisdiction. As a taxpayer, I would have to question the intent and integrity of any representative not supporting this resolution so vital to the needs and rights of the taxpayers of Colorado.</p>