



El Paso County Intergovernmental Operations and Lobbying Activities

As a statutory county under Colorado law, El Paso County is required to administer, supervise, enforce and facilitate a wide variety of Federal and State programs, regulations, services and laws. Federal and state programs ranging from Child Protective Services and Food Stamps to Clean Water and Criminal Prosecution are administered by El Paso County government. In 2012, more than half of El Paso County's annual budget was restricted meet the requirements of various State and Federal government programs, services and enforcement activities. As a result, El Paso County is committed to promote and maintain effective communications with state and federal lawmakers and with the leadership of administrative agencies which interact with county government.

Because lawmakers and agency directors at Federal and State government levels frequently enact laws, rules and regulations which have a direct impact on county government operations and financial stability, the Board of El Paso County Commissioners, statutory county offices and county administrative offices monitor, evaluate and provide input on proposed legislation and rulemaking which are likely to impact county government operations.

County elected and managerial personnel occasionally testify at state legislative hearings and administrative rule-making procedures. In addition, El Paso County maintains membership and participates in directing the lobbying activities of Colorado Counties, Inc. (CCI), and the National Association of Counties (NaCO), organizations which regularly review legislation, regulations and procedures and provide input during legislative and rule making processes.

El Paso County has an Intergovernmental Operations Officer who is assigned to the County Public Information Office and serves as registered lobbyist monitoring proposed legislation and reporting to county officials from the Colorado State Capitol during legislative sessions. When the legislature is not in session, he regularly attends legislative committee hearings, CCI committee meetings and various task force sessions to monitor proposed legislation and provide updated information on legislative and rulemaking procedures to El Paso County elected and administrative officials. In addition to these activities, the Intergovernmental Operations Officer routinely attends regular public meetings and schedules individual and group meetings for the Board of County Commissioners with state lawmakers and city and town council representatives from the eight municipalities located within El Paso County.

El Paso County monitors and provides input on Federal legislation and rulemaking primarily through its membership and participation in the National Association of Counties and its membership in the Regional Coalition for Federal Action which includes twelve local Business and Government agencies which provide combined resources to support a part-time federal lobbyist working in Washington on specific issues of regional interest. County Commissioners also serve on a number of legislative and policy steering committees and participate in visits to lawmakers (typically once or twice each year) as are needed to effectively communicate priorities and concerns related to federal legislation.

Annual funding in support of Intergovernmental Operations including county lobbying:

Intergovernmental Operations (state lobbying and intergovernmental coordination)	\$80,120
Annual Dues Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI)	\$77,588
Annual Dues County Sheriff's of Colorado	\$21,968
Annual Dues National Association of Counties (NaCO)	\$10,039
Regional Coalition for Strategic Federal Action	\$10,000
Annual Dues Major County Sheriff's Association	\$1,500
County Clerks Association	\$486

Recent federal lobbying activities on behalf of El Paso County Include:

- Support for Federal Legislation requiring the U.S. Forest Service to include local government input in forest management and fire mitigation policies.
- Support for Supplemental Federal Funding of agencies providing fire recovery and flood support following the disastrous Waldo Canyon Wildfire.
- Opposition to proposed regulations which would expand the endangered species protection to prairie dog species which are abundant and pose a threat to livestock in Colorado.
- Opposition to the expanded definition of "waters of the U.S." to include potentially hundreds of small creeks and dry creek beds and subjecting adjacent property owners irrelevant Federal regulations
- Recent
- Resolution urging both Congress and the President to pass thoughtful, responsible budget legislation and end the reckless threat of sequestration style cuts that would weaken or national defense

Recent state lobbying activities on behalf of El Paso County include:

- Support for legislation creating Veterans Courts as means to provide assistance rather than incarceration for wounded warriors who are charged with criminal offenses
- Support for rule making which requires lawmakers to consider the fiscal impact to county governments resulting from new legislation
- Support for a change in laws to permit certifications and training gained through military service to apply for licensing of skilled trades
- Support for equitable distribution of state highway appropriations rather to recognize that El Paso County has the largest population of any Colorado County
- Support for changes to relatively new evidence laws which would have forced counties to acquire and maintain massive evidence warehouses at considerable expense
- Support for legislation to allow Colorado law enforcement agencies access to certain Federal criminal data services
- Support for the appropriation of certain state discretionary and watershed protection funds to support recovery and mitigation efforts related to the Waldo Canyon Wildfire

El Paso County Contact:

For more information on El Paso County's lobbying activities and intergovernmental operations, contact:

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