

RIO GRANDE COUNTY,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
Denver, CO, December 28, 1994.

Hon. HANK BROWN,
U.S. Senator,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BROWN: Thank you for requesting our input concerning unfunded mandates. It seems each passing day there are more and we do appreciate your efforts to correct this problem.

The first to mind and most costly to Rio Grande County has been Subtitle D of the EPA regulations concerning the construction and operation of landfills. Rio Grande County and Alamosa County have formed a Regional Landfill Authority for the construction and operation of a new landfill due to these regulations. Our present landfills do not meet these requirements. This one regulation will cost us over \$1.7 million in construction. This figure would be considerably higher, but we have done as much as possible with county staff and equipment.

The second unfunded mandate that the County has been faced with is the Water Quality Act and Air Quality Act. We have been mandated to replace all fuel tanks which cost thousands of dollars. We also are having to obtain Storm Water Permit for our small airport and we believe shortly these Permits will also be required for our County shop facilities. This costs us in staff time to just keep up the quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports, and the updating of the policy.

The third unfunded mandate that we have had to comply with is the Department of Transportation's regulations concerning CDL's and now the new drug and alcohol testing. The County's Road and Bridge employees must obtain a CDL to operate our trucks which means the County is now paying the physical examines and paying for the CDL tests which run over \$100 per test. Starting in the 1995, we now have to do drug tests on 25% of all CDL's with hazardous ratings and then in 1996 all CDL's will need drug testing. Also in 1996 we will have to do testing for alcohol on 50% of our drivers. There are only several labs in the United States that are certified to do the testing of the samples. We are looking at around \$42/drug test and presently do not have the fees for the alcohol test. The regulations also mandate comprehensive policies concerning the testing and the actions by the employer if a positive result is found. If a positive test for an employee is found, disciplinary action must be in compliance with the American's Disability Act (ADA). Under ADA, alcoholism is a protected disability. Drug use is not.

ADA and American Family Leave also are unfunded mandates that have impacted Rio Grande County. Just the staff time alone to get the policies written and adopted and educate all the employees has been very time consuming. Every employer has employees that will try to use these new "rights" other than the basic intent of the legislation.

Other unfunded mandates that are difficult to place an exact price tag on, are all the programs and regulations for welfare and medicaid. Many of these regulations are passed to the state and then to local governments without the local officials really knowing who is responsible for the drafting of the regulations. Eligibility for most of these programs is being lowered every day which results in more clients and more match by local funds.

Even though you requested information on unfunded mandates, we would also like to take this opportunity to express several other areas of concern we have, namely such regulations as the Endangered Species Act and the Wetlands Act. These two Acts are having major economic impacts on Rio Grande County. We basically have no timber

sales in our National Forests due to the Endangered Species Act and environmentalists who are "protecting" us from ourselves. Having 75% of Rio Grande County owned by the Federal government and most being the National Forest Service, the timber industry is a major employer. Presently, the one lumber mill in Rio Grande County is obtaining their timber from New Mexico and northern Colorado. They cannot continue to do this and stay financially competitive. Agriculture and general development is being impacted by the Wetlands Act and many people are fearful to do any type of land improvement because of stories over zealous regulators who carry this Act to extremes.

We also want to urge your assistance in obtaining the balanced budget. We feel strongly that this legislation must be passed to save the nation. We urge your assistance in getting this legislation carried, but we want to see it as a Constitutional Amendment, not just an Act. This will make it very difficult in the future for other politicians to erode or repeal.

In closing, we are sad to hear of your retirement, but do thank you for the wonderful job you have done in representing Rio Grande County!

Sincerely,

VERN ROMINGER,
Chairman of the Board.

MT. PRINCETON MOBILE HOME
AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK,
Buena Vista, CO, June 9, 1993.

Hon. HANK BROWN,
U.S. Senate,
Colorado Springs, CO.

DEAR SENATOR HANK BROWN: We do support Bill S2900—regarding safe drinking water.

We do support safe drinking water, but the Government is imposing so many water tests, with a very high cost of testing being passed on to the water supplier.

In our mountain area of Colorado we have many small community water systems of which the Government will be putting out of business.

The State of Colorado tells us that our Laboratories here in Colorado are not equipped to do all of the testing that is required.

Our wells here in the Arkansas Valley have passed every test so far imposed with flying colors.

Our biggest problem is Congress passing these Bills, requiring so many more water tests which we have willingly provided in the past years. Now there is a High Dollar Cost with the increased testing of our water. A Quote from our State of Colorado—"Cost will be as high as \$10,000.00, we are told to budget \$1,000.00 per year."

I received a letter regarding an Inorganic Test, the fee will be \$1,600.00. They say our Labs can not handle all the Government Required tests—We'll have to send the test to out of State labs to meet the requirements.

We do not want the E.P.A. to take over, as all cost for their Job Security will be passed on to us.

We will be having a Water meeting in Buena Vista, Colorado on June 14, 1993 at 7:00 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, E. Arkansas and Railroad, Buena Vista, Colorado 81211. You are invited to attend. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

STATE OF COLORADO,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
Denver CO, January 4, 1995.

Hon. HANK BROWN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC

DEAR HANK: I am writing to urge you to co-sponsor S. 1, the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995, and to vote for the bill without weakening amendments.

As I said at the recent Senate Subcommittee hearing on the Balanced Budget Amendment, I believe most unfunded federal mandates are too burdensome and costly to the states and local governments. We have no room in our budgets for unfunded mandates which push important state services down the priority list. It is critical that states be given real, permanent protection against new unfunded federal mandates.

It is my understanding that the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee will hear testimony on the bill later this week and will send it to the Senate floor for final action next week.

Congress now has a critical opportunity to redefine the federal-state relationship. I hope it will take advantage of the new political climate in Washington and enact constructive unfunded mandate reform legislation.

Again, I urge your strong support of this important measure.

Sincerely,

ROY ROMER,
Governor.

MORNING BUSINESS

AMERICAN TROOPS IN HAITI

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today one of America's sons was killed while serving with the Special Forces on duty in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He is the first American serviceman to die while on this mission.

Where did this soldier die? Was he engaged in a battle with former supporters of General Cedras? No. This soldier died while he was monitoring toll booth operations on a road in Haiti. I will repeat that: The first American soldier to die in Haiti died while he was monitoring toll booth operations. He was shot by a passenger in a car at the toll booth.

Mr. President, why are American troops still in Haiti? General Cedras is gone. Aristede has been in power for more than a month. And still American forces remain in Haiti. And what are they doing? Monitoring toll booths and cleaning streets.

In this Senator's view, the return of our soldiers from Haiti is long-overdue. Their mission has been accomplished and they should not be performing local civil functions. It is a sad day when any American soldier loses his life in defending freedom. But Mr. President, it is totally absurd that this soldier was killed while performing a job he was neither trained for nor should have been doing.

I urge the President to bring the troops home now.

SENATOR KENNEDY'S SPEECH TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, yesterday, one of our colleagues made a speech at the National Press Club that deserves the attention of all Senators.

Senator KENNEDY spoke of the timeless values and enduring ideals that Democrats share with the American people. He eloquently described the