



## Please Vote YES on HB17-1220

### Prevent Diversion of Marijuana to the Illegal Market

Sponsors: K. Becker and Wist/Gardner and Fields

Since the passage of Amendment 64 almost five years ago, communities across Colorado have seen a steady increase in illegal home grow activity. Part of this is attributable to the fact that our state has some of the loosest home grow regulations in the country. While large-scale marijuana busts garner the attention of the media, the reality is that local law enforcement and county building officials are being called on **regularly** to investigate complaints about illegal growing in neighborhoods.

Large-scale home grows pose a public safety threat to our communities and endanger the well-being of our citizens by bringing a dangerous criminal element into our neighborhoods. Alterations to home electrical systems to accommodate large-scale growing activities pose a fire hazard to neighboring structures and endanger the safety of first-responders.

In response to these growing public safety concerns, counties and municipalities have begun looking at ways to address illegal home grow operations. One solution was to establish a cap on how many marijuana plants could be grown in a residential property. To date, almost a third of the counties in Colorado have adopted plant caps to combat illegal growing and public safety concerns in our communities.

HB 1220 builds on the success of these local caps by establishing a new default plant cap across the state. Under the bill, all residences in the state would be capped at 12 plants – unless a local cap allows a higher plant count. The bill respects local determinations on what an acceptable growing limit should be, while establishing baseline standards in other communities that will protect residents, firefighters and police officers.

**CCI strongly urges your support of HB17-1220**

**Contact:**

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BOARD OF  
**County Commissioners**

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March 22, 2017

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Colorado State Capitol  
200 E. Colfax  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

We are writing to you today to urge your support of HB17-1220. We are a rural county located in Southeast Colorado with a population of roughly 3,500 people. We have one of the lowest assessed valuations in the state, and lack the resources to keep up with the increase in illegal grow operations we are seeing in our county.

Last fall, Crowley County was one of five counties involved in a massive raid by the DEA that yielded over 22,000 pounds of illegal marijuana that was going to be sold out-of-state. Much of this marijuana was being grown illegally in homes throughout the region, including many here in Crowley County. We strongly believe that establishing a statewide cap on the residential growing of marijuana will give our local law enforcement a better handle on these increased illegal activities and make our communities safer.

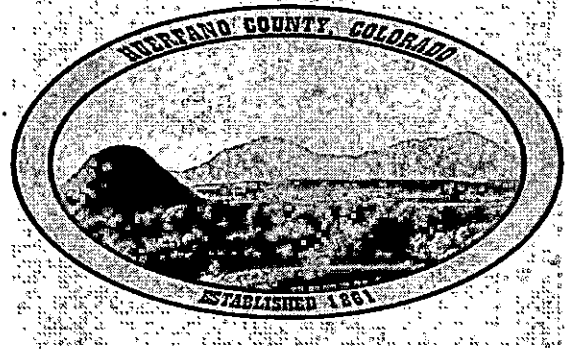
We thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Chair, Crowley County Board of Commissioners

cc: Sen. Bob Gardner  
Sen. Rhonda Fields  
Eric Bergman, Colorado Counties, Inc.

- Ray Garcia, Chairman
- Max Vezzani, Commissioner
- Gerald Cisneros, Commissioner



## Board of County Commissioners

March 20, 2017

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Colorado State Capitol  
200 E. Colfax  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Committee Members:

Illegal pot grows are a major problem here in Huerfano County. We currently have at least 30 that we know of – with no real method of recourse. We were able to get a representative from the Attorney General's office down for a presentation last year to help us understand what enforcement authority we have. His advice was, essentially, that we did not have a lot of legal ability to go after these illegal grows! We have houses down here that have been illegally retrofitted to offer 300 amp electric services (most houses are only equipped to have 100 amp services). We have greenhouses for "vegetables" springing up all over the county that are being used to grow marijuana outside of our licensing process.

We have modified our zoning code to limit plant counts to 18 plants but, even if the Sheriff busts someone for growing more than that, the case doesn't go to the D.A. As it is a land use and zoning matter, it is dealt with in county court – or not at all.

H.B. 17-1220 would give us the teeth to deal with the illegal grows in a manner that would hopefully deter others from trying the same thing. We really need a tool to give the Sheriff a level of comfort in dealing with the illegal grows and to free the land use department for the workload for which it was originally intended.

We urge you to look favorably at this legislation for the benefit of Colorado, and to help us control the illegal activities across our state.

Thank you sincerely for your consideration.

On Behalf of the Huerfano County Commissioners

John Galusha, County Administrator