



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Phone: 970-336-7204

1150 O St., P.O. Box 758, Greeley, CO 80632

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jennifer Finch, 970-336-7203

CDOT'S GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) RULEMAKING - A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING THAT WILL NEGATIVELY IMPACT RURAL COLORADO

WELD COUNTY, CO - On **Dec. 16, 2021**, the Colorado Transportation Commission will vote on a new Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction rule that will fundamentally change the purpose and direction of CDOT's mission. When the rule is adopted, CDOT, once tasked with building and maintaining safe, efficient roads, bridges and other infrastructure, will add air quality standards to their criteria in determining whether capacity projects, such as widening I-25, US 270, I-70, etc. may occur in the future, regardless of contribution by taxpayer dollars funded through the gas tax.

BE INFORMED – CDOT will justify restricting certain transportation funds for capacity projects under the premise that expanded capacity will induce demand – essentially, if you build it, they will come; therefore, the best way to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and thereby reduce emissions is to not build bigger roads.

However, documented studies show that for "induced demand" capacity restrictions to be successful, there must be viable alternative transportation modes available, which are more commonly associated with urban areas. "Passage of this GHG rule will prove the Colorado Department of Transportation is governing for what is best in the urban areas not what is best for the entire state," said Weld County Commissioner Scott James.

Rural areas generally have fewer resources, and may bear disproportionate financial burdens from higher taxes, fuel costs, and vehicle costs associated with GHG reduction strategies. The state's induced demand philosophy will affect land use decisions for local governments in the metro areas.

If emissions reduction standards are not met for the region, the GHG rule lays the foundation for CDOT and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to prioritize GHG emission reductions over projects that effectively and safely move people and goods throughout Colorado.

"CDOT says GHG reductions should be made through the purchase and use of electric vehicles and riding transit," said James. "The problem is, though, neither of those options work well in the non-urban areas of the state."

Weld County fully appreciates the importance of GHG emissions reductions; however, the GHG reduction rule, as written, is not a common-sense approach best suited for Colorado residents. Through testimony and data driven facts, Weld County has been engaged with the rule making process for months. Also, Weld County launched a robust air quality monitoring network, consistent with the role of a local government tasked with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens.

CALL TO ACTION - Weld County urges the public to contact your CDOT Transportation Commissioner and ask them to vote to delay adopting the rule. A delay will allow local government partners to continue to work with CDOT on a data driven decision making model that isn't directed to the metro area or punitive to the rural areas but will reflect leadership of a statewide air quality transportation program. For members of the public to participate in the final hearing, you may submit public comments and/or register to speak at the final Transportation Commission meeting on **December 16**, where the rule will be considered for adoption, by emailing Jennifer.uebelher@state.co.us