

Dear residents of Fountain, Green Mountain Falls, Calhan, Manitou Springs, Monument, Palmer Lake, Ramah, and Colorado Springs:

As leaders of your cities, we want to communicate with you proactively about the migrant crisis occurring in cities just north of us. We know there has been significant national news about the crisis at the Southern border, and its potential impacts on interior cities. We know that our colleagues in Denver are facing a significant crisis as they manage the arrival of hundreds of people per week, and we recognize that this crisis could well spill over to each of our communities with little warning.

Let us first discuss the press coverage, to include that sparked by the El Paso County Commissioners' press conference two weeks ago. Much of the information shared has been exaggerated or speculative, and we feel the need to set the record straight. Government is tasked with providing accurate information, and keeping citizens informed, not alarming or misrepresenting. The City of Denver is not and has not chartered buses to send migrants to any Colorado city, nor does it expect to. None of us have been asked to receive or shelter migrants by the City of Denver or the State of Colorado. Reports of buses of hundreds of migrants have proven false, and such false reports put undue stress on city resources.

In unity, the mayors of El Paso County wish to make it explicitly clear that our respective municipalities are not designated as sanctuary communities. We are committed to upholding the constitution and federal immigration laws, and we recognize that immigration law is exclusively a power of the federal government. While we all implore the federal government to take action to secure the southern border and control the flow of migrants into the nation, we also recognize the impact this crisis is having on cities nationwide, and we recognize the vital importance of maintaining open communication and collaborative decision-making processes within our county.

We strongly urge the El Paso County Commissioners to engage in meaningful consultations with us, the mayors, before making public statements that have a negative impact on our communities. Regardless of political viewpoints, local communities are charged with planning for all scenarios, and we will do so, together. As mayors and leaders, we do not have the luxury of making inflammatory statements and doing little else. Cooperation and understanding between local government entities are crucial to ensure the well-being and harmony of our residents.

Let us be clear: our communities, while diverse and resilient, simply do not possess the financial and infrastructure resources required to support large numbers of migrants. While we feel for our fellow Coloradans in Denver, we remain devoted to addressing the needs and concerns of our residents above all, and we request a collaborative approach to this situation that respects the autonomy and unique needs and resources of individual municipalities within El Paso County.

We want our residents to know we will continue to communicate openly and accurately, plan for all scenarios and work together in the best interests of residents of El Paso County. We implore our County Commissioners to do the same.

Sincerely,

DRAFT