



From the Director's Desk

A Call to Action: Speak to Your legislators Cleaning Up SB20-217

In collaboration with CIRSA, NWCCOG just [published a report](#) with recommendations for necessary modifications to SB20-217; the “use of force” bill passed by the Colorado Legislature this past June. The report is intended to provide context for the conversation that local civic officials should be having with their state legislators right now, and the ongoing conversation they should be having with local law enforcement leadership.

For the report, Chief Heather Coogan interviewed Chiefs and Sheriffs from across the region this fall about the challenges their agencies face in translating SB20-217 six months in. While SB20-217 addresses endemic issues that have come to a head in more urban places that include a lack of accountability and data, overly protective unions that allow bad actors to stay in the system, excessive use of force in daily practice, the militarization of how police handle protests and other policies & practices which escalate routine encounters very quickly as well as systemic racism; in our region, SB20-217 landed like someone was trying to hang a picture with a sledge hammer.



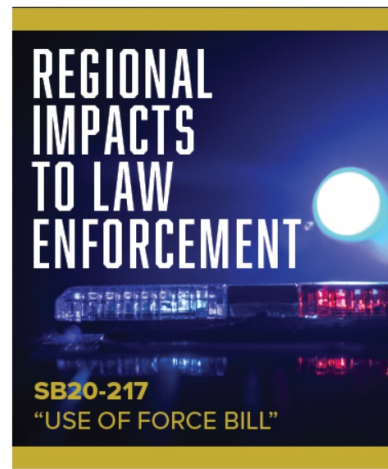
It has exacerbated an already acute morale problem in small agencies.

Unless amended or clarified, the act will have negative impacts to local approaches to community policing models. It will drive some bad actors out while also driving a lot of talent out of policing. It introduces race into contacts where it is not necessary. It will offend visitors and escalate situations. The report is a dive into the details that would allow SB20-217 to meet its’ intent while mitigating unintended consequences. The report provides context about the region and how vital locally-tailored approaches to law enforcement are to community engagement. This is not an excuse for racism. There is no place for implicit bias in policing and it needs to be actively addressed. Law enforcement leadership gets this. We think local leaders are not as engaged with law enforcement leadership as they could be. This is a prime opportunity.

The report is not “for or against” the police. People who respond to “Black Lives Matter” with “Blue Lives Matter” are

missing the point. The counterpoint to Black Lives Matter is racism and injustice.

“Law and Order” is not a counterpoint to peaceful protest, nor should it be code for suppressing any of the fundamental freedoms established in the Bill of Rights. On the other hand, the idea that we don’t need law enforcement is patently ridiculous, so the rhetorical stance of “defunding the police” is also. This is a time to reflect on the relationship of law enforcement to our communities. Most agencies have internally been reflecting and reforming/improving for decades, often in a silo. Local leaders should understand law enforcement better. Most are actively striving to improve, just the way we would expect any municipal or county department to do. We would like SB20-217 to be complementary to that effort.



Though 2020 is not unusual in the number of use-of-force incidents that seem unnecessarily to lead to death, with COVID, we finally gave ourselves the time to watch the videos of police violence, and that finally led to a tremendous national reaction. We don’t want it to be an overreaction that negatively impacts policing. This scrutiny is a good thing. Law enforcement is all about justice. What happened to George Floyd was insulting to our national conscious. Kudos to the Colorado Legislature to being one of the few across the country to take unprecedented, and immediate action to address the backdrop of citizen outrage over police brutality, to address systemic racism, and to move policy forward to address the growing Black Lives Matter movement with police reform legislation. Read the report to understand how the Act translates regionally, and share your input with those who can make a difference, at a state level and locally.

It is important that legislators get concrete input on how to modify the law, and that they hear from voices from outside the law enforcement community. This is about good governance. We can, and should strive to do better. The electronic version is attached here. If you are a NWCCOG member jurisdiction and would like printed copies, please let me know how many at my personal email jstavney@nwccog.org.

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Responding at the speed of light - Project THOR and the Cameron Peak Fire

October 17, 2020, the Cameron Peak wildfire was bearing down on Estes Park threatening access to the internet, 9-1-1 emergency communications, and other vital telecom networks. Josh Cramer, network architect at Trailblazer broadband, realized that for the 9-1-1 system to remain viable, they needed a redundant solution FAST. Cramer learned about [Project THOR](#), a new 480 mile internet line offering back-up and redundancy, that had recently been completed on the western slope, and contacted Nate Walowitz, NWCCOG's Regional Broadband Coordinator, who had spear-headed the project. Walowitz reacted quickly to the call for help, and together, they assembled a team of more than a dozen entities that set the wheels in motion to provide a service, in hours, that normally takes months or even years to accomplish. Read the complete story in the [Colorado Sun](#).



As the team in Granby completed the last fiber splice to set up a new back up broadband link between Granby and Estes Park, the East Troublesome fire jumped Highway 125 and began the race towards Grand Lake and Rocky Mountain National Park, said Josh Cramer, with Trailblazer Broadband in Estes Park. Cramer captured the image on Oct. 21, 2020. (Courtesy of Josh Cramer)

NWCCOG Welcomes Jeff Anderson

NWCCOG is excited to announce that Jeff Andrews of Andrews Business Consulting has been contracted as the Regional Business Recovery Coordinator, assisting communities with business resiliency and recovery efforts. This contract was funded through the EDA and will last through June of 2022.

Jeff has lived in Colorado for his entire adult life, spending time in Boulder, Denver and the Roaring Fork Valley before settling in Avon where he has lived since 1997.



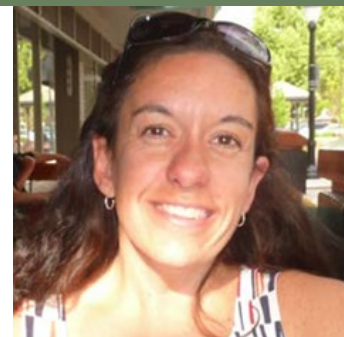
Jeff has over 30 years experience managing and operating restaurants, hotels, timeshares and property management organizations. He and his wife Lynne enjoy hiking and 4-wheeling in the summers, and skiing and snowshoeing in winter.

Please contact Jeff at jeff.andrews@nwccog.org or on his cellular at 970-390-3100 for assistance related to Covid resiliency and recovery efforts, and please add his email to any mailing lists in your organizations that you see fit.

Vintage Celebrates Certification - recognizes National Family Caregivers month

Ceci Peterson Obtains CSA Certification

Vintage Program Specialist, Ceci Peterson, received her Certified Senior Advisor (CSA)® credential in October! This credential applies to professionals who are able to demonstrate their competence and knowledge of working with older adults into their professional practices. In order to maintain the CSA certification, individuals are required to demonstrate a commitment to high standards, continuing education, professional ethics, and trust.



The seven-part course that Ceci had been studying since the Spring, gives professionals a practical,

comprehensive understanding of health, social and financial issues that are important to many older adults, including ethical issues specific to aging. Ceci not only passed the exam on the first try (only a 30% pass rate) but she did it in the midst of the East Troublesome Fire and hurried home after completing the exam to prepare for a possible evacuation. Congratulations to Ceci on her hard work and focus!

National Family Caregivers Month

Vintage is proud to recognize November as National Family Caregiver Month and to celebrate and honor the contributions of family caregivers and address the new realities they face with their loved ones during these challenging times.

In November 2020, Vintage offered a free 4-week online class for caregivers called Hero's Journey of the Caregiver, which is inspired by the work of Joseph Campbell, mythologist, researcher, and author. This class offered opportunities for the inner hero to show up in caregiving and ultimately move through obstacles on this journey using a multi-media approach (video clips, art, poetry, self-reflection, and discussion).



Hero's Journey of the Caregiver is created and taught by JoAnn Dorio Burton, who is a caregiver for her elderly mother, as well as an author, consultant, trainer, and Community Programs Coordinator for Windhorse Community Services. Vintage received valuable feedback from the caregivers who took the class. *"Thank you for Hero's Journey of the Caregiver. It gave me an opportunity to voice a lot of my feelings about being a caregiver and to know that what I have experienced is not unique. Also, as it was mentioned in class, we have become closer. Once again, thank you"*, a participant shared with Vintage. Vintage runs the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) to provide services to caregivers of older adults and grandparents raising grandchildren to enhance caregiving skills and alleviate the stresses associated with being a caregiver. Vintage provides caregiver services that fall into five different service categories: Respite Care, Information, Assistance, Counseling and Supplemental Services.

If you need information or assistance in gaining access to services, please contact Ceci Peterson to set up your appointment. You may reach Ceci by calling 970-531-4087 or by emailing cpeterson@nwccog.org

Next Council Meeting:

December 3, 2020 - 10:00 to 1:00

Full Council, EED Board & Foundation Board Meeting

Zoom Call

Agenda: 2020 Budget Revisions, approve 20201 budget, annual NWCCOG Foundation meeting