

OPEN LETTER FROM A BIPARTISAN GROUP OF FORMER LAWMAKERS TO THE SPEAKER AND THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE PROPOSED FENCE AT THE COLORADO STATE CAPITOL

March 18, 2021

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

On March 17, the Denver Post reported plans to erect a permanent wrought iron fence around the Colorado capitol building. The undersigned, a bipartisan group of former Colorado legislators, urges you to reconsider the substantive and symbolic impact of placing a permanent fence around the People's house.

Having worked in the building, we understand the importance of measures to protect the members, staff, and visitors while on the Capitol grounds.

We also understand that in times of heightened security concerns, temporary measures may need to be taken that insulate the capitol from the rest of the city.

But these considerations must be balanced with the fact that ours is a free and representative government, and physical barriers between people and the leaders they elect sends the wrong message.

We further recognize that the right of peaceful protest is fundamental. We in no way endorse the acts of vandalism directed at the Capitol last summer, but neither can we support using those events to justify measures that would limit and restrict future peaceful gatherings and protests on the Capitol grounds.

If a permanent fence is put around the Capitol, Colorado will have lost something special: a deep and abiding connection between its people and their government.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Speaker Terrance Carroll
Speaker Frank McNulty
Senator Ken Chlouber
Senator Larry Crowder
Representative Frank DeFilippo
Senator Cheri Jahn
Representative Bill Jerke
Senator Mike Johnston
Senator Andy Kerr
Representative Matt Knoedler
Representative Rosemary Marshall
Representative Carl Miller
Representative BJ Nikkel

President Kevin Grantham
President Peter Groff
President John Andrews
Senator Dan Grossman
Senator Lucia Guzman
Senator Bob Hagedorn
Senator Norma Anderson
Representative Debbie Benefield
Senator Tom Blickensderfer
Senator Greg Brophy
Representative Amy Stephens
Representative Cole Wist
Representative Rob Witwer

Governor Bill Owens
Governor Dick Lamm
Secretary of State Bernie Buescher
Secretary of State Gigi Dennis
Treasurer Mark Hillman
Senator Mike Feeley
Senator Tim Foster
Representative Dorothy Gotlieb
Senator Josh Penry
Senator Jim Rizzuto
Representative Christine Scanlan
Representative Kathleen Curry
Senator Laura Woods