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March 2, 2020

Representative Matt Gray  
Chair, House Transportation and Local Government Committee  
Colorado State Capitol  
200 East Colfax  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Representative Gray and House Transportation and Local Government Committee Members:

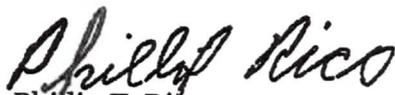
The City of Trinidad supports Senate Bill 20-056, which would permit travel of surplus military vehicles for use in firefighting efforts, including wildfire mitigation, not only on local streets and roads, but also on highways when owned by a municipality, county or fire protection district by clarifying the definition for the use of off-highway vehicles.

Colorado has a vast landscape. Many local governments in rural areas rely heavily on mutual aid to assist in firefighting efforts. Access to these rural areas is largely attained by the state highway system. As Coloradoans, we are all acutely aware of how quickly wildfire can spread and the devastating effect it has on homeowners, natural resources and communities, as well as the challenges it presents to those involved in suppressing wildfires. The availability of military surplus vehicles to assist with wildfire fighting efforts will provide another tool for firefighters to use in wildfire mitigation.

Trinidad's watershed is located approximately 40 miles west of Trinidad. Access to the City's watershed and Trinidad's only water source is via State Highway 12. The passage of Senate Bill 20-056 enables the City to acquire and use surplus military vehicles that can be used for purposes of mitigation to protect our watershed. Trinidad's full-time, paid Fire Department provides mutual aid to many neighboring communities and would be able to further assist in their wildfire mitigation efforts.

The City of Trinidad respectfully asks you to support passage of SB 20-056.

Respectfully,

  
Phillip T. Rico  
Mayor