



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 21, 2023

## **JOINT STATEMENT FROM PUEBLO COUNTY GOVERNMENT, PUEBLO WEST METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, COLORADO CITY METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, AND PUEBLO RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Pueblo West Metropolitan District, the Colorado City Metropolitan District, and the Pueblo Rural Fire Department are all holding mail ballot elections on May 2, 2023. Pursuant to Colorado statute, the districts ordered and received a list of registered voters from the Pueblo County Clerk and Recorder's Office on March 2, 2023. The districts properly relied on these voter lists in mailing ballots to voters in their respective jurisdictions.

Pueblo County Clerk and Recorder realized the list of registered voters inadvertently included 16- and 17-year-olds who had pre-registered to vote but are not eligible to vote until they are 18 years of age. As ballots are returned, they will be checked against the updated list of registered voters, and any ballots received from individuals under the age of 18 will be disregarded, unopened, and not counted. The election process is a long-standing system of checks and balances that provides an opportunity for our community to exercise their right to vote and select their representatives. Election safeguards have always been in place to ensure ineligible votes would not be counted.

On the evening of April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Pueblo County Clerk and Recorder issued a press release informing the public of this error. It was only upon reading this press release that the districts learned there was an issue with the voter lists. Corrected lists of eligible voters were sent to the special districts on April 20, 2023.

The Pueblo County Clerk and Recorder's Office, Pueblo West Metropolitan District, Colorado City Metropolitan District, and the Pueblo Rural Fire Department are working together to resolve these issues. We caught this error early and fixed it immediately due to the professionalism and commitment of our elected and appointed election officials, including County Clerk Candace Rivera and Designated Election Officials Sue Blair and Denise O'Hara.

We maintain that confidence in the electoral system, transparency to the public, and the integrity of the democratic process are of the utmost importance to all entities.

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