



HB23-1169 Limit Arrest For Low-level Offenses

Good afternoon Mr. Chair and fellow committee members. My name is Adam Burg, and I am the vice president of government affairs for the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

I'm here today to express our organizations' opposition to HB23-1169.

Crime in Colorado is at an all-time high and needs to be addressed in practical ways for the safety of everyone involved, including the individual committing the crime. Not only will this bill increase additional costs for businesses to incur these damages, but individuals behind these offenses will miss out on resources available to them through the judicial system that they would otherwise be offered at an intervention.

According to this month's City of Denver Crime Report, we know that Denver sees an average of 3,000 property crime reports a month, which is one of many offenses that fall under this bill. In 2022, Colorado saw over 22,000 cases of burglary where businesses were the victim 3 out of every 10 cases according to Colorado Crimes Statistics. Businesses could be discouraged from expanding or opening their businesses in areas facing higher levels of these offenses if they do not feel they have the protection from these crimes.

It's important to remember that an arrest does not lead to automatic prosecution. We know that for first-time offenders, an arrest often leads to institutional resources aimed at addressing the underlying causes of crime, such as substance misuse and mental health issues. These interventions allow the judiciary system to create diversionary plans for the individual. Our justice system recognizes that low level crimes are often a cry for help. The reality is, low-level arrests are necessary interventions, and they provide the judicial system with a negotiating tool to get people plugged into crucial resources. This bill would eliminate those lower-level, lower-stakes interventions. We need to be able to intervene with resources when people are in crisis AND we need to be able to deter further criminal behavior

Therefore, we urge you to vote no to HB23-1196. Thank you.