



DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1100 Massachusetts Street
Lawrence, KS 66044-3064
(785) 832-5268 Fax (785) 832-5148
www.dgcoks.gov

March 12, 2025

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 521
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

As locally elected officials, we are compelled to express our concerns regarding recent Executive Orders and how those orders will impact Douglas County and our close to 120,000 residents in many adverse ways. We ask you, our federally-elected representative, to provide the essential legislative checks and balances that only you and your peers have the elected authority to do. You must prevent a single branch of government from becoming too powerful. We implore you to engage with your congressional colleagues, in addition to the executive branch, to consider and limit the negative repercussions of these hasty and unsympathetic actions.

Kansas has thousands of federal workers, many residing in Douglas County. Several community members' employment comes directly from federal grants – some fund critical health, bioscience, plus national security research projects; some help employ a significant network of direct service providers. Just a few weeks ago, over a quarter of the staff at Haskell Indian Nations University were terminated as part of the executive actions. These terminations have a particularly profound local impact on the already small team dedicated to providing Native American students their rights to a higher education, a right guaranteed to every one of those students by the federal government. Instead of a long-overdue updated federal farm bill, our Douglas County USDA Service Center had its office lease canceled and all NRCS technicians in our six-county region were fired last week. For those terminated, these reductions appear baseless - seeking out employees whose only 'deficiency' was that they were recently hired or reclassified to a different type of federal employee. There was no inquiry or analysis of the necessity or qualifications of these civil servants.

Each of you, through your work on legislative committees, has an extensive technical understanding of how United States laws and policies impact the American people. If the goal is to identify inefficiencies and waste, we ask that you do it, thoughtfully, and afford our Douglas County residents - your constituents - the courtesy of deliberation regarding their livelihood. The constant whiplash of on-again/off-again policy changes creates economic chaos and represents a federal government dismissive of how decisions impact daily lives. You have the power to convene tough conversations and resources you can bring to bear as the U.S. Constitution authorizes you to do. Rather than tacit complacency, we ask you to intercede on behalf of Douglas County and all of our residents.

You and your Kansas colleagues were responsive during the COVID-19 pandemic, recognizing that the federal government had a role to play in protecting the health and welfare of all citizens.

We hope for the same now. With these recent executive actions, we expect an increased demand for physical and mental health care across our community. We anticipate a need to retrain our workforce and provide increased social service support for all those who will be affected. Sweeping employment losses will escalate housing insecurity. Contract cancellations will create business closures. Grant erasure will end some organizations. Will Douglas County and our municipal partners be expected to resolve all this disarray created by our federal partners? Will there be support from your congressional offices? If these reductions cannot be avoided, we ask you to engage with local and state leadership to respond with resources for all who are impacted by this overreach.

We share a commonality in our oath - to serve our democratic country and all of the people who constitute that country. It is a privilege to be of the people, for the people. The U.S. Constitution recognizes that a balance of power will overcome those seeking to consolidate power. We hope you will show the fortitude to deflect personal threats and political loyalties to defend our shared democracy. We must work together for the peoples' right to true American self-governance.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kelly, Douglas County Commission (Chair)
District 1

Shannon Reid, Douglas County Commission (Vice Chair)
District 2

Karen Willey, Douglas County Commission
District 3

Gene Dorsey, Douglas County Commission
District 4

Erica Anderson, Douglas County Commission
District 5



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March 12, 2025

The Honorable Roger Marshall
Russell Senate Office Building, Suite 479A
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Senator Marshall:

As locally elected officials, we are compelled to express our concerns regarding recent Executive Orders and how those orders will impact Douglas County and our close to 120,000 residents in many adverse ways. We ask you, our federally-elected representative, to provide the essential legislative checks and balances that only you and your peers have the elected authority to do. You must prevent a single branch of government from becoming too powerful. We implore you to engage with your congressional colleagues, in addition to the executive branch, to consider and limit the negative repercussions of these hasty and unsympathetic actions.

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March 12, 2025

The Honorable Tracey Mann
344 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Mann:

As locally elected officials, we are compelled to express our concerns regarding recent Executive Orders and how those orders will impact Douglas County and our close to 120,000 residents in many adverse ways. We ask you, our federally-elected representative, to provide the essential legislative checks and balances that only you and your peers have the elected authority to do. You must prevent a single branch of government from becoming too powerful. We implore you to engage with your congressional colleagues, in addition to the executive branch, to consider and limit the negative repercussions of these hasty and unsympathetic actions.

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March 12, 2025

The Honorable Derek Schmidt
1223 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Schmidt:

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