

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB26-1123

PREVENTING SEX ABUSE IN JAILS

MARCH 11, 2026

For many years, former Jail Commander, Edward Aber of the LaPlata County jail has used his position of power to violate women. Whether it was his female deputy co-workers, or inmates in his care who had a Constitutional right to be protected while in custody, he fueled his oath and utilized his power to victimize women. I am one of those women.

Over the course of at least four years, the CBI found that Aber watched strip search videos of 117 female inmates at least 3,166 times. He downloaded these videos from the LaPlata County Jail evidence system to his personal devices. He then watched these at the jail, at home, at places outside of the state and in hotel rooms right here in Denver. He watched these for the purpose of sexual gratification.

For his crimes, he was not arrested. He was not subjected to the same strip searches we were, he was quietly given a summons at his home in Durango for one count of Official Misconduct and 117 counts of Invasion of Privacy for the Purpose of Sexual Gratification. Despite pleas from the victims and 117 count ordered restraining orders, this former police commander who made a very public threat of suicide, has been allowed to keep his firearms and is under no pre-trial supervision. As victims we live in fear because we don't know what this man, who has shown zero regard for the laws of Colorado, might do.

Because of his actions, LaPlata County faces an uncertain budgetary future because the victims in this case have filed a multi-million-dollar lawsuit. According to a quote in the Durango Herald, LaPlata County has already started the process of cutting back positions, benefits and services in anticipation of having to pay out due to these suits.

As a sixth generation native of Colorado, it deeply disturbs me that the tax payers of LaPlata County will ultimately be the ones to pay for dirty cop's sexual exploits. But, with this Bill we have an opportunity and an OBLIGATION to ensure that no County in Colorado will ever again suffer due to the actions of one sworn officer who selfishly abused the power of his badge.

I ask you to support Rep Stewart's bill and I encourage you to read the heroic reporting of Elizabeth Pond in the Durango Herald.