

Rural Colorado United hosts town hall in Montrose, respond to Lauren Boebert's Monday event

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Josue Perez

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A day after U.S. Rep. Lauren Boebert held a town hall in front of supporters at Turn of the Century Saloon in Montrose, her first public appearance in the area since being elected, Rural Colorado United hosted a gathering at Riverbottom Park, expressing concerns with positions Boebert has taken on key issues and recent statements the congresswomen has made regarding the \$1,400 stimulus checks.

“This legislation uses COVID like a cheap drugstore concealer,” said Boebert before the House passed a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package. “This is nothing more than a trashy spending spree.”

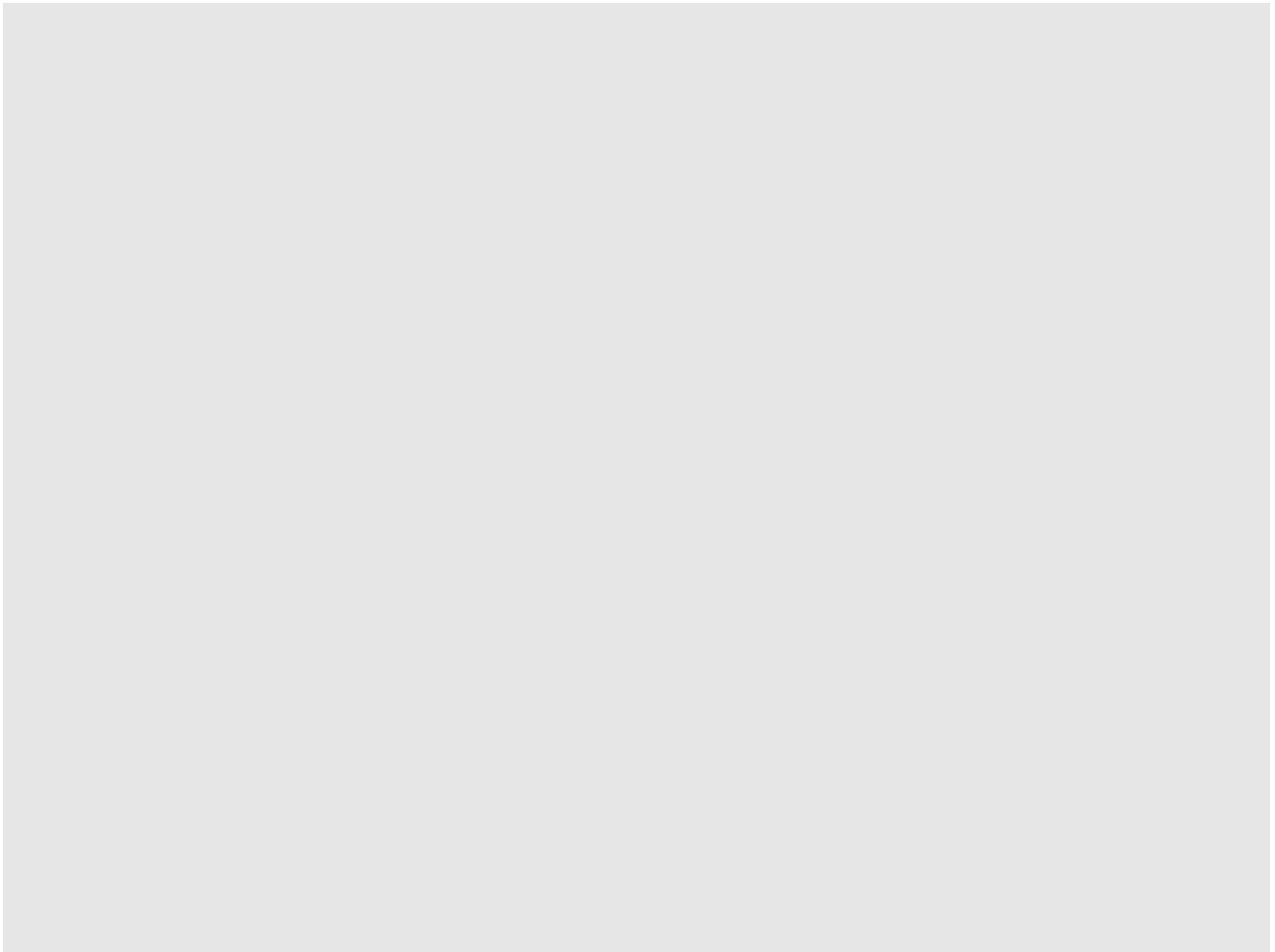
The statement sparked criticism and scrutiny of Boebert, representative for Colorado’s 3rd Congressional District, and was discussed during Rural Colorado United’s “Thanks for nothing, Boebert” town hall on Tuesday.

“According to our president, this is a backbone to our nation,” said Jayne Bilberry, a Montrose citizen who addressed the crowd of around 20 at Riverbottom Park. “It gives our nation a fighting chance to spring back after the \$1.9 trillion COVID relief bill.” Bilberry added it’s the group’s focus to speak with Boebert once she returns to Montrose, and called on her to have the courage to meet with others in the community rather than just supporters.

“We need her to represent all of us,” she said.

Another speaker expressed concern and disappointment with Boebert’s stance as a “one-issue candidate”: guns. Instead of working to serve all individuals and families in the district she serves, Boebert has exhausted energy in areas on a non-issue, the speaker added.

Bill Patterson, one of the event’s speakers and a Montrose resident, said collaborative efforts with Congress and Boebert is necessary, and all should be allowed to speak to a district representative to converse through issues so help can be provided to constituents in the area.



Lauren Boebert visits Montrose
(Justin Tubbs/Montrose Daily Press)

On Monday, Boebert argued the \$1.9 trillion relief bill was the first to not receive bipartisan support, calling it a “Democrat wish list.” (Though not one Republican in the House or Senate voted in favor of the legislation, Democrats argued support from GOP mayors and additional elected officials outside of D.C. made it bipartisan all the same.)

Boebert said less than 9% of the bill goes to public health spending, though this figure has been disputed by multiple news outlets as false. The American Rescue Plan — the name of the bill — will allot \$160 billion for vaccines, testing and other public health measures. But Democrats consider the \$358 billion allocated to reopen schools safely, emergency paid leave for people with COVID-19 also a piece of public health that is considered under the overall spectrum of public health spending.

With the \$358 billion figure part of that equation, that would put spending on public health at more than 20% of the stimulus budget, or more than \$400 billion.

Bilberry and others said they want to hold Boebert accountable for voting no on the COVID relief bill, as they say the bill will help thousands of people in the 3rd congressional district, and serve families and individuals who stand to benefit from the \$1,400 stimulus checks.

“It’s not about guns, it’s about the people in CD-3,” Bilberry said.

Some in attendance at Riverbottom said they were not able to attend the town hall on Monday. Some had not even heard about it until Tuesday afternoon. But all agreed that it was necessary and vital for Boebert to speak with all constituents in the district, not just supporters.

“Congresswoman Boebert makes 125 times the amount of the stimulus check she begrudges her most-in-need constituents, and is too scared to meet with us in-person, said Deb Fisk, a Delta constituent, in a provided statement. “I am tired of paying Congresswoman Boebert \$174,000 when she only panders to far-right, pro-insurrection conspiracy theorists. People deserve the right to ask their representative questions face to face — and all of us deserve a representative in Washington who isn’t scared to talk to her constituents.”

Bilberry told the Montrose Daily Press it’s her wish, and others in attendance, that Boebert will speak with all constituents when she returns to Montrose.

Josue Perez is a staff writer for the Montrose Daily Press