

GARNETT'S GAMBIT

HOUSE SPEAKER FIGHTS FOR LEGACY-DEFINING FENTANYL BILL IN FINAL YEAR AS LEGISLATOR



KATHRYN SCOTT, SPECIAL TO THE DENVER GAZETTE, FILE
New Speaker of the House Alec Garnett begins his leadership role during the first legislative day of the 73rd General Assembly at the Colorado State Capitol on Jan. 13, 2021.

**BY LUIGE DEL PUERTO
AND MARIANNE GOODLAND**
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When House Speaker Alec Garnett sat down with Colorado Politics in January to reflect on his last year in office, he said he always prefers taking on “one tough one than a bunch of consen-

sus-driven ideas.”

“I always tell Emily that I’m going to focus on one big thing,” said Garnett, one of the youngest to serve as House speaker in the Colorado General Assembly. Emily, an attorney, is Garnett’s wife. “Sometimes I don’t know [what it will be], but it always seems to find me.”

That one, big, tough thing, indeed, found Garnett yet again.

The Denver Democrat, who is in his fourth and final term in the House, is shepherding the passage of one the toughest bills to emerge out of the

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BILL, AT LAST

Collective bargaining legislation finally introduced in the state Senate. **Page 2**

FENTANYL

Legislators mull contours of response to crisis as families recount heartbreak. **Page 3**

Senate introduces collective bargaining bill

BY MARIANNE GOODLAND
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After more than a year in the making, a bill allowing county employees to join unions and set up collective bargaining units was finally introduced in the state Senate Monday night.

As first reported by Colorado Politics last week, Senate Bill 230, which started out as an effort to allow a wide array of public sector employees to engage in collective bargaining, is now stripped down to just affecting county workers.

Those workers do not need permission to set up unions, and in fact, four counties — Pueblo, Adams, Summit and Las Animas — already have collective bargaining agreements with their employees.

House Majority Leader Daneya Esgar, D-Pueblo, who has been the driving force for the bill, acknowledged that county employees can already join unions. But she told Colorado Politics Monday that the state needs to affirm that county workers have the right through state law. Right now, it's up to each individual leadership in a county to decide if employees have the right to do this, she said.

"We're saying as a state all county employees have this right. Just because there's good acting counties already doesn't negate the need for this in other areas where maybe there's not good acting county commissioners," she explained.

The bill would affect about 38,000 county employees across all of Colorado's 64 counties.

A fact sheet from a coalition of unions — AFT Colorado, the American Association of University Professors, Colorado WINS and Council 18 of the American Federation for State,



KATHRYN SCOTT, SPECIAL TO COLORADO POLITICS

House Majority Leader Daneya Esgar, D-Pueblo, says that the state needs to affirm that county workers have the right to collective bargaining through state law.

County and Municipal Employees — says the bill would allow workers to be recognized and negotiate over key employment elements, such as course and caseloads, safety protocols, wages, benefits and other aspects of employment. In addition, workers cannot be fired or discriminated against for organizing or participating in a union, and both sides must negotiate in good faith.

If issues cannot be agreed upon, the employees and employer enter non-binding mediation and possibly fact-finding. The bill does not force an employer to accept a contract it does not agree to, whether through arbitration or other dispute resolutions, and explicitly reserves final budget and fiscal matters to the employer, according to the fact sheet.

Senate President Steve Fenberg, D-Boulder, the bill's Senate sponsor, noted the long process for getting the bill out, claiming the sponsors intentionally did not introduce the

measure earlier because they wanted to have conversations with all stakeholders.

That's been a bone of contention for representatives of higher education, as well as counties, which claimed their concerns, particularly around cost, have been ignored and described the process as little more than being told what the bill would do. Fenberg and Esgar denied that claim, saying the counties' chief representative, Colorado Counties, Inc., never gave them any feedback on what the group wanted to see in the bill.

Colorado Counties, Inc., which represents 62 out of the state's 64 counties, opposes SB 230.

However, Esgar acknowledged that another organization, Counties & Commissioners Working Together, has negotiated the bill with the sponsors.

CCAT claims to be nonpartisan, but out of its 13 executive board and governing

board members, all but two are Democrats and only one is a Republican. According to the Secretary of State's lobbyist database, CCAT is in an "amend" position on SB 230.

The bill is similar to legislation Democrats in the General Assembly passed last year that allowed Colorado WINS to engage in collective bargaining on behalf of state employees, he added.

SB 230 lays out the process for workers to form and join a union, similar to the one employed by private sector workers. They must hold an election, have the election certified, and then figure out what to negotiate for.

Fenberg said the county is not forced to sign a contract, as is the case with the private sector, where employees can strike.

While the bill has language prohibiting strikes, work slowdowns or stoppages, county commissioners said last week the measure appears to only apply to an "exclusive representative," which they view as a union leader, not an employee, and that employees could choose to go out on strike. Fenberg said "exclusive representative" is not a person, but the entire union.

Opposition from CCI and its county commissioner members have centered around the cost of setting up unions and enhancing wages and benefits.

Phillips County Commissioner Terry Hofmeister said last week that his small county, with just 47 employees, would have to hire an attorney and a human resources person who specializes in collective bargaining, a cost his county can't afford and one that could lead to layoffs or cutbacks in services or both.

Fenberg said that if the union comes to the county with a

contract, and the county can't afford it, "the county commissioners can just walk away."

The introduction of SB 230 also raises questions about the political calculation the sponsors took by starting it in the Senate, where Republicans are less likely to spend lengthy hours fighting it. The bill, should it pass that chamber, would head into the House in the final 10 days of the 2022 session and in front of House Republicans, who see it as a target for a variety of purposes.

House Minority Leader Hugh McKean of Loveland told Colorado Politics SB 230 is the epitome of what is not good about legislation, especially this late in the session. McKean said his caucus is vehemently opposed to a bill that seeks a solution to a problem that does not exist.

He said the issue right now is how to stabilize jobs, particularly with high inflation and a possible recession on the way. County employees have great jobs and great benefits, McKean said, adding Republicans are "not hearing a clamor from county employees to unionize."

McKean also pointed out that the bill is a nod to AFL-CIO Colorado, which threatened last July to withhold campaign donations to state Democrats through mid-May 2022 unless Democrats made better efforts to partner with unions.

"Here we are at the end of April and it sure seems fishy that suddenly there's a bill to give unions a huge amount of power," McKean said, adding that counties have been among the few to push back against Polis and the Democrats on some aspects of their agendas.

"There's no love lost between Polis and the counties," the Republican leader added.

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PRIMARIES AND THE COURTS

While Colorado's primary line-up is mostly set for 2022, some of the candidates are still facing courtroom battles.

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FROM POLITICO TO PUBLISHER

Veteran Democratic political consultant David Sabados talks about his new career as publisher of the hyperlocal newspaper, the Denver North Star. **Q&A, Page 8**



STILL THE GOP'S 'TOTAL' KINGPIN?

The month of May will tell us a lot about whether former President Donald Trump maintains his death grip on the Republican Party. **Eric Sondermann, Page 12**



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Law enforcement coalition calls fentanyl bill's felony provision 'practically meaningless'

BY LUIGE DEL PUERTO
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A coalition of law enforcement groups on Tuesday described state fentanyl legislation's current felony provision for simple possession as "practically meaningless," while a group representing district attorneys said that language renders the intended teeth in the legislation "almost useless."

The coalition, composed of the County Sheriffs of Colorado, the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police and the Colorado Fraternal Order of Police, urged legislators to delete language that triggers the felony charge for possession above 1 gram of an illicit substance only if a person knew or should have known the drug contains fentanyl, an attempt to address the drug's ubiquitous presence in many other illicit substances.

That provision, the coalition said, "creates a remarkably high bar for law enforcement and district attorneys to prove and convict, making a felony charge for 1 to 4 grams practically meaningless."

The coalition's plea is but one among several voices that members of the state Senate must weigh when they meet to determine what could become the final contours of legislation that policymakers hope would confront Colorado's spiraling fentanyl crisis.

In particular, the Senate must decide whether to accept the House's version, which notably makes it a felony to possess 1 gram of an illicit substance, a position that moves closer to — but fails to satisfy — law enforcement's plea for a tougher response.

The senators also face pressure from advocates on the opposite end of the debate, who criticize the bill's felony language, arguing it treats opioid addiction primarily as a criminal matter — which they maintain is the wrong approach — instead of a public health crisis.

In a statement, the law enforcement coalition countered that fentanyl possession is "not a victimless crime." The group also said the current version of the bill fails to address the severity of the crisis.

"We believe that the current version, as approved by the House, compromises the lives of Coloradans, since possession of less than 1 gram of fentanyl still comes with only minor consequences as a misdemeanor," Bill Ray, who speaks for a coalition of law enforcement groups, told Colorado Politics in a statement.

"Fentanyl possession is not a victimless crime, as noted by families and law enforcement who have testified on this bill. We must be able to protect our communities from all the



VIA ATTORNEY GENERAL PHIL WEISER'S FACEBOOK

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser, center, led a coalition of state officials who on Dec. 16 called for unified, state-level action to address the state's fentanyl-fueled overdose crisis.



TIMOTHY HURST, THE DENVER GAZETTE

Bridget Young, who lost her son Alex when he was 24 years old to fentanyl poisoning, hugs Adams and Broomfield County District attorney Brian Mason after a press conference to introduce a bipartisan bill to address penalties for distributing and manufacturing fentanyl on March 24, 2022, in the West Foyer of the state Capitol.

crimes that come with increased drug activity, including violent and property crimes, as well as supporting the harm-reduction and treatment provisions in HB 1326 to fully address the crisis," Ray added.

The clash of tactics and ideology came into full view soon after legislators unveiled their response to the spiraling fentanyl crisis. Lawmakers have since struggled to find a compromise that law enforcement officials and advocates of non-criminal intervention can rally behind, even as the feuding sides press for a robust response to the opioid crisis.

Fatal overdoses have surged nationwide over the past several years, as fentanyl, which is stronger than heroin and lethal in small doses, became an increasingly dominant presence in the illicit drug market. A congressional report issued in February said a shift in the drug supply, coupled with the pandemic, drove deaths in the U.S. to historic highs and that fentanyl — or other synthetics

like it — are here to stay.

More than 800 Coloradans died after ingesting fentanyl in 2021, according to state data. That represents a roughly 50% increase from 2020 and more than triple the number of deaths from 2019.

The Colorado District Attorneys' Council also urges legislators to strike the caveat that a person knew or should have known fentanyl is in a drug. The council supports the bill's current version, even when it doesn't adopt a zero-tolerance approach, although the group is pressing for amendments.

"That requirement makes this provision almost useless and very few prosecutions would be successful under this standard, as it essentially requires a person to admit they were trying to buy fentanyl — highly unlikely," Tom Raynes, the group's executive director, said in a statement.

Attorney General Phil Weiser, who said the bill's approach to possession "needs further improvement," expressed the

same wariness at the House's decision to add a "second mental state for also knowing the fentanyl purity level or mixture of drugs."

"Adding this new element makes it much more difficult to prove that the individual possessing the drugs has committed a crime," Weiser told committee members on Tuesday. "As a result, this change makes it far less likely that a DA may hold those with non-user-level amounts of fentanyl accountable. To avoid this result, the mental state assigned to this possession crime should be the same as that assigned to all other drug possession laws."

Raynes said district attorneys also seek to unwind a three-year sunset in the bill that applies to the felony charge for simple possession of 1 to 4 grams of an illicit substance.

"The automatic repeal should also come out, as there is no logical basis since the introduced version already called for a review," Raynes said.

Some district attorneys also will likely push for changes relating to provisions that deal with distribution resulting in death to treat all such conduct the same, regardless of the quantity of drug.

Others will push to eliminate the bill's "Good Samaritan" provision, which allows a person who provides fentanyl to someone who overdoses, whether intentional or not, to face a lesser than a felony 1 drug charge, even if a recipient dies, if the person calls 911, stays on scene, and cooperates with first responders or law enforcement.

Advocates like Lisa Raville, executive director of the Harm Reduction Action Center in Denver, see that approach as wrongheaded. She earlier said incarceration has led the country to its current overdose cri-

sis by driving drug use, with increasingly dangerous substances, underground.

Raville and others instead advocated for increased treatment, warning that felony convictions for users would only make their lives more difficult by denying them jobs and housing, which, they added, would make it harder for users to stay clean.

Ultimately, legislators will need to persuade Gov. Jared Polis to sign the final bill they send to his desk.

Polis, like Weiser and other law enforcement officials, is adamant that the crisis demands a "robust" response.

"Fentanyl is extremely deadly and Governor Polis continues to support tougher penalties for possession, which he called for in his state of the state address and continues to urge the legislature to get a comprehensive bill to his desk addressing this crisis, including making testing strips more available, increasing drug addiction treatment, and harsher criminal penalties for possessions and especially for dealing," Conor Cahill, the governor's spokesperson, told Colorado Politics in a statement.

In an interview with CPR News a few days ago, Polis equated fentanyl to poison.

"You have to think of fentanyl more as a poison than a drug. You remember when people were sending around the toxins in the Capitol, the white powder that was killing people, what was that?" he said. "Anthrax, right. So you think of it more like anthrax. You don't say, 'OK, you have anthrax. We're going to send you to a place where we convince you not to have anthrax.' You say, 'Do you realize that 1 gram of fentanyl can kill over a thousand people?' That's what we're talking about here. This is not cocaine. This is not even meth."

Rep. Matt Gray drops reelection bid; Democratic vacancy committee to choose replacement

BY ERNEST LUNING
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A Democratic vacancy committee will meet on Sunday to pick a candidate to replace state Rep. Matt Gray on the June primary ballot following the Broomfield Democrat's announcement on Tuesday that he isn't seeking a fourth term, Colorado Politics has learned.

"Representative Matthew Gray withdrew his candidacy for reelection to House District 33 on April 26, 2022," the state Democratic Party wrote



BROOMFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT State Rep. Matt Gray, D-Broomfield, was arrested April 21.

in an email obtained by Col-

orado Politics. "In accordance with Colorado Democratic Party Rules, the HD33 Vacancy Committee will fill the vacancy."

Gray's decision to drop his reelection bid comes five days after he was arrested on April 21 on suspicion of driving under the influence at the Broomfield elementary school his 6- and 8-year-old children attend.

The Democrats notified members of the district vacancy committee — typically made up of party officers and elected

officials — that it will convene virtually at 2 p.m. Sunday to pick a replacement candidate for the Democratic-leaning seat, which covers portions of Broomfield, Adams and Weld counties.

Gray, a former prosecutor, was running unopposed for a fourth term in the June 28 primary. Republican Stacie Dougherty is the only GOP candidate for the seat. He didn't respond to a request for comment.

On the day after his arrest, Gray said in a tweet that was later deleted that he hadn't

been intoxicated but that his "symptoms of anxiety and depression are such that too many people are worried when they're around me." He added: "I'm going to increase my level of therapy and appreciate all the support."

According to an analysis conducted by the state's independent redistricting commission, the district's electorate has favored Democrats by an average 13.6 percentage points in benchmark, statewide races over the past three general elections.

CPW director placed on leave after complaints of 'inappropriate comments'

BY MARIANNE GOODLAND AND JESSICA SNOUWAERT
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The Colorado Department of Natural Resources Executive Director Dan Gibbs placed Parks and Wildlife Director Dan Prenzlöw on administrative leave after Gibbs received complaints about "inappropriate comments and interactions" at a CPW conference in Vail last week, a state media release said.

Gibbs did not disclose what those remarks were, but an anonymous group called "Justice at CPW" identified the event and the alleged comments.

A Monday statement from Justice for CPW accused Prenzlöw of directing racially insensitive language toward a Black agency employee in front of 600 people at the department's 9th annual conference on April 19.

Justice at CPW also published a statement the group said came from the employee. In the statement addressed to Gibbs and Gov. Jared Polis, the employee said she is "traumatized, disappointed, upset and extremely uncomfortable."

The employee could not be reached for comment but confirmed in an email

that the statement posted by Justice for CPW is accurate.

Prenzlöw could not be reached for comment.

Rick Enstrom, who served on the state wildlife commission from 2000 to 2008 and was chairman for three years, said he doesn't know any more about exactly what was said and the context but that he doesn't think Prenzlöw could have been "inappropriate" intentionally.

"He just had a Howard Cosell moment, a poor choice of words," Enstrom said. "When you get that far up the food chain, there's no room for inadvertence by anybody, poor guy. I hate to see this event define an otherwise nearly perfect and stellar career."

Jeff Crawford, also a former wildlife commissioner who has known Prenzlöw for years, said he has "never heard him utter anything like this."

"I was shocked," he said, adding, "I was not there in Vail, so I don't know exactly what happened, but that's not Dan Prenzlöw."

In a statement on Monday Gibbs said she he received "several complaints



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE Colorado Director of Parks and Wildlife Dan Prenzlöw.

about inappropriate comments and interactions" at CPW's Partners in Outdoors Conference in Vail, CO.

"As the Executive Director of Colorado's Department of Natural Resources, equitable, inclusive access for all to our programs, events, and the outdoors are a priority personally and integral to the mission and culture of DNR," he said. "DNR has commenced a fact finding investigation to better understand what occurred and to help inform any future

personnel or department actions. We will follow our processes and procedures in regards to complaints received associated with the conference."

Meanwhile, Heather Dugan, assistant director for field services with 30 years of recreational and wildlife experience, will take over as acting director for the agency.

Reporter Scott Weiser contributed to this story.

HOUSE DISTRICT 21 2 Republicans on primary ballot following assembly re-do

BY BREEANNA JENT AND MARY SHINN
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After a court-ordered re-do of the House District 21 Assembly Saturday, the Republican primary race to represent southern El Paso County in the state house will be competitive.

Current House District Rep. Mary Bradfield, who is running for reelection, will now join Karl Dent, a private security company owner, on the ballot.

Bradfield said in an email Monday afternoon she was "very confident" the process to



Karl Dent

hold a new assembly was fair. Dent disagreed, saying he felt the lawsuit that ordered Saturday's assembly was "brought in bad faith."

At the second assembly, Dent garnered 48% of the vote and Bradfield captured 35%. A minimum of 30% is needed to make the ballot.

At the first assembly held in March, Dent, who is embroiled in several legal cases, was the



Mary Bradfield

only one to capture more than 30% of the vote. At that assembly, Bradfield missed the ballot by .08% of the vote of 41 delegates.

Another candidate, Juli Henry, also did not make the ballot in March and she again did not receive enough votes to make the ballot Saturday.

Judge Marie Moses earlier this month ruled in Denver District

Court the results of the March assembly would be overturned because El Paso County GOP Chairwoman Vickie Tonkins "had no authority to unilaterally and covertly" add a voting delegate to the House District 21 assembly.

Court documents said the voting delegate in question was not present at the precinct caucus where she was nominated. Tonkins added her later at the request of Dent and another person. The two said they nominated the delegate in question to serve.

Tonkins has denied all allegations of bias in the past.

Dent's candidacy has also caused some controversy within the party because he was convicted of felony trespassing related to a domestic violence case. Dent is appealing that conviction. He was also recently found guilty of violating a civil protection order related to the same incident. Additionally, Dent faces animal abuse charges related to a dog fight that he argues he cannot be held responsible for because he was not present.

Rights for mobile home residents advance without rent stabilization after 'threats' from Gov. Polis

BY HANNAH METZGER

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The Colorado House advanced a bill Monday that seeks to expand the rights of mobile home residents, but sponsors said they were forced to remove the most important part of the bill due to "threats" from Gov. Jared Polis.

As introduced, House Bill 1287, would have capped lot rent increases in mobile home parks to 3% annually or the local rate of inflation. But lawmakers took this portion of the bill out via an amendment approved on Friday.

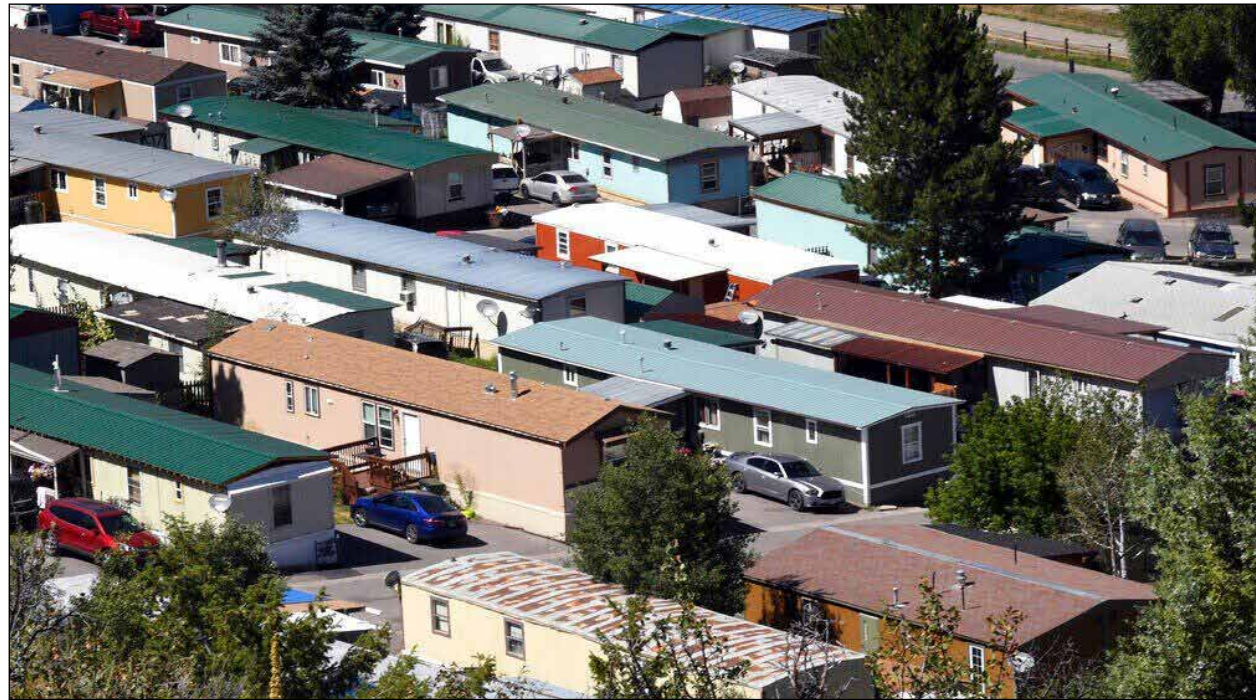
Rep. Andrew Boesenecker, D-Fort Collins, one of the bill's sponsors, said the measure had enough votes to pass the House and the Senate, but said Polis threatened to veto the bill if it included what's been described as "rent stabilization" requirements.

"This is the last amendment I wanted to offer, but we cannot have this bill vetoed," Boesenecker said. "There are so many good things in this bill that will protect residents."

What remains of the bill would expand protections for mobile home residents when their parks are closed, requiring landlords to pay for the residents' relocation costs or offer to purchase their mobile homes, and extending the time residents have to buy for-sale parks from 90 to 180 days.

But without the rent stabilization, Boesenecker said many Coloradans living in mobile homes will be forced onto the streets. He said he knows of 12 people in his district alone that would be evicted if the rent keeps going up.

During a public hearing for the bill, dozens of mobile home residents said lot rents in their parks have increased dramatically in recent years. Some residents said their rent increased by 39% in less than two years or by 67% in less than four, with



The Eagle River Village mobile home park in Edwards is less than 10 miles from world-class skiing at Beaver Creek Resort and represents one of the last bastions of affordable housing in the area.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

some rent spikes occurring every six months.

In a statement, Polis's spokesperson said the governor's position — to veto the bill if it arrived on his desk in its introduced form — was due to the fear that "rent stabilization" would result in mobile home parks shutting down.

"The governor believes that prefabricated modular homes and mobile homes are an important part of the housing solution for our state and supports mobile home reforms as long as they won't lead to the closure or abandonment of mobile home communities," Cahill said.

Mobile home park owners raised the same argument during the public testimony. Owners described the bill as a "small business killer" that would force them to close their parks as they face increasing operating costs. These rising costs, they said, have led many mom-and-pop mobile home park owners to sell out to larger companies in recent years.

Of Colorado's 734 registered mobile home parks, 66% are controlled by corporate or

multi-state owners, said Boesenecker, who pointed to the large owners as the prime culprits responsible for drastically increasing rents of mobile home parks.

David Reynolds and Frank Rolfe own more than a dozen mobile home parks in Colorado and hundreds throughout the country through RV Horizons-Impact Communities. The pair also run Mobile Home University, a Front Range training course on "how to make money" in the mobile home parks business. The course openly directs owners to "relentlessly" increase rents and cut amenities because residents can't afford to leave.

Supporters of the bill said this is common as, when lot rents increase, residents are often stuck because it costs thousands of dollars to relocate their mobile homes, if they are physically or legally able to move them at all. Though they own their mobile homes, they do not own the land they sit on.

"They call it shooting fish in a barrel because they can prey on poor people," said Rep. Cathy

Kipp, D-Fort Collins, who was in tears while reacting to Friday's amendment. "I am extremely disappointed in the governor's threat to veto this bill that is causing the most important portion of this bill to be removed."

Other Democrat lawmakers expressed similar sentiments.

Rep. Brianna Titone of Arvada called it "disheartening," while Rep. Edie Hooton of Boulder described it as "an affront to a state that says that their No. 1 priority is affordable housing."

Over 130,000 Coloradans live in mobile homes, most of whom are elderly or low-income, according to state data.

Between 2010 and 2019, Colorado lost 47% of its rental units that cost less than \$600 per month, according to the Colorado Center on Law and Policy. In some Colorado cities, especially mountain towns, mobile homes account for up to 90% of affordable housing stock, said professor Esther Sullivan, who studies manufactured housing at the University of Colorado.

While some Democrats balked at the governor's veto threat,

Republican Reps. Dan Woog of Erie and Kevin Van Winkle of Highlands Ranch welcomed Polis's position.

"If we held it where the landlord can only raise the rent a certain amount every so often, what that landlord is going to do is, either before the tenant moves in or in between, they're going to jack that rent way up," Woog said. "With property tax right now and insurance, that's the main reason these rents go up. Everything else is going up."

The House passed the amended bill in a 41-24 vote along party lines on Monday, with all Democrats in support and all Republicans in opposition. The bill will now be sent to the Senate for consideration.

Though "rent stabilization" for mobile homes is lost, Boesenecker said he will continue to look for a solution and urged Polis to do the same.

"We're going to come back for this," Boesenecker said. "Residents spoke clearly about the need for this policy, about the vulnerable place they continue to be placed in and we have heard them."



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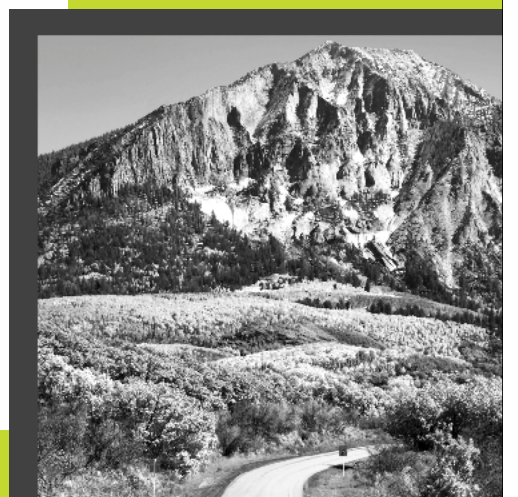
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Before Colorado's primary line-up is final, some candidates face courtroom battles

TRAIL MIX



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Colorado's June primary ballot is nearly set.

Federal and state-level Democratic and Republican candidates seeking their party's nomination have been chasing support from fellow partisans for months, hoping to collect enough votes from delegates to party assemblies or signatures on nominating petitions — or in some cases, both — in order to qualify for the ballot, which is supposed to be finalized by Colorado's secretary of state by April 29.

The ballot certification deadline doesn't have much wiggle room, since county clerks are waiting to send ballots to their printers so they can send them to military and overseas voters by the May 14 deadline. Ballots start going in the mail to most Colorado voters on June 6 and must be returned by June 28.

The assembly route — taken by the vast majority of Colorado's major party candidates — began in the first week of March, when county parties held precinct caucuses and began designating delegates to higher assemblies held at the county, district and state levels. Those meetings concluded on April 9, when state Republicans met all day at the Broadmoor World Arena in Colorado Springs and Democrats convened on-line for a virtual state assembly. It takes support from 30% of delegates to win a spot in the primary, with the candidate receiving the most votes also receiving top-line designation on ballot, with additional qualifying candidates appearing in the order chosen in a drawing.

In a parallel process, candidates could begin circulating petitions in mid-January and had until March 15 to gather the required number, with varying requirements depending on the office sought — 12,000 to run for governor and U.S. senator, 8,000 to run for other statewide offices, 1,500 to run for U.S. House seats and 1,000 for legislative seats, with additional geographic requirements for the statewide offices. (Petitions for county-level offices, such as county commissioner and sheriff, are verified by county clerks.)

A few candidates opted to go both routes — most notably, Republican gubernatorial candidate Heidi Ganahl — though if they qualify by petition, they only needed 10% of the delegate vote at their respective assemblies.

For petitioning candidates, the Colorado Secretary of State's Office's Elections Division then had roughly a month to verify whether submitted petitions contain enough valid signatures, checking each entry against the statewide voter registration database to determine whether a voter was registered with the candidates' party when they signed, whether they live in the right district and whether their signa-

tures match ones on file. The petition paperwork has to be filled out correctly, too, including proper notarization. Candidates have a chance to "cure" some errors, including by retrieving affidavits from voters whose signatures don't match the ones they affixed to mail ballots and other documents.

Most state and federal candidates who sought the ballot in Colorado this year by petition succeeded. Of the 31 candidates who turned in petitions by the deadline — roughly half the number of candidates who circulated approved petition formats — only five received insufficiency notices, and one of them, Republican Erik Aadland, made the ballot at the GOP's 7th Congressional District assembly.

After all the assemblies have been adjourned and all the petitions have been verified, though, there's still a delay in the calendar before the ballot is set in stone to allow for court challenges.

Most of the time, it's candidates suing to get on the ballot, typically by arguing that election officials wrongly excluded some signatures that should have been counted.

While the dockets have been crowded in recent cycles, this year just two candidates made that case, though neither succeeded. Republicans Carl Andersen and Brad Dempsey filed lawsuits last week asking the court to rule that they should join Aadland and two other Republicans — Tim Reichert and Laurel Imer — on the 7th CD primary ballot. (State Sen. Britany Pettersen is the presumptive Democratic nominee for the open seat, which has been held since 2007 by Democrat Ed Perlmutter, who is retiring after this year.)

Once in a while, though, opponents go to court in an attempt to knock a candidate from the ballot, arguing that their petitions shouldn't have been deemed sufficient, such as the lawsuit filed last week by supporters of U.S. Rep. Lauren Boebert, who wanted state Sen. Don Coram's name removed from the Republicans' 3rd Congressional

District primary.

The move has only been tried a few times in Colorado, and it hasn't ever succeeded.

Most recently, supporters of former state Sen. Owen Hill, R-Colorado Springs, who was challenging U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn in the 2018 GOP primary in the 5th Congressional District, took their case all the way to the Colorado Supreme Court and beyond, hoping to dislodge the incumbent.

It turned out that some of the petition-gatherers hired by Lamborn hadn't met legal residency requirements, potentially invalidating hundreds of signatures they'd gathered, but after a couple of hair-raising losses — and hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees — Lamborn won a favorable ruling in federal court that kept him on the ballot and threw out part of the statute that would have blocked him.

Lamborn won the primary — Hill finished a distant third, behind second-place finisher Darryl Glenn — and was easily reelected to a seventh term. He's running for a ninth term representing the El Paso County-based seat this year.

In 2016, a group of Democrats sued to erase Jon Keyser's name from the Republican U.S. Senate primary after it came to light that one of the circulators hired by his campaign had forged multiple signatures, but a judge ruled that the plaintiffs had waited too long to file their lawsuit.

Plagued by a drumbeat of damaging headlines — including the circulator's arrest on felony forgery charges and the discovery of a dead voter's signature on his petitions — Keyser didn't fare as well with voters as he had in court, finishing in fourth place. Glenn won the GOP nomination, ahead of Jack Graham, Robert Blaha, Keyser and Ryan Frazier, but went on to lose narrowly to Democratic U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet, who is seeking a third term this year.

Republican Eric Weissmann, a 2012 candidate in the 2nd Congressional

District primary, was the first Colorado candidate faced with overcoming a legal challenge to his petitions brought by political opponents.

A top recruit of national Republicans, the wealthy Boulder investor was running in the primary against then-state Sen. Kevin Lundberg, R-Berthoud, for the chance to challenge then-U.S. Rep. Jared Polis in the newly competitive 2nd Congressional District. Following redistricting, the seat was nearly evenly divided between Republicans, Democrats and unaffiliated voters after Larimer and parts of Jefferson counties had been added to the Boulder County-based seat.

After the Secretary of State's Office determined that Weissmann fell 158 signatures short on his petitions, Weissmann asked a judge to let his campaign correct "small but systematic errors in the notarization process" that had excluded hundreds of signatures he maintained were otherwise valid.

In a surprise move, the Colorado Democratic Party filed to intervene, arguing that election officials had "failed to reject all petition signatures that do not meet the requirements of petitions signatures under Colorado law."

The Democrats, a spokesman said, simply wanted to "ensure that standards for gathering signatures and submitting them remains consistent for every candidate," though during cross examination Weissmann's lawyer, Mario Nicolais, asked the state Democrats' executive director, Alec Garnett, why the party had only attempted to strike signatures rather than argue that some had been mistakenly ruled invalid, if the party was really only concerned with the integrity of the process.

The court ruled that Weissmann had easily qualified for the ballot, but he lost the primary to Lundberg by 6.6 percentage points. Lundberg lost by nearly 18 percentage to Polis, who won two more terms in Congress before being elected governor four years ago. He's seeking a second term this year.



BRIAN A JACKSON, ISTOCK / GETTY IMAGES

Bennet challenger O'Dea yanks footage of Russian jets from latest TV ad

BY ERNEST LUNING
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At least it wasn't the Canadian Rockies.

Colorado Republican Joe O'Dea launched a new TV ad this weekend in his bid to challenge Democratic U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet. The 30-second spot describes the construction company owner as "the boss" and lists issues the political newcomer has been hammering on the campaign trail – from cutting the federal deficit and tackling inflation to reducing the crime rate.

The initial version of the ad, released online, however, included a split-second clip of Russian military jets soaring among the clouds as the ad's narrator says O'Dea is running to "support the police and military."

After reporters at Roll Call brought the O'Dea ad's flub to light on Friday, O'Dea's campaign was able to swap in stock footage of U.S. fighter jets before the spot made it to air on Saturday, a campaign spokesman told Colorado Politics, but not before Democrats made hay with the goof.

Veronica Yoo, a spokeswoman for Senate Major-



VIA YOUTUBE

Russian military jets are pictured for a split second in a campaign ad released online by Colorado Republican U.S. Senate candidate Joe O'Dea on Friday. The campaign says it retooled the ad with stock footage of U.S. fighter jets before the ad started airing the next day.

ity PAC, a national Democratic organization aligned with Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, said in a statement that the error showed O'Dea is "utterly incompetent and not ready for prime time."

"Claiming to support our troops over footage of Russian fighter jets is a slap in the face to Colorado veterans, service members, and military families – not to mention the height of political negligence," Yoo said.

O'Dea campaign spokesman Sage Naumann acknowledged the mistake and then took aim at the Democratic incumbent his boss hopes to face in November.

"This was an error, 100%," Naumann told Colorado Politics in a text message. "We own that. We also know, however, that voters care a helluva lot more about Michael Bennet voting with Vladimir Putin – an authoritarian thug – when he voted against the bipartisan sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline this year."

O'Dea is running in Colorado's June primary against state Rep. Ron Hanks, R-Cañon City, a retired military intelligence officer who spent 32 years in the Air Force. Bennet, who is running for a third full term, is unopposed for his party's nomination.

Lamborn challenger can't use anti-Biden nickname on primary ballot, judge rules

BY ERNEST LUNING
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Republican congressional candidate Dave Williams can't include a phrase meant to express contempt for President Joe Biden along with his name on primary ballots, a judge ruled Wednesday in Denver.

The Colorado Springs state lawmaker, one of three Republicans challenging eight-term U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn in Colorado's June primary, sued earlier this month to force election officials to list his name as "Dave 'Let's Go Brandon' Williams" on ballots, arguing that the phrase is his nickname. But Denver District Court Judge Andrew McCallin said Secretary of State Jena Griswold properly exercised her authority to refuse.

Some of Biden's most ardent detractors adopted the phrase as code for "F- — Joe Biden" after a TV reporter misunderstood what the crowd was chanting after a NASCAR race last fall.

Williams blasted the judge's ruling and told Colorado Politics he plans to file an

immediate appeal to the Colorado Supreme Court.

Griswold, a Democrat running for reelection, denied Williams' request to print the phrase along with his name on ballots, maintaining that it's a slogan, not an actual nickname.

The judge agreed Williams proved during a Tuesday hearing that he has been using the phrase as a nickname – it's part of his Twitter handle and the way he signs campaign emails – but nonetheless sided with Griswold.

In an emailed statement, Griswold said the decision "affirms that the content of the ballot is not a place for political gamesmanship."

Williams tore into the judge's decision in a text message to Colorado Politics.

"It's clear that a Democrat-appointed judge put his thumb on the scale for a corrupt Democrat Secretary of State," Williams said. "Even after conceding I had a bonafide nickname in accordance with state law, the judge went out of his way to help the (secretary of state) violate the statute."

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DAVID SABADOS | POLITICAL PRO-TURNED-PUBLISHER TAKES PAPERS HYPER-LOCAL

BY ERNEST LUNING

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Nearly three years ago, after losing a city council race in Denver's District 1 in the northwest part of town, veteran Democratic political consultant David Sabados decided to shift gears. Joining with experienced journalist Sabrina Allie, he founded Denver North Star, a free monthly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses in the same neighborhoods where he had campaigned.

Until earlier this month, Sabados served as editor and publisher of the paper and a sister publication he launched last fall, the bilingual G.E.S. Gazette, covering

the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods along Interstate 70 and the burgeoning River North art district. After taking a job handling communications for the metro-area Regional Air Quality Control Council, Sabados announced on April 15 that he's hired an editor and will continue as publisher of the hyper-local newspapers.

Born and raised in Colorado, Sabados, 39, grew up in Evergreen and graduated from Highlands Ranch High School and the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. He'd planned to teach high school English but stumbled into politics and decided to make a career of it.

A former chair of the Colorado Young Democrats, Sabados was elected vice chair of the state Democratic Party — a position that came with a seat on the Democratic National Committee — by a single vote in 2017.

His consulting firm, Compass Strategy Group, ran numerous local and state-level races for a decade, counting among its wins the election of Arturo Jimenez to Denver City Council, Jovan Melton to the state legislature and Val Flores to the State Board of Education. Noting that his candidates often won despite being outspent by as much as 10-to-1, Sabados joked that he carved out "an interesting niche — underfunded candidates."

As executive director of Coloradans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, Sabados helped steer the state's death penalty repeal, and he was one of the lead organizers behind Denver's public campaign financing system, which goes into effect with next year's municipal election.

Our interview with Sabados has been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Colorado Politics: What prompted you to hang up your hat as political consultant and politician a few years back to start, of all things, a monthly, printed newspaper?

David Sabados: The first issue of the Denver North Star came out in October of 2019, but the idea originated that spring. I ran for Denver City Council — unsuccessfully, you may recall — and there just wasn't a lot of that kind of hyper-local press. There were folks who were covering the mayor's race, but there wasn't re-



Colorado Politics talks with leaders & influencers from around the state

ally anything that was talking about those district-level issues, about development in different parts of the city, and there was no source of local news for our community anymore. For decades, Northwest Denver used to have a paper, the Northwest Tribune, and I think our community really was worse off for it having closed. So, I reached out to Sabrina Allie, who also ran unsuccessfully for council and had a background in media, and I said, 'Hey, why don't we start a paper in our community?'

I had a strong, 20-year-old experience from being the news editor of the UNC Mirror in college, but most of my press background was from the other side, talking with reporters for campaigns. I wrapped up my last client, which was the death penalty repeal — after we succeeded in repealing the death penalty — and I didn't go after more clients. I've always looked for different ways to serve the community where there's a need. Sometimes it was helping get folks elected, sometimes it was helping pass legislation, and sometimes it was creating a newspaper for our community. It's all some different sides of community service to me.

CP: What made you decide to go with a print publication, though? You have a website, but the North Star is primarily an old-fashioned newspaper.

Sabados: We wanted to print it to make it easily accessible. I love digital-only media, there's several I read on a daily basis, but there is still something — what's the word I'm looking for — something important about being able to sit down and take an hour and read a physical publication about your community, a publication that's a self-contained document. You're not going down a rabbit hole of links, one to the next, like you can do online. Whether it's a weekly or a monthly, a reader can pick up a paper and say, 'This is what's going on in my community this week or this month,' and all that information is self-contained right there. There's something that a community still loves about that.

I actually get a lot of positive feedback about the fact that it's still print. And it also still make sense as a business model because we're a free publication delivering to homes across North Denver. The advertisers love it because they know that it's

getting right to people, and they get to have an option that's not unlike direct mail for them, but it's also seen as more respected, because you can send someone a postcard about your pizza joint opening, or you can put an ad in your local paper, and people who are looking will look in the paper.

CP: Coming from a background in politics, were there things you wanted a newspaper to do that outlets you'd dealt with hadn't?

Sabados: I think it's more that we wanted to have a different focus. I don't expect the Denver Post or Colorado Politics or the Denver Gazette to be diving into a neighborhood zoning issue, because, for most of their readership, it's not relevant. If they're covering a city council vote, they're gonna say, 'The council passed this 10-3, period.' You know, where a publication focused on just part of the community can go in-depth, city council member X voted Y, and then talking to them about why they voted that way, because that's the person who represents this community specifically.

We haven't had a city council election — that's just starting up now — but we have had a school board election, and I think we had some of the most comprehensive coverage of Denver School Board candidates. We could do full bios with Q and A's for candidates in a way that I wish we'd had back in that 2019 election, not that I think it would have changed anything.

That's a reason we started our second paper last October, the G.E.S. Gazette, and we're working on issue number eight. It's a bilingual, English-Spanish publication focused on the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods and the RiNo art district.

CP: Now that you've covered politics and government, how has your perspective changed on being on the other side, trying to get across a message in the news? Are there things you would do differently, if you were back on the political side?

Sabados: I have a dramatically better view on how to pitch stories, to be honest. My inbox — like yours, like everyone's — just gets flooded with crap, and then even the more interesting pieces sometimes get

lost, and sometimes you don't realize what is interesting or relevant because there's just so much going on. I think I have a significantly better sense of how to approach media outlets, to cut through that and say, 'Hey, this is a piece that's actually relevant to your publication, to your audience. I'm not pitching it to 18,000 other outlets, because I think it's important for you.'

CP: How has the media landscape changed since you launched the paper?

Sabados: I think it has improved — there's the second paper I started, there's a community paper for Five Points, there's the City Cast Denver podcast, and, of course, the Denver Gazette. There's more media now, ironically, than there was a couple of years ago, which is bucking a national trend, and it's all mostly hyper-local.

We started publishing only a few months before the pandemic hit. We received wonderful feedback from folks, saying, 'Thank you for delivering a paper directly to me with information about my immediate community,' and saying that it cuts through the noise. It was accessible at a time when people were home all the time. It was the exact opposite of that doomscrolling, right? It was the exact opposite of the Twitter holes that people were falling into. It was just different.

CP: You recently started work — your new day job — doing communications for the Regional Air Quality Control, which allowed you to hire Eric Heinz as a full-time editor at the papers. What will the new gig amount to?

Sabados: It's a government adjacent nonprofit is how I've termed it, created by the state. The entity does everything from working on the state implementation plan for air quality that's tied to the EPA, to working with a lot of municipal governments on their efforts on everything from electrification to bike-ability walk-ability, down to how to reduce your own pollution and take meaningful steps personally to improve air quality.

CP: Do you ever get an itch to get back into politics?

Sabados: It's a little early, but maybe I'll announce for mayor? (Laughs) The line you're supposed to give is never say never, but that's the honest answer. I have absolutely no plans to run for anything, but when I posted on Facebook that I was stepping back from day-to-day at the paper, I immediately start getting questions about whether I was running for the council district or at-large, and the answer is I am absolutely not. This isn't a stepping-stone. I ran because the time was right for me to run, and it was the race I wanted, but it didn't work out. And like I said, you find other ways to serve — you lose a municipal election, you started a municipal newspaper, talking about those same issues. It's all public service to me.

Polis signs \$36.4 billion state budget

BY MARIANNE GOODLAND
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Gov. Jared Polis on Monday signed a \$36.4 billion spending plan — the biggest so far in Colorado's history — that funds the state's priorities in the upcoming fiscal year.

All told, the budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 allocates roughly \$2.5 billion more compared to current allocations. Counting general fund money alone, the budget includes major increases in several areas, notably health care and public safety.

"Colorado's thriving economy is the reason we were able to put away record reserves for a rainy day, and make record investments in education to reduce class size and improve teacher pay," Polis said in a statement. "We are bringing real relief to Coloradans with this bipartisan balanced budget, and ensuring we have a cleaner, healthier and safer Colo-

rado for years to come."

Rep. Julie McCluskie, D-Dillon, who chairs the Joint Budget Committee, noted in the same news release that the budget spends more on K-12 and higher education. The spending plan, for example, increases the per pupil funding by \$511 and an additional \$12,000-\$13,000 per classroom. Policymakers said that would translate to increased teacher pay, smaller class sizes and additional staff support for mental health programs.

"I'm proud that we are boosting funding for our public colleges and universities, which will save students money on higher education. With our economy growing and unemployment levels at the lowest they've been since the start of the pandemic, this budget directs significant savings to businesses, families, and hard-working Coloradans, improves our air quality and invests in our kids' future to

move Colorado forward," she said.

Fellow JBC member Sen. Chris Hansen, D-Denver, said the spending plan strikes a balance between meeting Colorado's pressing needs and putting the state in a financially secure position in the coming years.

The budget that landed on Polis's desk hews closely to the original plan that the Joint Budget Committee unveiled weeks ago. That plan underwent several iterations, with both the House and the Senate taking out and adding dollars and programs. The House's version of House Bill 1329 added 12 amendments, which increased appropriations by \$63.2 million, of which \$8.7 million came from the general fund.

When the bill and its accompanying budget-balancing measures reached the Senate, that chamber kept 11 of the 12 amendments, and then added 10 more. The Senate's additions increased appro-

priations by \$731 million, which included \$522.5 million in general fund dollars and \$152 million in cash funds for capital construction, according to a budget document.

Notably, the Senate added \$503 million to the Department of Education's budget, with half of the money paying for teacher pay increases and the other half devoted to paying down the state's debt to K-12 education, known as the budget stabilization factor.

The Joint Budget Committee, which met to reconcile the competing the two chambers' versions, reversed that change, a decision that the House and Senate ultimately agreed to.

Minority Leader Rep. Hugh McKean, R-Loveland, decried that decision, arguing that changes the two chambers made should have stayed as they reflect the people's priorities.

"We spoke as a body!" he complained.

Polis signs bill for 10 hours per week of free universal preschool

BY HANNAH METZGER
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By the fall of 2023, all 4-year-old children in Colorado will be able to attend preschool for free, thanks to new legislation signed into law April 25.

House Bill 1295 will establish a long-promised universal preschool program and a new Department of Early Childhood. Under the bill, the program will begin in 2023, providing 10 hours per week of free preschool for all children the year before they enter kindergarten.

Gov. Jared Polis signed the bill on Monday, touting the legislation as an accomplishment of his administration. Polis has called for free preschool since he was running for governor in 2017.

"Today, we are celebrating the final milestone of turning the vision of free universal preschool for every child into a reality in Colorado," Polis said. "There is no better investment than an investment in education and our kids."

The universal preschool program will save Colorado parents an average of \$4,300 per year in child care costs, according to state estimates. Under the bill, parents may choose a preschool provider themselves within their community.

The state Senate passed the Democrat-sponsored bill in a 24-11 vote in April, following the House's 43-19 vote in March.

"We are doing something historic," said Senate President Steve Fenberg, D-Boulder, who sponsored the bill. "Success for Colorado starts with support for the youngest Coloradans. As we continue to build back from this pandemic and folks across the state continue to return to work, we need to be able to provide parents with child care opportunities that are easy to navigate and also won't break the bank."

Though the bill received some bi-

partisan support, some Republican lawmakers voted against it.

Republican lawmakers proposed nearly a dozen changes to the bill on the Senate and House floors, all of which were rejected. Some opponents raised issue with the Department of Early Childhood that will be established under the bill.

"Government continues to grow and grow and grow dramatically. Since 2019, we have added 14 offices of government," Sen. Paul Lundeen, R-Monument, said on the Senate floor while voting against the bill. "This creates a new department, a massive department. Friends, colleagues, beware. Government is growing fast in the state of Colorado."

Supporters of the bill said the Department of Early Childhood will seek to boost access to early education by creating a "one stop shop" of state services.

Currently, early childhood programs are spread across multiple agencies with different eligibility requirements and funding streams, making it difficult for families to navigate, supporters say. Under the bill, the programs will be consolidated under the new department to streamline the system and create a single application for all early childhood programs.

"Now families can go to one place, fill out one application and not leave anything on the table when it comes to services for their children," said bill sponsor Sen. Janet Buckner, D-Aurora. "I couldn't be happier and I couldn't be more proud."

The universal preschool program and Department of Early Childhood will cost more than \$365 million through 2024, according to state estimates. More than \$190 million will come from taxes on tobacco and nicotine products passed by Colorado voters in 2020. Another \$127 million will come from the state's general fund or education fund.



The Marshall fire moves west down Marshall Mesa on Dec. 30, 2021, near Eldorado Springs. Colorado is preparing for what could be the worst wildfire season in history.

TIMOTHY HURST,
DENVER GAZETTE

State announces millions in funding to prepare for what could worst wildfire season

BY MARY SHINN
AND HANNAH METZGER
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Colorado will pour nearly \$20 million of federal funding into fire prevention this year ahead of what could be the worst fire season in the state's history, officials announced on Friday.

On the same day, the state House passed House Bill 1007, which would create a grant program for organizations that conduct wildfire mitigation outreach in hazard areas. The bill would also extend an existing income tax deduction and create a new state income tax credit to reimburse homeowners for the costs of performing wildfire mitigation measures on their property.

The additional federal funding announced by state officials will pay for additional contracts with air tankers and helicopters, expanded dispatch services and new technology for on-the-ground coordination, Senate President Steve Fenberg said. The additional funding came from Federal Emergency Management reimbursements.

The resources are needed to prepare for the worst-case scenario, he said.

"We may very well be heading into the worst fire season in our state's

history," he said. "I hope I am terribly wrong."

The state is planning to extend its contract with a large air tanker and to add a contract with a second large air tanker. Two Type 1 helicopters, some of the largest and fastest, will also be added, Gov. Jared Polis said.

Colorado competes with other states to extend the contracts, which ensure aircraft are available.

The officials made the announcement on the same day the state is facing the worst fire conditions the state as seen in over a decade.

The state has prepositioned a multi-mission aircraft that can detect fires early in Mesa County and a strike team of firefighters in northeastern Colorado. Another strike team will be sent to southeastern Colorado, Morgan said.

The new 24/7 dispatch services will also ensure that local fire departments have quick access to state dedicated aircraft and other support to help stop fires early.

"It will save lives and it will save property," he said.

Polis and Fenberg also announced the new Office of Climate Preparedness that will coordinate disaster recovery and work on an action plan to address disasters.



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Report: State’s economy in recovery mode, but mixed signals persist

BY DENNIS HUSPENI
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Despite a series of mixed or muddled messages, Colorado’s economy remains in strong recovery mode with the number of jobs here exceeding pre-pandemic levels, unemployment continuing to decline and strong gross domestic product growth, according to a report released Tuesday.

The Quarterly Business and Economic Indicators report covers the first quarter of 2022 and is prepared by the Leeds Business Research Division at the University of Colorado Boulder with data from the Colorado Secretary of State’s Office.

“It’s a mixed story and the data is muddled, sending mixed indicators — as often is the case,” said Brian Lewandowski, executive director of the Leeds School of Business Research Division.

First, the good news: Colorado’s job recovery took the state above pre-recession levels in February 2022.

“In Colorado, 375,200 job losses were recorded from February to April 2020, but 389,400 jobs were added back from May 2020 through March 2022,” according to the report. “Colorado’s March 2022 employment was 14,200 (0.5%) above the pre-recession peak in January 2020.”

Colorado’s unemployment rate stood at 3.7% in March, the lowest level since February 2020, right before the pandemic, when the state’s jobless rate was 2.8%. The national unemployment rate was 3.6% in March.

Industries with the strongest recovery included leisure and hospitality — which was hit the hardest with forced pandemic shutdowns — and professional and business services.

New business filings increased 23% from the fourth quarter, which is typical for the

first quarter of every year, but slipped 2.1% year-over-year in the first quarter.

State records show 12,831 businesses dissolved in Q1 2022, a 20.4% increase from the same quarter in 2021, and a 12.9% increase from Q4.

That’s likely because the federal government helped prop up small businesses earlier in the pandemic through Paycheck Protection Program loans, Lewandowski said.

“We’re not at a point of great concern, when that information is coupled with the entities in good standing and existing entity renewals,” he said.

While the nation recorded the highest top-line inflation in four decades, prices in the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood metropolitan statistical area spiked even higher to a 9.1% year-over-year increase in the consumer price index in March. The national average was an 8.5% increase.

“Concerns remain about the supply chain, inflation, the war in Ukraine, workforce issues,” Lewandowski said. “There’s a lot of real concerns by businesses and individuals out there.”

Another glimmer of hope came from increasing food and energy costs, in that they’re still high but were “increasing at a decreasing rate in the last couple of months,” Lewandowski said. “When commodity-driven prices stabilize, we’ve seen inflation come down.”

“Colorado continues to outpace the nation in gross domestic product (GDP), employment, income and labor force,” the report states. “State GDP increased 6.3% year-over-year in Q4 2021 and per capita personal income was \$69,113 in February.”

The U.S. annual real GDP grew at 5.7% in 2021 — the fastest annual pace of growth since 1984.

SPACE COMMAND

GAO finds ‘shortfalls’ in relocation process

BY STEPHANIE EARLS
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A Government Accountability Office review of the process that awarded U.S. Space Command to Huntsville, Ala., instead of Colorado Springs, has identified “significant shortfalls” in the “transparency and credibility” that led to the decision, according to a senior-level source with knowledge of the report.

The GAO report won’t be available to the public for at least another month; but Colorado lawmakers who requested and signed off on it got an early look.

The GAO findings were “a report card that, if I gave it to my parents, I’d probably get grounded,” sources said.

A quest to find a permanent location for the headquarters for U.S. Space Command had been ongoing, in fits and starts, for years — with Colorado Springs apparently a front-runner — before the January 2020 announcement in the waning days of the Trump administration.

Sources say the GAO review launched

in the wake of the announcement found that Peterson Air Force Base, where Space Command is temporarily headquartered now, could bring the command up to “full operational capacity” much faster than the Alabama site could, two to three years compared to at least six at the Redstone Arsenal site. The difference in readiness could play an important role in the Biden administration reassessing the basing decision given heightened national security concerns brought about by Russia’s attack on Ukraine, the official said.

The GAO report was requested last year by Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colorado Springs, a ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, and championed by other elected officials in the state, who sought a deep dive into the “methodology and scoring” that went into the Air Force’s decision.

A separate inquiry by the Pentagon’s Office Inspector of General, requested by Colorado lawmakers, also was launched, and a report is due out soon.

For prominent Colorado judge, Ukrainian war with Russia poses potential threat to judicial reform

BY MICHAEL KARLIK
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For Colorado's highest-ranking federal judge, the war between Ukraine and Russia has not only reignited death and devastation in his ancestral home, but has potentially set back his professional efforts to improve the country's judicial system.

Timothy M. Tymkovich, the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, has visited Ukraine four times since joining the federal bench. He had hoped to return this summer to continue his work in speaking to judges and lawyers about western judicial norms, but the Russian invasion put a halt to those plans.

"Certainly if some measure of Ukrainian sovereignty survives, I think we can pick up where we left off," Tymkovich told Colorado Politics in an interview in late March. "I hope I have the opportunity to go back and help Ukraine rebuild and help it develop the kind of national government it deserves."

Soon after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Ukrainian independence, the U.S. Agency for International Development launched several initiatives to privatize the Ukrainian economy, improve print and broadcast media, and bolster the electoral process. The court system was also the focus of a joint US-AID-Ukrainian "Rule of Law" project beginning in 1993.

During his third visit in 2018, Tymkovich worked through the USAID program to give a speech at a university in western Ukraine and participated in a two-day training with Ukrainian judges, some of whom had relocated from Crimea and eastern Ukraine after Russia's first invasion in 2014.

"Many judges have actually had to flee the Russians once and they may have to flee the Russians twice," he said.

Although USAID recruited



Judge Timothy M. Tymkovich addresses Ukrainian students in Chaikovich during a May 2018 visit.

COURTESY OF TIMOTHY TYMKOVICH

Tymkovich for Ukraine, he did not know the extent of his family's ties until visiting as a judge. Tymkovich's grandfather arrived at Ellis Island in 1913 as a six-year-old boy, after leaving his family's village in what was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He and two siblings departed New York by train and traveled to Denver, where Stephen Tymkovich — Timothy's great-grandfather — had settled a few years earlier.

As part of his visits to Ukraine, Tymkovich, whom President George W. Bush appointed to the 10th Circuit in 2003, met his distant relatives in the village of Chaikovich. It was surprising to him to learn that the Tymkoviches were a founding family in that part of Ukraine, and their status as early property owners qualified them as nobility.

"Who knew that you could go from having known nothing about your family to finding out that you're part of the Ukrainian noble class?" he quipped. "Of course, it didn't take much then. You could own a plot of ground and become nobility."

During his 2018 trip, he spoke to an assembly at a local school. Most of the boys who were there, he said, are now probably 18 and fighting against Russia. Tymkovich added that the university where he delivered a presentation is currently a center for refugees. Tymkovich has only been able to find out the status of his translator — he said she has escaped to western Ukraine.

Through the Rule of Law program, the American government has brought judges to Ukraine to conduct trainings,

established legal clinics and helped to develop an electronic case management system. A 2007 report on the program warned that there still was an "overall slow pace of judicial reform" and "constantly increasing level of corruption."

Tymkovich believes the country has turned a corner in the last decade, importantly with the 2018 creation of the High Anti-Corruption Court. He recalled that some judges, during his first visits to Ukraine shortly after his judicial appointment, were holdovers from the Soviet era who had experienced a different set of judicial norms.

"What made me optimistic was really this new generation of judges that I was working with. Many had traveled widely and some had gone to law schools in the United States,"

he said. "They were subject to really extensive background checks and financial checks to ensure they come on the bench without any substantial conflicts of interest."

Tymkovich acknowledged other historical problems in the Ukrainian judiciary, which Ukrainian reform advocate Mykhailo Zherakov has referred to as "a criminal syndicate." Tymkovich said that having a justice system that can fairly enforce contracts and protect property rights necessarily boosts economic confidence and investment in a country.

"I don't think some of the important elements of a functioning judiciary are a mystery. It's more of the implementation," he explained. "The judges I was working with were the ones dedicated to moving to this model."

It is difficult to guess what the war might mean for the future of Ukraine's courts, Tymkovich said. Some judges are fighting, others have fled and the rest are still holding court despite the chaos. He had planned to bring his friend and former 10th Circuit colleague, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Neil M. Gorsuch, to speak during his next visit, and hoped that Gorsuch's presence might have been a boost to the Rule of Law program.

For now, Tymkovich said he has been inspired by the leadership of Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky, who has a law degree himself. Tymkovich hopes that the separate branches of Ukraine's government will respect due process and eschew corruption even in the wake of the war's massive strain on Ukrainian society.

"Given the specter of the loss of independence, the loss of freedom, I would think that would bolster the notion that these institutions are important to protecting individual liberty and economic rights," he said.

Judicial discipline bill cruises through Senate panel

BY DAVID MIGOYA
The Denver Gazette

A bill to independently fund the Colorado Commission on Judicial Discipline was passed by a Senate committee Thursday a week after state Supreme Court justices gave it their measured approval.

Senate Bill 22-201 heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee for its consideration. If approved, it moves to the full Senate and then the House.

The bill aims to create an independent office of judicial dis-

cipline within the Judicial Department, essentially moving it out from under the Supreme Court, so it can be funded with taxpayer dollars. The Colorado Constitution creates the discipline commission, but requires the Supreme Court to come up with the rules under which it must operate.

Still in the bill is an interim committee composed of four members from each chamber of the General Assembly to study over the next several months whether additional changes

to how judges are disciplined need to be addressed.

The committee's composition was one of several items Chief Justice Brian Boatright and Justice Monica Márquez questioned during a Senate Judiciary hearing last week. The justices said the committee should include members from the judiciary, as well as lawyers and other groups with a stake in the outcome.

The committee could also study whether voters should consider a constitutional

amendment to make the discipline commission wholly independent of the court.

At Thursday's hearing — the bill was approved unanimously — co-sponsor Sen. Pete Lee, D-Colorado Springs, said the interim committee was to be "inclusive as much as possible."

"The outreach and input of an interim committee should be inclusive, collaborative and with a broad stakeholder process. The public needs to know judges are held accountable just as all others are to be held accountable."

Said bill co-sponsor Sen. Bob Gardner, R-Colorado Springs: "The Commission on Judicial Discipline and the Judicial Department and the Supreme Court came together to deal with a very complex and nuanced set of interests in order to partner for judicial accountability and transparency."

An amendment added Thursday was a provision that would allow victims to have a say in the judicial discipline process, a measure Boatright said was important to include.

Does Trump remain the 'Complete and Total' kingpin?

DOWN THE MIDDLE



ERIC SONDERMANN

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The month of May will be telling. We are about to find out whether Donald Trump maintains his death grip on the Republican Party. Or whether that grip has loosened and other voices, not fully subservient, can prosper.

Virtually every day, statements emerge from Mar-a-Lago announcing the defeated president's "Complete and Total" endorsement of this or that Republican candidate.

From his endorsement of Sarah Palin for the Alaska congressional seat: "Wonderful patriot Sarah Palin of Alaska just announced that she is running for Congress. ... Sarah is tough and smart and will never back down, and I am proud to give her my Complete and Total Endorsement."

The man likes his capital letters.

For Colorado's Trumpiest legislator, Trump wrote: "Congresswoman Lauren Boebert has done a fantastic job representing Colorado's Third District. She is a fearless leader, a defender of the America First Agenda, and a fighter against Loser RINOs and Radical Democrats. She will continue to be tough on Crime, strong on Borders, and always protect our under-siege Second Amendment. Lauren has my Complete and Total Endorsement."

So it goes. Day after day, Trump rewards his loyalists and seeks retribution against any who have questioned or doubted him. Particular scorn is reserved for those who have openly crossed him.

He regularly seeks to boost Wyoming candidate Harriet Hageman, "who is running against warmonger and disloyal Republican, Liz Cheney." Anyone deemed too close to the Senate minority leader is guilty by association with "the old, broken-down Crow, Mitch McConnell."

Trump is unlike all ex-presidents who came before him. Think of the graceful, precedent-setting exit of George Washington's farewell address.

Our first president, bound by no term limit or tradition, had the selfless foresight to establish a norm of peacefully transferring power. At age 64 and ailing as his second term wound down, he worried that if he died in office his countrymen would come to see the presidency as a lifetime appointment.

In his famous words of departure, largely penned by his loyal lieutenant, Alexander Hamilton, Washington warned of a "spirit of revenge" and the rise of "cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men" who would "usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion."



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former President Donald Trump speaks at a rally at the Delaware County Fairgrounds on April 23 in Delaware, Ohio, to endorse Republican candidates ahead of the Ohio primary on May 3. A New York judge has found former president Donald Trump in contempt of court for failing to adequately respond to a subpoena issued by the state's attorney general as part of a civil investigation into his business dealings.

Trump, convinced without evidence that he was robbed of his office, seeks to remain the dominant figure in his party and to keep a stranglehold over who rises and falls in its ranks.

His is less kingmaker — for in Trump's orbit there can be but one king — than kingpin. But coming Republican primaries over the next few months will put that status to the test.

The action starts this week in Ohio where celebrated author and onetime Trump critic, J.D. Vance, received the prized "Complete and Total" endorsement after equally celebrated groveling and the sacrifice of any intellectual integrity he had left in his consummate Tucker Carlson impersonation.

But Vance faces a tough field and his nomination is not assured even with the Trump nod.

A week later, a congressional primary in Trump-loving West Virginia features two incumbents thrown together in a new district. Trump is completely, totally backing Alex Mooney while David McKinley enjoys the support of the state's popular Republican governor.

Meanwhile, in the Nebraska primary for governor, Trump has thrown in with rancher Charles Herbster in a close race against two strong, also very conservative contenders. Herbster is the subject of eight separate allegations of sexual assault. In Trump-world, a little groping is regarded as more qualification than deal-breaker.

Come mid-May, the action shifts to North Carolina and Idaho. In the Senate race in the Tar Heel state,

Trump-anointed candidate Ted Budd seems to hold a narrow lead over former governor Pat McGrory and a third candidate also from the party's hard conservative flank.

In Idaho, a deeply divided GOP confronts a gubernatorial primary in which the incumbent Brad Little is being challenged by Janice McGeachin, his lieutenant governor. McGeachin does quite a Palin/Boebert/Taylor Greene impression and recently addressed a conference of white nationalists so, naturally, she has Trump's support.

As the month winds down, the action will shift to the Pennsylvania Senate primary where Trump was drawn to the entertainment-obsessed, chameleon-like figure of Mehmet Oz, better known as Dr. Oz. That endorsement came only after Trump's first candidate, Sean Parnell, withdrew following credible charges of domestic abuse. Quite the family values crew.

Turning south, the Alabama Senate primary features two strong candidates still standing after Trump rescinded his endorsement of Rep. Mo Brooks. In that case, "Complete and Total" did not account for Brooks's weak polling and his off-script remark that it might be time, after all, to move on from the 2020 election.

Across the border in Georgia, incumbent Gov. Brian Kemp, who honorably resisted Trump's entreaties to overturn Biden's narrow win there in 2020, is being opposed by the Trump-endorsed David Perdue, a former U.S. senator.

Kemp, perhaps second only to Liz Cheney on Trump's hit list, seems on track to beat back the challenge.

The Wyoming primary along with that in Palin's Alaska wait until August. By then, the verdict will be largely in on whether Trump's control remains absolute or if it has started to wane.

If his chosen candidates lose even a few of these intra-party contests, the balloon will have been punctured. Trump will remain a dominant figure in the GOP, but not an unassailable one. Weakness will have been revealed and rivals will be emboldened.

Of course, the real storyline is that even if Trump's clench on his party is released, what is left behind will still be quite Trumpian in nature. Those eagerly waiting to take up the mantle might present a slightly more palatable persona attached to a very Trump-like message.

As for all those candidates who contorted and prostrated themselves in search of the coveted Trump blessing and, minus Twitter, some endorsement statement with lots of capitalization, well, at some point soon, a mirror awaits.

Hang on. We are entering the most important month of Trump's weird, obsessed, vengeful post-presidency.

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Panel kills permanent standard time bill in favor of permanent daylight saving time

BY HANNAH METZGER
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The legislative battle between standard time and daylight saving time ended Tuesday when a Senate panel killed a bill to implement permanent standard time in favor of a measure pursuing daylight saving time.

Sen. Jeff Bridges, who sponsored both of the competing bills, requested that Senate Bill 135 — which sought to make Mountain Standard Time permanent — be voted down because the full House and Senate already passed House Bill 1297, which would make daylight saving time year-round.

“This one was fun. I was so excited

about having people fighting on Twitter ... about a bill not along party lines,” Bridges, D-Greenwood Village, said. “However, we did come to an agreement on the other bill. I’m a person who sticks to my agreements.”

The Senate State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee voted, 3-1, to indefinitely postpone SB-135 without discussion. Meanwhile, HB-1297 passed its final legislative vote on April 19 and will be sent to Gov. Jared Polis for consideration.

HB-1297 would make daylight saving time year-round if federal law is changed to allow states to do so and if four other states in the Mountain Time

Zone also make the switch. The bill received a bipartisan 27-7 approval in the Senate and a 50-12 vote in the House.

After decades of trying, HB-1297 became the first “lock the clock” bill to make it to floor votes. Colorado lawmakers have tried for more than 30 years to end the flipping back and forth between standard time and daylight saving time, beginning in 1988 with efforts of then-Sen. Bill Schroeder, R-Morrison. Since 2015, legislators have offered seven bills and ballot proposals to make standard time or daylight saving time year-round, all of which were killed in committee.

Following the U.S. Senate’s unanimous approval of a bill to make daylight sav-

ing time permanent in March, most of Colorado’s debate focused not on whether to stop the biannual clock switching but about which time to stick with.

“For folks that have to work in the morning outdoors to start off their day, we are making that harder,” said Sen. Kerry Donovan, D-Vail, while voting against HB-1297. “We are making school bus rides darker and we are making people who get to work earlier darker.”

Supporters of permanent daylight saving time said it would allow people to spend more time outdoors in the evenings, increasing mental and physical health while also boosting spending at local shops and restaurants.

House passes bill to ban medical debt collection without price transparency

BY HANNAH METZGER
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The state House passed a bill Tuesday to ban hospitals from pursuing debt collections against patients if the hospitals are not in compliance with a federal law that requires them to post prices online.

If enacted, House Bill 1285 would prohibit noncompliant hospitals from using debt collectors, filing negative credit reports against patients and obtaining state court judgements for outstanding debts. Non-compliant hospitals could still bill patients, but if they pursue collection actions, they must refund any debt paid by the patient, in addition to all legal fees.

“We’re going to finally have pricing convergence, pricing competition and the macroeconomics of health care,” said bill sponsor Rep. Patrick Neville, R-Castle Rock. “It’s going to lead to a lot of consumer savings and better health care.”

More than a year after it went into effect, only 6% of Colorado hospitals are in full compliance with the price transparency law that allows patients to compare costs between hospitals, according to a report by PatientRights-Advocate.org. That is below the national average of 14.3%.

The House passed the bill in a 63-1 vote, with only Rep. Janice Rich, R-Grand Junction, voting against it. The bill will now be sent to the Senate.

The bipartisan-backed bill is sponsored by the unlikely duo of Neville and Pueblo Democrat Rep. Daneya Esgar. This is the first time the ideological opponents have co-sponsored the same bill in the eight years they

have served together.

“We don’t always think alike but on this specific bill, we’re aligned. This is a bill about protecting consumers when it comes to health care costs,” Esgar said. “It’s a good bill to move folks in the right direction and to protect those people who are looking for health care and making sure they know exactly what is going on in terms of pricing.”

Though lawmakers are united in support of the bill, hospitals have stood firmly against it. During a public hearing for the bill, large hospital systems claimed the bill would lead to frivolous lawsuits, while smaller hospitals worried it could threaten their businesses because they do not have the resources to comply with price transparency right now.

On Friday, lawmakers amended the bill to give small, critical access hospitals with less than 25 beds more time to comply. For these hospitals, the bill would go into effect in February 2023 instead of this August as it will for all other hospitals.

“This will help out in the country,” said Rep. Marc Catlin, R-Montrose, who proposed the amendment. “This is to give them an opportunity to comply, rather than treating them like some of the folks that have a lot bigger budgets.”

Rich still opposed the measure, saying she is “just tired of the government’s meddling” in business.

Also this week, the House unanimously passed House Bill 1284, which seeks to expand protections against surprise health insurance bills. If enacted, the bill would align state law with the federal No Surprises Act, which went into effect in January.



Sonia Brown has been providing child care from her home for over 20 years, and spends her morning playing games with six young children in Broomfield.

KATHRYN SCOTT
FOR COLORADO
POLITICS

Panel advances bill to invest \$10M in Colorado’s child care industry

BY HANNAH METZGER
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A state Senate panel unanimously advanced legislation to invest around \$100 million into the child care industry as Colorado struggles through an unprecedented child care shortage.

If enacted, Senate Bill 213 would use \$50 million of economic recovery and relief money and another possible \$50 million in federal funds to pay for staffing, training and expansion of child care facilities. The Senate Health and Human Services Committee approved the bill on April 25, sending it to the chamber’s Appropriations Committee.

“The purpose is all about making sure we’re addressing some of the issues that have happened since COVID-19,” said bill sponsor Sen. Rhonda Fields, D-Aurora. “Many families spend a huge amount of money on child care and others are remaining out of the workforce in order to care for their children.”

In Colorado, an average family with two young children spends \$28,600 — or 14% of their income — on child care annually, according to federal data. Single parents fare even worse, paying on average 49.5% of their income on infant child care, according to a Child Care Aware of America report.

Some families can’t find child care at all. In Colorado, 51% of residents live in “child care deserts” where there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots, according to Mile High United Way.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic closed around 7% of licensed child care

centers in Colorado, providers only had the capacity to serve 62% of the state’s 246,000 kids under 6 whose parents both work, according to a report that cited 2019 figures. That meant a shortage of more than 90,000 child care slots statewide.

“Unfortunately, most of that desert area is in rural parts of the state where we don’t have the ability to have this type of child care,” said bill sponsor Sen. Jerry Sonnenberg, R-Sterling. “The importance of this bill is how do we take care of kids that may not be taken care of.”

The bill received bipartisan support largely because it would delegate \$7.5 million to train informal child care providers — such as babysitters, nannies and family members — on the best practices for teaching, fostering emotional development, nutrition and first aid. Sonnenberg said informal child care is most common in rural, Republican areas.

The bill would also put \$19 million toward opening new child care centers and expanding capacity at existing licensed child care facilities. Another \$10 million would create employer-based child care facilities for business owners to provide employees with on-site child care, and \$15 million would fund an existing grant program to train and recruit child care staff.

The potential \$50 million in federal funds would be used to implement the Child Care Sustainability Grant Program, offering licensed child care providers between \$2,100 and \$31,500 to spend on employee pay, benefits, training or hiring additional staff.

OUT WEST ROUNDUP

NEW MEXICO

Fires hit Southwest 'dangerously early,' governor says

New Mexico faces a long and potentially devastating wildfire season, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said on April 23, as Southwestern wildfires cause destruction and force people from their homes.

Hundreds of structures were lost in a growing number of wind-driven blazes across drought-stricken New Mexico, Lujan Grisham said.

Over 20 active wildfires were burning in at least 16 of the state's 33 counties, in the wake of winds that gusted up to 90 mph on April 22, Lujan said during a briefing, adding, "So half the state has a fire issue."

With so many fires burning in April, well before the normal May or June start of the wildfire season, "our risk season is incredibly and dangerously early," Lujan Grisham said.

Wildfire has become a year-round threat in the West given changing conditions that include earlier snowmelt and rain coming later in the fall, scientist have said. The problems have been exacerbated by decades of fire suppression and poor management along with a more than 20-year megadrought that studies link to human-caused climate change.

New Mexico as of April 23 had the most major wildfires burning of any state, though neighboring Arizona also had large fires that included one that burned 30 homes near Flagstaff on April 19.

The largest blazes were concentrated in northern New Mexico, where two major fires merged and numerous villages were threatened by advancing flames as residents heeded calls to leave.

MONTANA

Judge blocks transgender birth certificate law

HELENA • A Montana judge on April 21 temporarily blocked enforcement of a law that required transgender people to have undergone a "surgical procedure" before being allowed to change their sex on their birth certificates.

The law was part of a growing list of Republican-controlled states that have moved to restrict transgender rights as they gain more visibility in culture and society.

In Montana, District Judge Michael Moses of Billings ruled the law is unconstitutionally vague because it does not specify what surgical procedure must be performed. The law also required transgender people to obtain a court order indicating they'd had a surgical procedure.

Because he could grant the temporary injunction based on the vagueness issue, Moses said he did not further analyze the constitutionality of the law.

The plaintiffs — Amelia Marquez of Billings and a transgender man who is not identified in court records — wanted to change the sex on their birth certificates without



Kylee Moberg tries to get through a road block on NM94 to get to her friend and horses on April 22. Police blocked the road because of the new Calf Fire burning near the area of the Hermit Peak Fire.

EDDIE MOORE, ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL

undergoing costly surgical procedures.

Both argue having a birth certificate that does not match their gender identity puts them at risk of embarrassment, discrimination, harassment or violence if they are asked to provide their birth certificate.

The temporary injunction remains in place until the full case is decided.

Before the 2021 legislature passed the challenged law, transgender residents seeking to change their birth certificate needed only to provide an affidavit to the state health department. The temporary injunction puts that process back in place.

Republican state Sen. Carl Glimm, who sponsored the legislation, has argued that the health department overstepped its authority in changing the designation on a birth certificate from "sex" to "gender" and then setting rules for how it could be changed.

NAVAJO NATION

FBI ads highlight unsolved homicide, missing person cases

ALBUQUERQUE • Federal authorities are taking to the airwaves to call attention to unsolved homicide and missing person cases on the largest Native American reservation in the U.S. as several states are starting to funnel more resources and investigators toward solving such cases.

The FBI on April 19 announced it's running a 60-second radio ad in the Navajo language to call attention to what family members and advocacy groups have described as a crisis that is affecting Indian Country.

The spot features a plea from the mother of Lee Michael Pahe, who was found fatally shot last summer in Naschitti, New Mexico.

The radio spot comes as New Mexico implements legislation adopted earlier this year to ensure more effective coordination among law enforcement agencies when it comes to missing Native Americans or unsolved homicides.

On the Navajo Nation, which spans parts of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah, federal authorities hope listeners will come forward if they have any information about Pahe's case or the others the FBI and Navajo Nation law enforcement are investigating.

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of whoever was responsible for his killing.

ARIZONA

House speaker gets Profile in Courage award

PHOENIX • Arizona's Republican House speaker on April 21 was named one of five recipients of the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage award for his refusal to consider overturning the 2020 election results despite massive pressure from former President Donald Trump and his supporters.

Speaker Rusty Bowers rebuffed repeated direct efforts by Trump, his attorney Rudy Giuliani and others to overturn results that saw President Joe Biden narrowly defeat Trump in Arizona. Trump and Giuliani urged Bowers in a phone call to retroactively change Arizona law to allow the Legislature to choose a different slate of presidential electors than those picked by the voters.

Bowers said he was honored by the award but felt undeserving. "Honoring my oath and the people's choices at the ballot box are not heroic acts — they are the least that Arizonans should expect from the people elected to serve them," he said.

The award created by Kennedy's family in 1989 is designed "to recognize and celebrate the quality of political courage that he admired most." This year's award honors those who showed "courage to protect and defend democracy in the United States and abroad."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will be honored for his effort to rally his nation and the world against the Russian invasion. Besides Bowers, the other American honorees are Republican Wyoming U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, Democratic Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn

Benson and Fulton County, Georgia, elections department employee Wandrea "Shaye" Moss.

UTAH

Democrats back independent as U.S. Senate candidate

SALT LAKE CITY • Utah Democrats pulling hard to defeat Republican Sen. Mike Lee took the unusual step on April 23 of spurning a party hopeful to instead get behind an independent, former presidential candidate Evan McMullin.

Democrats were swayed by calls from prominent members who said McMullin, a conservative who captured a significant share of the vote in Utah in 2016, was the best chance to beat Lee in the deeply conservative state that hasn't elected a Democratic U.S. senator for more than 50 years.

Lee also faced two GOP challengers at his party's nominating conventions. He handily won in front of the right-leaning crowd with over 70% of the vote. But those candidates will still appear on the primary ballot because they used the state's other path to the primary ballot and gathered signatures.

Lee's relationship with former president Donald Trump has been front and center since CNN reported on text messages showing that the senator was involved in early efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, though Lee later pivoted and voted to confirm the election results after no widespread fraud emerged.

McMullin is a former CIA officer ran for president in 2016 and made inroads in the deeply conservative state where many GOP voters had reservations about then-candidate Trump. Lee himself cast a protest vote for McMullin, though he later became as staunch Trump ally, and the former president has endorsed him.

Republican Party Chair Carson Jorgensen took aim at the Democrats' decision, arguing it showed a weakness in the other party's platform.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'There's stuff that has kept me up at night': Judges speak candidly to Denver students

BY MICHAEL KARLIK

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Three members of the state's Court of Appeals fielded questions from curious high school students on Tuesday, one of the most common subjects being how they could separate their emotions about cases from the impartial legal decisions they are expected to render.

The judges conceded that it takes practice.

"Sometimes I see myself getting mad at a police officer not giving the correct warnings, like Miranda warnings, or doing something to coerce a confession out of somebody," said Judge Matthew D. Grove. "Yeah, there's stuff that has kept me up at night. It comes with the territory."

Grove, along with Judges David J. Richman and Ted C. Tow III, were part of the three-person panel that heard two real appeals at STRIVE Prep — RISE, a charter school in the Green Valley Ranch section of Denver. The visit was part of the judicial branch's 35-year-old Courts in the Community program. Last fall, the Colorado Supreme Court traveled to Pomona High School in Arvada to hold oral arguments, and the justices will repeat the experience next month at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction.

Ross Gothelf is the teacher for the civics and economics "Life 101" course for 11th grade students. Months before the event, he said two attorneys and a judge oriented him to the cases and provided him with lesson materials about the court system in Colorado.

"I was a political science major and almost went to law school, but ended up staying in the classroom," Gothelf said. "I want to give a lot of credit to the scholars: They are juggling a lot right now. To see their level of engagement with the cases feels so phenomenal."

Gothelf's students witnessed two half-hour oral arguments covering distinct areas of the law. In the case of Hogan et al. v. City of Englewood, an Arapahoe County judge ruled that governmental immunity did not shield Englewood from being sued after two women crashed their golf cart at Broken Tee Golf Course and sustained injuries due to an obscured tree stump sticking out of the ground.

The city appealed, arguing the stump and the surrounding tall grass were not an unreasonable risk to health or safety, especially given that the plaintiffs were not on the cart path.

"There's a common sense element to this case and there's also a golf context to this case," explained David M. Westbrook, the attorney for plaintiffs Rebecca Hogan and Betty Medina. "It's kind of a common sense thing that a stump is a trip hazard."

In the second case, *People v. Chapel*, an Arapahoe County jury convicted David Joseph Chapel of two trespassing charges stemming from a night of drinking at a house party. When Chapel awoke at 4 a.m. at the party house, he heard a loud noise and saw people fleeing out the door and over the balcony.

Because the temperature was below freezing, Chapel tried to enter neighboring houses for warmth. One resident found him in her apartment, but agreed that Chapel neither argued nor fought with her when asked to leave. Chapel contended on appeal that jury should have heard a "choice-of-evils" defense



PHOTOS BY STEVE PETERSON

Judge Matthew D. Grove speaks with Morgan Rasmussen and Brisais Vargas, 17-year-old juniors. STRIVE Prep — RISE school in Green Valley Ranch hosted a Courts in the Community event, featuring oral arguments before a three-judge panel with the Colorado Court of Appeals on April 19.



Judges Ted C. Tow III, David J. Richman, and Matthew D. Grove hear oral arguments from David Westbrook, right.

that would have justified his trespassing because of an emergency.

"We're all thinking for ourselves, 'I wonder if what he did was reasonable. I wonder if it was his only option,'" said public defender Mark Evans. But in reality, "we're deciding whether a group of 12 people get to make that decision on their own."

Between cases, the audience was able to question the attorneys. One student asked about the length of time a criminal case takes, to which Evans responded that his client, Chapel, was finally having his appeal heard three years after being arrested in March 2019.

"In all candor, the amount of time between the point of conviction and when the appeal gets resolved is an injustice in itself. He's already done with his sentence, so what we're fighting about right now is his criminal record," Evans said.

Junior Eliud Jimenez addressed Grove specifically, noting that the judge had appeared frustrated that the trial court in the Hogan case never held a hearing to lay out the facts about the allegedly-dangerous stump for the appeals court to review.

"I know you were struggling with the case just now," Jimenez said. "I know it can be frustrating. My question is: How do you guys keep your cool? How do you stay calm?"

"Some of us are better than others,"

Tow quipped. "You do have to keep remembering that we are a servant of the people and we are essentially representing our state when we're up here and we need to act accordingly."

"To be clear," Grove added, "my frustration today is not with the conduct of the attorneys. ... Expressing frustration with the law and how it works or doesn't work is different from having somebody not answering the question or answering the question they want to. But deep breaths, remembering who you are and why you've got the robe."

Multiple students probed the judges' skill at staying objective. Morgan Rasmussen observed that certain cases are bound to bother even them.

Tow answered that he used to prosecute crimes where the victims were children. The emotions do not go away, he agreed, but he has learned how to keep those emotions from affecting his job.

"I refer to it as my 'garage door.' It just shuts and keeps the traumatic part away from the thoughtful part about the law," he said.

Gothelf, the teacher, said afterwards that many of his students were immigrants, or their parents were. Consequently, the law for them was not an abstract issue. Some attendees found the cases entertaining and gained an insight into what a career in law might look like.

JiRyan Ellis said that the students learned the details of both cases beforehand, but his opinion changed after hearing the arguments, particularly with the golf cart case.

"I came into it thinking hey, they (the plaintiffs) were knowingly breaking the rules," he explained. "But the lawyer gave me a new perspective on their side."

"I was completely with the government. Follow rules! That's how I think," countered Sasha McCalman.

Richman, who joined the Court of Appeals upon his 2008 appointment, recalled to a smaller group of students that he knew he wanted to be a lawyer when he was roughly high school age. His inspiration was the 1964 book *Gideon's Trumpet*, which described the story behind the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright*. The case established that indigent criminal defendants have the right to an appointed attorney, and spurred the creation of the Office of the Colorado State Public Defender.

"I worked really hard in high school and college to get to law school," he said.

One teacher asked the panel of judges how consistently the hundreds of trial court judges across Colorado apply the law, given that the Court of Appeals sees almost every case that is appealed directly from all 22 judicial districts in the state. Tow, a former trial court judge, said all errors in judging are not created equal. It is one thing for a judge to be reversed on appeal without having the proper guidance, he said, but it would be different if "I just blow it."

"I took your question a little differently," Richman interjected, "to be: What is the quality of judges across the state?"

He explained that Colorado, unlike some other states that elect judges, relies on a nonpartisan, citizen-led system of commissions to screen and recommend judicial candidates.

"Colorado is, I think, considered a shining example of how judges should be put on the bench," Richman said.



TIMOTHY HURST, THE DENVER GAZETTE
House Speaker Rep. Alec Garnett introduced a bipartisan bill to address penalties for distributing and manufacturing fentanyl on Thursday in the West Foyer of the state Capitol.

GARNETT

FROM PAGE 1

legislature this year — a sweeping measure that hopes to counteract fentanyl’s deadly wake in the state.

The measure, if ultimately enacted into law, will help shape the speaker’s legacy as public servant and leader in an era of Democratic dominance, under which Garnett, Gov. Jared Polis and their allies in state government ushered in progressive ideals, notably in the area of criminal justice.

“Garnett has presided ably over a House with a huge Democratic lean and an expansive agenda. He has tapped the brakes on occasion and the accelerator at other times depending on the issue,” said Eric Sondermann, who regularly writes columns for Colorado Politics and the Gazette newspapers. “Together with Gov. Polis and Senate President (Steve) Fenberg, they certainly constitute a new, younger generation of political leadership at the Capitol and a more progressive philosophy.”

And if Garnett decides to run for mayor of Denver — his name is among a few being tossed around as possible contenders, though he shut down the idea for now, at least — many say his work on fentanyl and public perception on crime will be a factor in the race.

“I do think that fentanyl — and public safety more broadly — will impact Denver’s mayoral race,” said Michael Fields, president of the conservative-leaning think tank Advance Colorado Institute. “Denver is a tipping point right now. Downtown has changed, housing costs are skyrocketing, crime is up, and businesses are looking elsewhere. The next



Michael Fields



KATHRYN SCOTT, SPECIAL TO COLORADO POLITICS
Members of the House of Representatives gather around the desk of Rep. Kerry Tipper as they they continue their work on the first day of the returning session. Colorado lawmakers return to the state Capitol on May 26, 2020, in Denver, Colorado after a 10-week pause in response to the coronavirus.

leader of the city is going to need to be strong, and be able to unite people to fix these problems.”

Sondermann, who also describes Denver as facing a fork in the road, acknowledged the nimble balancing act that Garnett finds himself in.

“The fentanyl issue is a particularly vexing one,” Sondermann said. “It is acknowledged in most circles that Democratic legislators overstepped in their so-called reform a couple of years ago. Garnett is now center-stage in trying to craft and shepherd through an adjustment that is palatable to both the anti-criminalization elements of his party and those far more concerned with growing lawlessness.”

He added: “That is not an easy balance to achieve.”

Like many, Sondermann sees fentanyl and its malevolent tally of dead and sickened Coloradans as inevitably occupying “front and center” in next year’s mayor’s race in the state’s most

populous city, and candidates hoping to court Denver’s progressive voting bloc will “also have to walk that line.”

“The trick is that the decriminalization agenda is at odds with the lived experience of an increasing number of voters, even in left-leaning Denver. That is something for which Rep. Leslie Herod, a likely mayoral candidate and sponsor of the earlier reform bill, will have to answer, along with Garnett, if he ends up entering the race.”

Herod, interestingly, grilled law enforcement officials, notably Denver Police Chief Paul Pazen, during the committee hearing on the bill in an exchange that offered a glimpse into the relationship between the city’s police chief and its representative at the Capitol, who could also jump into the mayor’s race.

The immediate battle ahead

For now, the battle in front of Garnett is getting the fentanyl bill out of the leg-

islature and onto the governor’s desk.

As one of the bill’s sponsors, the Denver Democrat stands right in the middle of the crossfire, caught not just between law enforcement advocates and criminal justice advocates, but also among competing views within his caucus. All the parties agree the fentanyl crisis needs a unified state response, but they diverge on how to treat simple possession of fentanyl.

In the last few days, Garnett has tried to steer the conversation toward what he thinks is the most essential element of the fentanyl legislation — its multi-pronged approach to combating the drug — instead of the incessant focus on fentanyl possession.

During the April 13 House Judiciary hearing, Garnett acknowledged the bill isn’t perfect but lamented that not enough attention has been paid to its provisions on harm reduction and education. All told, he said, the measure is a “monumental step forward.”

The debate over possession revolves around two interlocking issues: The first dwells on a 2019 law that made it a misdemeanor to possess up to 4 grams of many drugs, including fentanyl. The second deals with fentanyl’s unique nature. A potent synthetic opioid used legitimately in medicine, the substance is mixed illicitly into other drugs, such as meth and cocaine, and is primarily found in pills often made to look like legitimate oxycodone tablets. Those pills are rarely pure fentanyl, officials in Colorado and elsewhere have said. Often, they have relatively low amounts of fentanyl and are primarily composed of other substances, such as the active ingredient in Tylenol. Still, because fentanyl is so potent at low doses, the pills are deadly.

Law enforcement groups, some mayors — Denver’s Michael Hancock, among them — and families whose loved ones have overdosed stand on one side of that debate, urging policymakers to lower the felony threshold for its possession to any amount. On

the other side are health providers and addiction experts, who insist that legislators adopt a health-centric approach to confront Colorado's opioid crisis.

And in an effort to accommodate the diametrically opposed factions, Garnett offered to set the threshold for felony possession at 1 gram, which is about 10 pills, an amount that a person with addiction problems could go through in a day or less, due to fentanyl's quick but short-lived high.

Neither side appears happy with the speaker's solution.

The harm reduction activists argue that any step toward "felonization" returns Colorado back to the failed policies of the "War on Drugs," while the law enforcement advocates insist 1 gram still leaves too many Coloradans dead.

The coalition behind the bill has managed to get it out of the House committee and through hours-long debate in the House on April 22. At print time, the bill has cleared the House and its first hearing in the Senate.

Fields of Advance Colorado acknowledged the difficulty that Garnett faces.

"There is no doubt that Speaker Garnett has tried to find a compromise on it, but it's one of those bills where nobody will end up happy," Fields said. "The far-left doesn't want any possession to be a felony. But most Coloradans see fentanyl for what it is — a poison that is killing two Coloradans a day, including kids. Given this, any possession of fentanyl should be a felony."

The generalist

A veteran of some of the most monumental fights at the state Capitol, the House speaker has taken on construction defects, "red flag" legislation, sports betting and transportation funding — just to name a few — in his four terms as a legislator.

But his biggest test came two years ago, when a shapeshifting virus began to infect, sicken and kill millions of people around the world, forcing governments to impose drastic measures and sending economies into a nosedive.

Rep. Kerry Tipper, D-Lakewood, put the enormity of Garnett's challenge this way: "He stepped in to this position as speaker of the House two months before the entire world turned up side down."

Digging the state out of the COVID-induced hole would have already been a herculean task, according to Tipper, who, at the time, thought the pandemic would define the speaker's legacy.

But even amidst the health crisis, Garnett shaped and shepherded some of the most profound measures to emerge out of the state Capitol in decades. Tipper said they included, for example, last year's transportation bill, which created hundreds of millions of dollars in new revenue streams to pay for infrastructure projects.

"When I think of Alec, I think of him as this generalist," Tipper said.

His expertise, she said, lies not necessarily with any particularly subject but in navigating the complexities of policymaking and getting something through.

America's grand experiment in representative democracy was purposely designed to slow or even kill legislation, a way of forcing parties to come to a compromise to ensure a new law doesn't enter society as a knife that wounds but as a nourishment — or at least not a shock that sends society reeling. Tipper said Garnett has become an astute student of the art of legislating — the leader who sees the big picture, reaches consensus and finds a way to get a pro-



TIMOTHY HURST, THE DENVER GAZETTE

Speaker of the House Rep. Alec Garnett pats his son's head while mother Brenda Garnett hands a piece of chocolate to her grandson during a recess in the first day of legislation at the Colorado state Capitol building on Jan. 12 in Denver.

positional to the finish line.

It's that experience, she said, that makes Garnett the perfect — and perhaps only — legislator to take on an issue as complex and as emotionally draining as the fentanyl legislation.

"I don't know anybody else honestly in the building that could be doing this bill and get something across the line successfully," Tipper said, adding that's probably why Garnett decided to take on the fentanyl bill.

Garnett hinted as much in an interview with Colorado Politics.

"I approach things differently than most legislators," he said. "There's an art to the public policy process and to do the best you can to help move forward solutions to the problems Colorado encounters."

He added: "I've tried to take on big issues that, if they were left to one side or the other, could become either highly politicized or couldn't move forward with the best solutions possible."

A future behind the scenes?

The third Democrat from the Capitol Hill House District to wield the speaker's gavel, Garnett's political future is wide open.

For now, he dismisses the idea of running for any other elected office. Pointing out that his hair is now grayer and he's earned a few wrinkles, Garnett said he has poured his heart and soul into each issue he has tackled, and noted that this kind of undertaking — intensive, relentless, grinding — is challenging to do forever.

"I believe public service is meant to be temporary," he said. "It's meant to bring people in who are citizens to do the best they can."

But that doesn't mean he is done with politics. Garnett hinted of remaining in the public policy arena, where he has spent his entire career in, but behind the scenes, perhaps a little away from the limelight.

"I'm proud of my ability to solve problems and bring people together," he said. "I can use the skills I have and not necessarily be in an elected office."

But it's precisely those skills, his rela-

tive youth and what has been a successful run as a policymaker — his detractors argue that the policies he embraced moved Colorado in the wrong direction but readily agree he succeeded in pursuing a progressive agenda — that put him on the radar for another office, notably the mayor's chair in Denver.

Garnett said there are collateral consequences for launching a full-blown campaign for the seat, the big one being family. During his eight years at the Capitol, he and Emily have brought three children into the world. There have been days when he had ducked out during a debate to make quesadillas for the kids — because they like how their dad does it — or tucked them into bed. It helps that he lives less than a mile from the Capitol.

"I've always tried to put family first," Garnett said. "In this moment in time, it would be very challenging for me to be the mayor Denver needs — very hands on, who can solve a lot of problems" and raise his three kids the way he ought to.

If or when — observers say it's only a matter of time — he seeks another office, he will run on his legislative record as a House member and his decisions as a speaker.

His Democratic allies hail the work they accomplished with Garnett at the helm.

"Under the leadership of my friend Speaker Garnett," House Majority Leader Daneya Esgar told Colorado Politics, "the House has passed historic legislation to drive down the cost of health insurance, save people money on their prescription drugs, fix our broken transportation funding system, and enact universal preschool for all four-year-olds in our state."

"Working together, the Speaker and I led the House through a global pandemic that saw us pass a \$1 billion state stimulus plan and direct billions in federal funds toward the most pressing issues in our communities — access to affordable housing, behavioral health, and skills training that advances careers. There's no question about the speaker's

legacy in the Capitol," Esgar said.

Fields, the political strategist, also frames Garnett's legacy against the backdrop of Democrats' electoral wins that put them in charge of all levers of state government.

"I don't believe Colorado is better off than it was four years ago. Single-party rule and bad policies have made our state less safe and more expensive. That's not one person's fault — it's a combination of Democrats in the Senate, House, and governor's mansion," Fields said, calling, for one, the 2019 law that made less than 4 grams of fentanyl a misdemeanor "one of the worst pieces of legislation passed in the last few decades."

Mitch Morrissey, the former district attorney for Denver who met a young Alec Garnett years ago — Garnett's father, Stan, served as Boulder district attorney, said in viewing the speaker's tenure through the lens of criminal justice, he is disappointed Garnett "ignored the vital importance of confronting the surge in crime in Colorado."

"As Speaker, Garnett missed a leadership opportunity to call for a comprehensive review of the crime wave and the unintended consequences and higher costs of the crime policies that were put in place in Colorado before and during his time in the legislature," Morrissey said.

What political observers agree is the breadth of Garnett's legacy. Tipper, the Lakewood Democrat, puts it this way after noting how the speaker has led Colorado through the pandemic, shepherded "transformational" legislation during his tenure and greatly expanded his caucus: "His legacy is so much bigger than this one bill."

"If this is going to be the issue that defines me," Garnett said, "I'm willing to accept that because I think that no state has gone from zero to four and tried to bridge their way back."



Mitch Morrissey

Longtime politico Dennis Gallagher dies at 82

BY JULIA CARDI
julia.cardi@gazette.com

Dennis Gallagher, the Colorado politico and eponym of the Gallagher Amendment whose political career spanned five decades, has died at age 82.

Gallagher was known as a warm social butterfly who had a genuine interest in helping the communities he was elected to serve.

He understood “you can be successful alone, but it’s so much more rewarding to be successful in a community,” said Gallagher’s son, Danny, in an interview Saturday.

“Truly in his heart, he wanted to make people’s lives better. He didn’t care what side of the aisle you were on.”

He died in his sleep on April 22, his family confirmed. Gallagher’s longtime friend Tom Noel wrote in an obituary Gallagher had been struggling with heart problems.

He served two terms in Colorado’s House of Representatives after his election in 1970, followed by 20 years in the Senate.

Gallagher represented District One on Denver City Council for two terms from 1995 to 2003 before being elected as the city auditor in 2003.

Those close to Gallagher praised him for his deep involvement with the communities he was connected to and his care for marginalized people.

“Those of us who rarely, if ever, hear from or see our representatives can only envy the residents of Northwest and Central Denver. They have been represented by one of the biggest and most visible legislators of all,” reads the obituary by Noel, a historian and professor at CU Denver, which he provided to The Denver Gazette.

Noel said in an interview that Gallagher had a genuine interest in reaching out to marginalized populations, such as people of color, immigrants and low-income people, without an expectation that they would benefit his political campaigns financially.

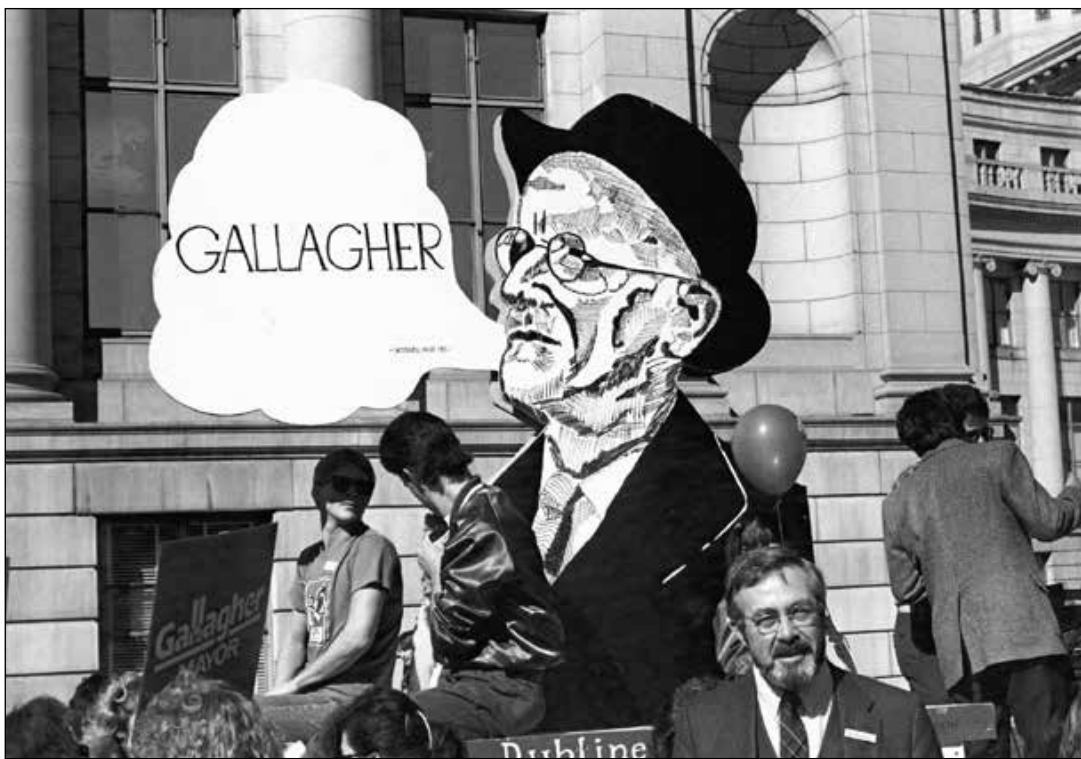
“He said the main thing about being in office is you just have to listen to people. ... Many people he helped weren’t in a position to ever give him any contributions.”

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock tweeted that Gallagher was a “large presence” in the city.

“For decades, his public service was reflected every day — not just for his beloved Northside — but for the benefit of our entire city. ... We’ve lost a storied Denver public servant.”

In 2019 Gallagher chaired the campaign of Jamie Giellis, who sought to unseat Hancock. She tweeted Saturday that Denver “lost a giant, a champion for good, and an incredibly kind soul. ... Thank you for letting me stand on your shoulders.”

As auditor Gallagher wrote



Courtesy of Tom Noel Dennis Gallagher with the James Joyce Society float in a St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Courtesy of Tom Noel Dennis Gallagher with his then-wife JoAnne, daughter Meaghan and son Danny.

a letter to the director of the Colorado Department of Transportation in 2014 blasting the controversial expansion of Interstate 70 through North Denver. Gallagher said in the letter spending money on the project that he argued would become obsolete as environmental and social factors shifted people away from reliance on cars and trucks for transportation was a “wasteful expenditure” of tax dollars.

He also wrote the demolition of dozens of homes required for the project echoed the original I-70 construction’s treatment of residents in Denver’s Globeville and Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods — which the construction of the highway split apart — as “second class citizens.”

Noel said Gallagher never wavered in his opposition to the

I-70 expansion.

“He thought the irony of it was the city keeps talking about housing for the poor, and that’s exactly what you had there being erased. Those were low-income homeowners, in many cases.”

“He was fighting to say, we don’t always need to build a highway,” Danny Gallagher said. “Sometimes we just need to let people live next to one another.”

Perhaps Gallagher’s most visible political legacy is his sponsorship of the Gallagher Amendment, a voter-approved change to the Colorado Constitution enacted in 1982. The amendment changed how property taxes are assessed by mandating that 45% of statewide property tax collections had to come from residential property,

and 55% of revenue came from non-residential property.

The amendment was intended to lessen the burden of property taxes on homeowners at the time.

“That was his real sincere interest in ordinary folks,” Noel said.

But over the years the Gallagher Amendment had an unplanned effect of strapping local governments for funds, especially for schools, as it intersected with the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights. It required the state legislature to lower the assessment rate for residential property to keep revenue in line with the Gallagher Amendment’s ratio, and the TABOR provision that requires voters to approve tax increases meant the assessment rate couldn’t be raised again without a vote.

Voters repealed the Gallagher Amendment in 2020.

Noel said Gallagher was sorry for the unintended impacts of the amendment. Though Gallagher wasn’t surprised at the repeal, he felt there could have been alternative solutions.

Gallagher stayed involved outside his political career with the

communities he was connected to. He taught at his alma mater Regis University for more than four decades.

He also celebrated his Irish heritage, serving as Grand Marshal of Denver’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade. He took his students on summer trips to Ireland, using his political connections to introduce them to high-ranking officials in the country.

“He had that Irish disrespect, shall we say, for the English,” Noel joked.

Danny Gallagher said his father’s heritage influenced his desire to help marginalized people because of the discrimination and hardships people of Irish descent still faced in the U.S. when he was young.

“They think about Irish culture and heritage differently, because throughout history it’s been taken away. ... Those struggles can inform who you become,” Danny said.

Remembrances poured in on social media.

“Dennis was such a wealth of knowledge, humor and stories. He was brilliant and kind,” wrote former Colorado Rep. Joe Salazar on the Facebook post announcing Gallagher’s death.

“A true Denver original, with a heart as big as the world,” another comment read.

“His knowledge and love for Denver inspired me my entire life,” tweeted current District One Councilmember Amanda Sandoval.

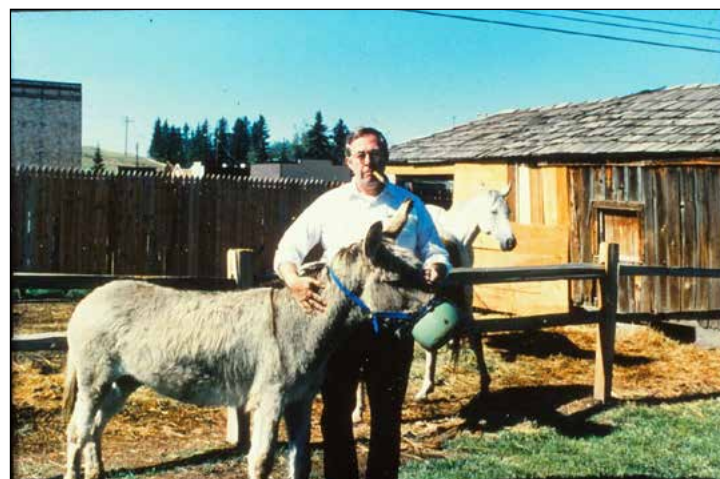
“With Dennis gone, who will enlighten city council and legislative journals with quotations from poets such as William Shakespeare and Gerard Manly Hopkins?” Noel wrote. “To those who think no politician can be honest, Dennis Gallagher was the answer.”

Gallagher had two children, Danny and Meaghan, with his former wife JoAnne. Meaghan Gallagher previously passed away at age 19.

He is also survived by his brother, Tim.

Danny Gallagher said he’s comforted by knowing his father is joining Meaghan and his own parents, William and Nellie.

“It’s nice to know he’s joining some friends and family on the other side.”



Courtesy of Tom Noel Gallagher at a Democratic Party caucus.

REGISTER

Young changemakers to be honored at annual luncheon

BY JOANNE DAVIDSON
Special to Colorado Politics

PROJECT PAVE

Denver
News: When supporters of Project PAVE gather at the Denver Art Museum on May 3 for the 26th annual Transformations Luncheon, they will be celebrating the teens who have made strides in their own healing, created healthy relationship standards and become relationship role models for their peers thanks to Project PAVE. In addition, they will honor Adam Evans, who is leaving Project PAVE after



Derek McCoy

16 years as its executive director, and welcome his successors, Tara Williams and Derek McCoy. Williams and McCoy are serving as co-executive directors. Williams'



Tara Williams



Project PAVE

focus is operations and development while McCoy oversees programs and partnerships, the newest of which is

the Brave Woman Program. Other Project PAVE programs include Youth-Community Edu-

cators, True Man, Path to Healthy Relationships, School-Based Therapy, Social-Emotional Support Groups and PAVE Education at Home. The Transformations Luncheon begins with a mimosa bar at 11 a.m., followed by lunch and the program at 11:30. Tickets are \$100 each and can be purchased by visiting <https://bit.ly/pavelunch22> Pacific Western Bank is the event's Gold Sponsor; Silver Sponsors include CHFA and GE Johnson Construction Co. **About the organization:** Project PAVE seeks to build safe, compassionate and connected communities and end relationship violence by giving young people the skills that will enable them to build healthy relationships. **Website:** projectpave.org Have news or announcements for the Nonprofit Register? Email nonprofits@coloradopolitics.com and include a contact name and number if more information is needed.

A tip of the hat to expanding women's voices at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts

BY JOANNE DAVIDSON
Special to Colorado Politics

WOMEN'S VOICES FUND

Denver
News: At first blush, Women with Hattitude could be seen as nothing more than a fancy luncheon where a bunch of society ladies, dressed to the nines, accessorize their outfits with hats. Hats as elaborate as those one would see at Ascot, a Royal wedding or the Kentucky Derby. It's much more than that, however. Women with Hattitude raises money for the Women's Voices Fund at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, and is supported by women in power positions throughout the metro Denver area. Jennifer Dechtman, a top-producing agent with LIV Sotheby's International Realty and founder of the "Denver I Love" blog, chaired the 15th edition of the event DCPA president/CEO Janice Sinden described as one of her favorites because "It advances equity and inclusion." Lydia Garcia, executive director of equity and organizational culture at the DCPA, added: "We don't need to find women's voices. They've been speaking, even though no one was listening."



STEVE PETERSON

Lydia Garcia, left, and Janice Sinden, president and CEO of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, present Jo Semple with a declaration of "Jo Ann Semple Day," alongside her husband, Martin Semple, Chairman of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Board of Trustees.

Dechtman's guests included environmental attorney Susan Daggett, who is also the wife of U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet; Colleen Walker, CEO of the Auraria Higher Education Center; Shannel Ryan, Metro Denver president/CEO of LIV Sotheby's International Realty; and Dr. Rachel Groff, president-elect of the Presbyterian/St.

Luke's Medical Center medical staff. HealthONE sponsored the parade of hats where prizes were given in such categories as Exquisitely Elegant, Big & Bold and I Made It Myself. Maureen McDonald, the HealthONE/HCA Continental Division's assistant vice president for community engagement, hosted such friends

as Lea Devereaux, vice president/strategic initiatives for Mile High United Way; Taloma Partners principal Tamra Ward; Christin Crampton Day, executive director of Colorado Business Committee for the Arts; and Faye Washington, whose husband, Dr. Reginald Washington, is chief medical officer at Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children and Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center. Marco Fields, whose company, Moxxy Women, was the luncheon's Crown Sponsor, was there with her daughter, Jada, as was Beret Sponsor Adrienne Fitzgibbons and her daughters Kimi Brown and Erinn Corson and daughter-in-law Julia Porterfield. Also in attendance: Linda Ramirez-Eaves, general counsel for the biotech firm Olink Proteomics; Natalie Guard, a member of the Denver Council on Foreign Relations; and DCPA trustees Susan Fox Pinkowitz, Ruth Krebs and Martin Semple, whose wife, JoAnn, was honored for her role in establishing the Women's Voices Fund. JoAnn Semple, who has spent 20-plus years volunteering as an archivist for Denver Center Theatre Company productions, also helped start another of the DCPA support groups, the Directors Society.



STEVE PETERSON

Jada and Marco Fields. Women with Hattitude, benefiting the Women's Voices Fund, at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts in Denver, Colorado, on April 26.

About the organization: Since its start in 2005, the Women's Voices Fund has championed the work of female artists in Denver and beyond. It has enabled the Denver Center Theatre Company to produce 38 plays by women – including 16 world premieres – commissioned 24 female playwrights and hired 38 female directors. The Women's Voices Fund is supported by membership dues and fundraisers like Women with Hattitude. **Website:** denvercenter.org

Legislature OKs in-state tuition after 1 year of residency

BY HANNAH METZGER
hannah.metzger@coloradopolitics.com

Coloradans may soon be eligible for in-state college tuition after only one year of residency, thanks to new legislation approved by the state legislature on April 27. If signed into law, House Bill 1155 would shorten Colorado's residency requirement for in-state tuition from the current three years to one year prior to enrollment. Students would also need to have graduated from a high school or completed a high

school equivalency exam in Colorado. "An educated workforce is a strong workforce," said bill sponsor Sen. Julie Gonzales, D-Denver. "We are really, through this policy, seeking to help employers as much as we are seeking to help students and college administrators." More than 200 additional students would be eligible for in-state tuition each year under the bill, according to state estimates. This comes as Colorado's annual college enrollment has decreased each year

since the COVID-19 pandemic began, falling by 5.2% from 2019 to 2020 alone, according to data from the Colorado Department of Higher Education. The bipartisan-sponsored bill passed the Senate in a 25-9 vote Wednesday, after the House approved the bill in a 41-19 vote earlier this month. In both chambers, only Republicans voted against the bill. Some opposed the bill because it would build off of the ASSET Bill passed in 2013, which allowed undocumented students to qualify for in-state tuition.

The new bill would remove ASSET's requirement that undocumented students be admitted to college within one year of graduating high school in order to receive in-state tuition. "During the pandemic, we had a number of people who wanted to or were unable to enroll ... particularly for ASSET students who did not enroll within that one-year time period after graduating in either 2020 or 2021," Gonzales said. "They lost their ability to pursue higher education."



POLITICS CALENDAR

COMPILED BY COLORADO POLITICS

Colorado Politics' weekly political calendar will help you find political and public-policy events throughout Colorado. It includes candidate and issue campaign events, public policy meetings, court hearings, state and local party conventions, assemblies, debates, rallies, parades, speaking engagements, traveling dignitary appearances, water meetings, book signings, county commission hearings, city council meetings and more. As a subscriber, you can submit your own events for publication to calendar@coloradopolitics.com for free publication on this page. Please include who, what, when, where and why for each event. (Party designations: R-Republican, D-Democrat, L-Libertarian, G-Green, S-Socialist, U-Unity.) Contact event organizers regarding any location changes or cancellations.

MONDAY, MAY. 2

- **(R) Larimer County Republican Party: Republican Breakfast Club**, 7-8:30 a.m., 2842 SE. Frontage Rd., Johnstown, cost for breakfast and meeting \$10
- **(R) Jefferson County Republican Party: Men's Club**, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., 608 Garrison St., Unit A, Lakewood, contact Dan Bidstrup 303-882-54569 or jeffcorepublicanmensclub.org, cost \$5
- **Colorado General Assembly: House Finance**, 1:30 p.m., 200 E. Colfax Ave., HCR 0112, Denver
- **City of Denver: City Council Meeting and Public Comment Session**, 5-6:30 p.m., join the meeting at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3GN7Zv99SluXrlm4UC8NLQ
- **(R) Summit County Republican Party: Central Committee Meeting**, 5:30-7 p.m., 151 Peak One Blvd., Frisco
- **(R) Boulder County Republican Party: W.I.N. Talks**, 6:30-8 p.m., 619 Ken Pratt Blvd., Longmont
- **(S) Denver Democratic Socialists of America: EcoSocialist Committee**, 7-8 p.m., register for the Zoom call at <https://www.denverdsa.org/events>
- **(D) Douglas County Democratic Party: Data Analytics Committee Monthly Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., visit <https://www.dougcodems.org/events> for Zoom link
- **(S) Denver Democratic Socialists of America: NEWR Weekly Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., contact housing@denverdsa.org for Zoom link
- **(R) Adams County Republican Party: Education Forum**, 7-8:50 p.m., 400 W. 104th Ave., Northglenn

TUESDAY, MAY. 3

- **(R) Collegiate Peaks Republican Women's Forum: Meeting**, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 217 Crossman Ave., Buena Vista, contact Millie Meardon 719-395-3228 for more information
- **(D) Montrose County Democratic Party: Dem Lunch Bunch Meeting**, 12-1:30 p.m., contact Sarah Combs 970-964-8968 for more information
- **(R) Delta County Republican Party: Monthly Meeting**, 6-7 p.m., 21987 Austin Rd., Austin, contact Angie Many 970-210-0948 for more information
- **(D) Denver Democratic Party: HD 6 Monthly Meeting**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 690 Colorado Blvd., Denver
- **(D) Boulder County Democratic Party: Field Leadership Action Group**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 5735 A. Arapahoe Ave., Boulder
- **(D) Jefferson County Democratic Party: Chairs Advisory Meeting**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/95390103549> to join the meeting

WEDNESDAY, MAY. 4

- **(R) Arapahoe County Republican Party: Breakfast Committee**, 6:45-8:30 a.m., contact 303-779-1115 for more information
- **(R) Boulder County Republican Party: Monthly Morning Meeting**, 7-8 a.m., contact bbeck@bocogop.org for more information
- **DRCOG: Metro Vision Idea Ex-**



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

change-Make Small Plans, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., register in advance for the webinar at <https://drcog.org/node/988392>

- **DRCOG: Executive Committee**, 3 p.m., contact drcog@drcog.org for virtual meeting link
- **DRCOG: Board Work Session**, 4 p.m., contact drcog@drcog.org for virtual meeting link
- **DRCOG: Performance and Engagement Committee**, 5:30 p.m., contact drcog@drcog.org for virtual meeting link
- **(D) Huerfano County Democratic Party: Meeting**, 6-7 p.m., visit <https://www.coloradodems.org/calendar-of-events/> for Zoom link
- **(L) Adams County Libertarian Party: Development Group Meeting**, 6-7 p.m., 10180 Grant St., Thornton
- **(L) Denver Libertarian Party: Liberty on the Rocks**, 6-9 p.m., 727 E. 16th Ave., Denver
- **(D) Denver Democratic Party: Denver Young Dems Monthly Meeting**, 6:30-7:30 p.m., contact info@denveryoungdems.org for more information
- **(D) Boulder County Democratic Party: Longmont Area Democrats Meeting**, 6:30-8 p.m., 2121 Miller Dr., Classroom Bldg., Longmont
- **(D) Arapahoe County Democratic Party: Executive Committee Meeting**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., contact secretary@arapahoedems.org for Zoom link
- **(R) Log Cabin Republicans: Happy Hour**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 629 E. Colfax Ave., Denver
- **(R) Park County Republican Party: Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., 880 Bogue St., Fairplay
- **(D) Colorado Democratic Party: Outreach Team Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., visit <https://www.coloradodems.org/calendar-of-events/> for Zoom link
- **(S) Denver Democratic Socialists of America: Housing Justice Committee Monthly Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., contact housing@denverdsa.org for more information
- **(D) Douglas County Democratic Party: Finance Committee**, 7-8:30 p.m., visit <https://www.dougcodems.org/events> for Zoom link

THURSDAY, MAY. 5

- **Colorado General Assembly: Capital Development Committee**, 8 a.m., 200 E. Colfax Ave., SCR 352, Denver
- **(L) Northeast Colorado Libertarian Development Group: Monthly Meeting**, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 539 S. Baxter Ave., Holyoke
- **(R) Clear Creek County Republican Party: Meeting**, 6-7 p.m., 1630 Miner St., Idaho Springs

- **(R) CU Republicans: Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., contact coloradocr@gmail.com
- **(D) Arapahoe County Democratic Party: HD 38 Book Club**, 6:30-8 p.m., visit <https://www.arapahoedems.org> for Zoom link
- **(D) El Paso County Democratic Party: Executive Committee Meeting**, 6:30-8 p.m., 332 W. Bijou St., Colorado Springs
- **(L) Boulder/Denver County Libertarian Party: Left Hand of Liberty-Dinner**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., 800 S. Hover St., Ste. 12, Longmont
- **(R) Adams County Republican Party: Monthly Meeting**, 6:30-8:45, 400 W. 104th Ave., Northglenn
- **(D) Jefferson County Democratic Party: HD 28 Monthly Meeting**, 7-8 p.m., visit <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84146603811> to join the meeting
- **(R) Gilpin County Republican Party: Meeting**, 7-8:30 p.m., contact marina.fish@gmail.com for more information

FRIDAY, MAY. 6

- **(R) Denver Republican Party: First Friday Breakfast**, 8-9:30 a.m., 2910 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, contact alan@denvergop.org for more information
- **(R) Republicans @ Denver Athletic Club: Meeting**, 12-1 p.m., 1325 Glenarm Pl., Denver

SATURDAY, MAY. 7

- **(R) Gunnison County Republican Party: Meeting**, 8:30-10:30 a.m., 10209 Hwy. 135, Almont, contact Jane Chaney 970-349-7744 for more information
- **(D) Denver Democratic Party: HD 4 Monthly Meeting**, 9-11:30 a.m., contact hd@denverdemocrats.org for more information
- **(D) Adams County Democratic Party: Latino Initiative**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., 5590 N. Pecos St., Denver
- **(D) Mesa County Democratic Party: Cinco de Mayo**, 10 a.m., 3rd-7th St. on Main St., Grand Junction, visit <https://www.latinangloalliance-foundation.org/cinco-de-mayo.html> for more information
- **(S) Denver Democratic Socialists of America: Labor Committee Meeting**, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82938520009> to join the meeting
- **(L) Denver Libertarian Party: Liberty Toastmasters**, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., 727 E. 16th Ave., Denver
- **(D) Arapahoe County Democratic Party: Virtual Town Hall with Aurora Legislators**, 10:15-11:45 a.m., visit <https://www.arapahoedems.org> to register in advance
- **(D) Arapahoe County Democratic Party: HD Party for the Planet**, 4-6 p.m., 6500 E. Girard Ave., Denver, cost \$20, contact ammeisel@mac.com to purchase
- **(L) Weld County Libertarian Party: Development Group Meeting**, 6-8 p.m., 2 S. Parish Ave., Johnstown

SUNDAY, MAY 8

- **(S) Denver Democratic Socialists of America: Bi-Weekly Abolition Working Group Meeting**, 7-8:30 p.m., visit <https://bit.ly/abolition-wg> to register in advance



COLORADO POLITICS PUBLIC NOTICES

Public notices are required by the legislature of the State of Colorado to inform residents of the state of the everyday activities of government, businesses and other events of legal importance. Public notices are essential to democracy our republic, and an informed citizenry. Public notices remain most effective in newspapers, as these permanent records cannot be altered or destroyed. Colorado Politics provides this valuable resource as a legally adjudicated newspaper in the City and County of Denver to keep local residents informed and hold public officials accountable. If you would like to publish a public notice in the City and County of Denver, please emaillegals@coloradopolitics.com

NAIC 10287
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
PMI Insurance Co.
3030 N. Third Street, Suite 790
Phoenix, AZ 85012
Assets:.....\$20,228,896.00
Liabilities:.....\$9,962,537.00
Surplus:.....\$10,266,359.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that **PMI Insurance Co.**, organized under the laws of **Arizona**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 15873
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
United Guaranty Residential Ins Co
230 North Elm Street
Greensboro, NC 27401
Assets:.....\$1,991,903,034.00
Liabilities:.....\$1,893,085,972.00
Surplus:.....\$98,817,062.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **United Guaranty Residential Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **North Carolina**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 16667
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
United Guaranty Residential Insurance Company of NC
230 North Elm Street
Greensboro, NC 27401
Assets:.....\$14,957,128.00
Liabilities:.....\$5,040,541.00
Surplus:.....\$9,916,587.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **United Guaranty Residential Insurance Company of NC**, organized under the laws of **North Carolina**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Surety and Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 16803
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Friday Health Plans of Colorado, Inc.
700 Main St Suite 100
Alamosa, CO 81101-2527
Assets:.....\$48,776,227.00
Liabilities:.....\$40,717,880.00
Surplus:.....\$8,058,347.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **Friday Health Plans of Colorado, Inc.**, organized under the laws of **Colorado**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Health** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/22/22 | Last Pub.: 5/13/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 18732
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Arch Mortgage Guaranty Company
8040 Excelsior Drive, Suite 400
Madison, WI 53717
Assets:.....\$47,242,110.00
Liabilities:.....\$3,070,225.00
Surplus:.....\$44,171,885.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Arch Mortgage Guaranty Company**, organized under the laws of **Wisconsin**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 19801
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Argonaut Insurance Company
225 W. Washington Street, 24th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606
Assets:.....\$2,392,360,626.00
Liabilities:.....\$1,321,201,699.00
Surplus:.....\$1,071,158,926.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Argonaut Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 19828
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Argonaut Midwest Insurance Company
225 W. Washington Street, 24th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606
Assets:.....\$21,348,222.00
Liabilities:.....\$3,853,850.00
Surplus:.....\$17,494,372.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Argonaut Midwest Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 19860
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Argonaut Great Central Insurance Co
225 W. Washington Street, 24th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606
Assets:.....\$47,046,857.00
Liabilities:.....\$18,648,185.00
Surplus:.....\$28,398,672.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Argonaut Great Central Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 25143
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company
One State Farm Plaza, D2
Bloomington, IL 61710-0001
Assets:.....\$1,361,626,620.00
Liabilities:.....\$28,241,176,481.00
Surplus:.....\$23,120,450,138.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **State Farm Fire and Casualty Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/29/22 | Last Pub.: 5/20/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 25151
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
State Farm General Insurance Co
One State Farm Plaza, D-2
Bloomington, IL 61710
Assets:.....\$6,738,979,090.00
Liabilities:.....\$4,438,105,103.00
Surplus:.....\$2,300,873,986.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **State Farm General Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/29/22 | Last Pub.: 5/20/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 25178
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
State Farm Mutual Automobile Ins Co
One State Farm Plaza, D2
Bloomington, IL
Assets:.....\$214,493,498,015.00
Liabilities:.....\$71,313,914,654.00
Surplus:.....\$143,179,583,361.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/29/22 | Last Pub.: 5/20/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 27251
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
PMI Mortgage Ins Co, in Rehabilitation
3030 N. Third Street, Suite 790
Phoenix, AZ 85012
Assets:.....\$740,957,689.00
Liabilities:.....\$1,685,982,402.00
Surplus:.....\$-945,024,713.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **PMI Mortgage Insurance Co., in Rehabilitation**, organized under the laws of **Arizona**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 29114
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Arch Mortgage Assurance Company
8040 Excelsior Drive, Suite 400
Madison, WI 53717
Assets:.....\$36,043,260.00
Liabilities:.....\$9,017,254.00
Surplus:.....\$27,026,006.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Arch Mortgage Assurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Wisconsin**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 36927
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Colony Specialty Insurance Company
52 East Gay Street
Columbus, OH 43215
Assets:.....\$91,679,512.00
Liabilities:.....\$67,903,724.00
Surplus:.....\$23,775,788.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Colony Specialty Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Ohio**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 40266
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Arch Mortgage Insurance Company
8040 Excelsior Drive, Suite 400
Madison, WI 53717
Assets:.....\$2,140,567,829.00
Liabilities:.....\$1,997,049,172.00
Surplus:.....\$143,518,657.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: is to certify that the **Arch Mortgage Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Wisconsin**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Mortgage Guaranty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 63274
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Fidelity & Guaranty Life Insurance Co
801 Grand Ave. Suite 2600
Des Moines, IA 50309
Assets:.....\$38,358,118,122.00
Liabilities:.....\$6,885,448,086.00
Surplus:.....\$1,472,670,031.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **Fidelity & Guaranty Life Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Iowa**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Life, Accident & Heath** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 64017
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Jefferson National Life Insurance Co
350 N St Paul St
Dallas, TX 75201
Assets:.....\$10,806,986,316.00
Liabilities:.....\$10,704,390,680.00
Surplus:.....\$102,595,636.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **Jefferson National Life Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Texas**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Life** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 66869
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Nationwide Life Insurance Company
One West Nationwide Blvd; 1-04-701
Columbus, OH 43215
Assets:.....\$178,832,416,721.00
Liabilities:.....\$169,741,025,384.00
Surplus:.....\$9,091,391,337.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **Nationwide Life Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Ohio**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Property & Casualty** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 69108
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
State Farm Life Insurance Company
One State Farm Plaza, D-2
Bloomington, IL 61710
Assets:.....\$86,272,988,097.00
Liabilities:.....\$71,341,679,904.00
Surplus:.....\$14,931,308,193.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **State Farm Life Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Life, Accident & Health** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/29/22 | Last Pub.: 5/20/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 92657
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
Nationwide Life and Annuity Company
One West Nationwide Blvd; 1-04-701
Columbus, OH 43215
Assets:.....\$42,615,377,594.00
Liabilities:.....\$40,061,963,550.00
Surplus:.....\$2,553,414,044.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **Nationwide Life and Annuity Company**, organized under the laws of **Ohio**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Life** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/8/22 | Last Pub.: 4/29/22
Published in Colorado Politics

NAIC 94498
COLORADO DIV OF INSURANCE
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
FOR YEAR 2021
State Farm Health Insurance Company
One State Farm Plaza, D-2
Bloomington, IL 61710
Assets:.....\$8,347,433.00
Liabilities:.....\$12,276.00
Surplus:.....\$8,335,156.00

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY
To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that the **State Farm Health Insurance Company**, organized under the laws of **Illinois**, subject to its Articles of Incorporation or other fundamental organizational documents and in consideration of its compliance with the laws of Colorado, is hereby licensed to transact business as a **Life, Accident & Health** insurance company, as provided by the Insurance Laws of Colorado, as amended, so long as the insurer continues to conform to the authority granted by its Certificate and its corporate articles, or its Certificate is otherwise revoked, canceled or suspended.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City and County of Denver this first day of March 2022.

Michael Conway
Commissioner of Insurance
First Pub.: 4/29/22 | Last Pub.: 5/20/22
Published in Colorado Politics

DISTRICT COURT
Weld County, Colorado
901 9th Avenue
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Case Number: 2022 PR 30019
Division: 1
In the Matter of the Determination of Heirs or Devisees or Both and of Interests in Property of:
GLADYS MARIE BROWN, Deceased

NOTICE OF NON-APPEARANCE
HEARING BY PUBLICATION TO
INTERESTED PERSONS AND
OWNERS BY DESCENT
OR SUCCESSION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-1303, C.R.S.

To all interested persons and owners by descent or succession: Gary Brown, Nancy Johnston, Beau Brown, or Megan Linebeck-Adams

A petition has been filed alleging that the above decedent(s) died leaving the following property:
2PL-3 PULLAM SUB 2ND FILING
Location: WELD COUNTY

The non-appearance hearing on the petition will be held at the following time and location or at a later date to which the non-appearance hearing may be continued:
Date: June 6, 2022 Time: 8:00 a.m.
Courtroom or Division: 1
Address: Weld County District Court, Weld County, Colorado, 901 9th Avenue Greeley, Colorado 80631
The non-appearance hearing will take approximately 10 minutes.

Note:
• You must answer the petition on or before the hearing date and time specified above.
• Within the time required for answering the petition, all objections to the petition must be in writing, filed with the court and served on the petitioner and any required filing fee must be paid.
• The hearing shall be limited to the petition, the objections timely filed and the parties answering the petition in a timely manner. If the petition is not answered and no objections are filed, the court may enter a decree without a hearing.

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April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

DENVER PROBATE COURT
Denver County, Colorado
1437 Bannock Street, Room 230
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022PR30438
In the Matter of the Estate of:
William P. Volk, Jr., also known as
William Philip Volk, Jr., Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to Denver Probate Court of the City and County of Denver, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Attorney or Party Without Attorney:
Elizabeth A. Anderson, Esq.
Atty. Reg. #: 50930
The Law Network, P.C.
6025 S. Quebec Street, Suite 240
Centennial, CO 80111
Phone Number: (303) 265-1111
FAX Number: (720) 749-6161
elizabeth@coloradoestateplanners.com

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DENVER PROBATE COURT
Denver County, Colorado
1437 Bannock St. Room 230
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022PR30410
Division: I
In the Matter of the Estate of: Lucille Halle, a/k/a Lucy Jean Hall, Deceased

NOTICE OF HEARING WITHOUT
APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
TO INTERESTED PERSONS
AND OWNERS BY DESCENT OR
SUCCESSION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-1303, C.R.S.

To all interested persons and owners by descent or succession: Gladys Higgins; Thelma Beard; Amos Hall, Jr.; Estate of Lucille Halle*; Roquel Y. Mays; Freddie Mays, III; James L. Cain, III; Antoinette Pierre; Roxann Pierre, a/k/a Roxann Shaw; Rollin D. Pierre, II; Shelly R. Oliver; Deryl A. Oliver Jr.; Rollin Oliver; and Deryl A. Oliver.

A petition has been filed alleging that the above decedent(s) died leaving the following property:
Description of property: L 25 & 26 BLK 31 MCCULLOUGH ADD 3RD FLG
Location of Property:
2143 High St., Denver, CO 80205

A hearing without appearance on the PETITION FOR THE DETERMINATION OF HEIRS OR DEVISEES OR BOTH, AND OF INTERESTS IN PROPERTY is set at the following date, time, and location:
Date: June 10, 2022 Time: 8:00 A.M.
Address: 1437 Bannock St., Rm. 230, Denver CO 80202

Notice:
• You must answer the petition on or before the hearing date and time specified above.
• Within the time required for answering the petition, all objections to the petition must be in writing, filed with the court and served on the petitioner and any required filing fee must be paid.
• The hearing shall be limited to the parties, the objections timely filed and the parties answering the petition in a timely manner. If the petition is not answered and no objections are filed, the court may enter a decree without a hearing.

***** IMPORTANT NOTICE*****
Any interested person wishing to object to the requested action set forth in the attached motion/petition and proposed order must file a written objection with the court on or before the hearing and must furnish a copy of the objection to the person requesting the court order. JDF 722 (Objection form) is available on the Colorado Judicial Branch website (www.courts.state.co.us). If no objection is filed, the court may take action on the motion/petition without further notice or hearing. If any objection is filed, the objecting party must, within 14 days after filing the objection, contact the court to set the objection for an appearance hearing. Failure to timely set the objection for an appearance hearing as required will result in further action as the court deems appropriate.

Attorney:
Matt Groves, #27315
Jessica R.L. Zaegel, #46306
Groves Law, LLC
281 S. Pearl St., Denver, CO 80209
Phone Number: 303-557-0199
FAX Number: 877-789-6229
E-mail: matt@grovesllc.com
E-mail: jessica@grovesllc.com

Published in Colorado Politics
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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202

CASE NUMBER: 22C00276
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 186
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Alexis Iylene Rowland
For a Change of Name to: Alexis Iylene Jaramillo

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 11, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Alexis Iylene Rowland Be changed to: Alexis Iylene Jaramillo

Published in Colorado Politics:
April 29, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
Arapahoe County, Colorado
7325 Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112

Case Number: 2022PR30510
In the Matter of the Estate of: Shirley Heidelberg Bicket, also known as Shirley H. Bicket, and also known as Shirley Bicket, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022 or the claims may be forever barred.

Attorney for Personal Co-Representatives, Robert B. Bicket and William P. Bicket: David A. Simmental, Esq.
Atty. Reg. #: 32361
Simmental Law, LLC
9085 East Mineral Circle, Suite 190
Centennial, CO 80112
Phone Number: (303) 771-5158
FAX Number: (866) 607-8513
E-mail: DAS@Simmental-Law.com

Published in Colorado Politics
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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202
720-865-7840

CASE NUMBER: 22C00197
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 186
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Jasmine Marie Gallegos
For a Change of Name to: Angelina Cleo Rain Starr Carden

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 8, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Jasmine Marie Gallegos Be changed to: Angelina Cleo Rain Starr Carden

Published in Colorado Politics:
April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202
720-865-7840

CASE NUMBER: 22C00189
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 175
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Christian Santiago Perez
For a Change of Name to: Christian Santiago Pena

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on March 18, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Christian Santiago Perez Be changed to: Christian Santiago Pena

Published in Colorado Politics:
April 29 and May 6 and 13, 2022

COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202

CASE NUMBER: 22C00347
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 186
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Jared Allen Peterson
For a Change of Name to: Jay Dean Townsend

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 22, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Jared Allen Peterson Be changed to: Jay Dean Townsend

Published in Colorado Politics:
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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202

CASE NUMBER: 22C00357
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 170
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Jylissa Nuñez
For a Change of Name to: Jylissa Lopez-Baez

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 18, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Jylissa Nuñez Be changed to: Jylissa Lopez-Baez

Published in Colorado Politics:
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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202
720-865-7840

CASE NUMBER: 22C00186
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 170
In the Matter of the Petition of Parent/Petitioner: Paris Nicole Adams
For Minor Child: LeDavion Zkei Kazadi
For a Change of Name to: LeDavion Zkei Roybal-Hudson

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 4, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of a Minor Child has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: LeDavion Zkei Kazadi Be changed to: LeDavion Zkei Roybal-Hudson

Kristin Wood, Clerk of Court

Published in Colorado Politics
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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202

CASE NUMBER: 22C00282
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 170
In the Matter of the Petition of Parent/Petitioner: Edwin Mendoza & Daisy Castaneda
For Minor Child: Edwin Nolan Mendoza
For a Change of Name to: Nolan Edwin Mendoza

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 8, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Edwin Nolan Mendoza Be changed to: Nolan Edwin Mendoza

Published in Colorado Politics
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DISTRICT COURT
Moffat County, Colorado
221 W Victory Way # 300
Craig, CO 81625

Case Number: 2022PR30015
In the Matter of the Estate of: Andrew B. Russo, Jr. a/k/a Andrew Basil Russo, Jr. a/k/a Andrew Russo, Jr. a/k/a Andrew B. Russo a/k/a Andrew Russo, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Moffat County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Angela Geis, Personal Representative
Attorney for Personal Representative: Kristin A. Dittus, Esq.
Life & Legacy Planning, Ltd.
44 Cook Street, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80206

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April 29 and May 6 and 13, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
Jefferson County, Colorado
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401

Case Number: 2022PR30213
Division: 11
In the Matter of the Estate of: BEVERLY JOAN WESTMORELAND; a/k/a BEVERLY J. WESTMORELAND; and a/k/a BEVERLY WESTMORELAND, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO §15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Jefferson County, Colorado on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Steven William Rich, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Golden Legal Advice, Inc.
Christopher C. O'Dell, No. 10638
P.O. Box 16545
Golden, CO 80402
Phone Number: 303-921-4555
chris.odell@comcast.net

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DISTRICT COURT
Arapahoe County, Colorado
7325 S. Potomac St.
Centennial, CO 80112

Case Number: 22PR30441
Division: CLX
In the Matter of the Estate of: BONITA LEE HUTCHESON, a/k/a BONITA L. HUTCHESON, a/k/a BONITA HUTCHESON, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Therese A. Hutcheson, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Brian Landy (#25337)
4201 E. Yale Ave., Suite 110
Denver, CO 80222
Phone: (303) 781-2447
E-Mail: brianlandy@landy-law.com

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DENVER PROBATE COURT
City and County of Denver, Colorado
1437 Bannock Street, Room 230
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022 PR 30475
In the Matter of the Estate of: CHARLES WILLIAM BERBERICH aka CHARLES W. BERBERICH aka CHARLES BERBERICH, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO §15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to the Denver Probate Court of the City and County of Denver, Colorado on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Marilyn Munsterman, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Elizabeth A. Bryant, Atty. Reg. #: 19699
Bryant Ritsick Symons & Ratner, LLC
3773 Cherry Creek N. Drive, Ste. 600
Denver, CO 80209
Phone Number: 720.845.1690
Email: elizabeth.bryant@brslaw.com

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COUNTY COURT
DENVER COUNTY, COLORADO
1437 Bannock St, Room 135
Denver, CO 80202

CASE NUMBER: 22C00354
DIVISION: Civil | COURTROOM: 175
In the Matter of the Petition of Adult: Alexis Jasmine Martinez-Nolasco
For a Change of Name to: Alexis Jasmine Martinez

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PETITION FOR
CHANGE OF NAME

Public notice is given on April 25, 2022 that a Petition for a Change of Name of an Adult has been filed with the Denver County Court. The Petition requests that the name of: Alexis Jasmine Martinez-Nolasco Be changed to: Alexis Jasmine Martinez

Published in Colorado Politics:
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DISTRICT COURT
Jefferson County, Colorado
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401

Case Number: 2022PR030529
In the Matter of the Estate of: Deborah Kathryn Oehler, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Jefferson, County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

James Robert Oehler, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Erik Morlang, Esq., Atty. Reg. #23321
Erik Morlang, PC
1777 South Harrison Street, Suite 1500
Denver, CO 80210
Phone Number: 303-482-1859

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DISTRICT COURT
Adams County, Colorado
1100 Judicial Center Dr.
Brighton, CO 80601

Case Number: 2022 PR 30290
Division: PR
In the Matter of the Estate of: Sadie E. Matthews also known as Sadie Elizabeth Matthews and Sadie Matthews, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Adams County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Attorney for Personal Representative: Quick Law, LLC
Masayo Quick, Atty. Reg. #: 37021
Denver meeting space (not a mailing address):
1290 Broadway, Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80203
Springs Office and Mailing Address: 411 Lakewood Circle, Ste. A110-E
Colorado Springs, CO 80910
Phone Number: 720-515-2259
E-mail: mquicklaw@rocketmail.com
No Fax

Published in Colorado Politics
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DISTRICT COURT
Jefferson County, Colorado
Court Address:
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401

Case Number: 2022PR30487
Division: 11
In the Matter of the Estate of: Sarah L. Smaha, a/k/a Sarah Smaha, a/k/a Sarah Littlefair Smaha, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Jefferson, County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Kathleen M. Shea, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Julie Groves, #27314
Jessica R.L. Zaegel, #46306
Groves Law, LLC
281 S. Pearl St., Denver, CO 80209
Phone Number: 303-557-0199
FAX Number: 877-789-6229
E-mail: julie@grovesllc.com
E-mail: jessica@grovesllc.com

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DISTRICT COURT
Arapahoe County, Colorado
7325 S. Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112

Case Number: 2022PR30440
Division: CLX
In the Matter of the Estate of: JOHN P. VOLKMAN, a/k/a JOHN PAUL VOLKMAN, a/k/a JOHN VOLKMAN, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Michael J. Volkman, Personal Rep.
Attorneys for Personal Representative: Miranda K. Hawkins, #31290
Jennifer A. Gordon, #30361
Elizabeth J.M. Howard, #41439
Goddard & Hawkins, P.C.
4500 Cherry Creek Drive South, Suite 625
Denver, CO 80246
Phone No: 303-292-3228
FAX No: 303-292-1956
Email: mhawkins@goddardhawkins.com
Email: jgordon@goddardhawkins.com
Email: ehoward@goddardhawkins.com

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DISTRICT COURT
Broomfield County, Colorado
17 DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020

Case Number: 2022 PR 30055
Division: PR
In the Matter of the Estate of: LOUIS FRANKLIN JOHNSON A/K/A LOUIS F. JOHNSON A/K/A LOUIS JOHNSON, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Broomfield County, Colorado, on or before August 22, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Personal Representative: Joelean Lambrecht
1163 W. 156th Ave., Broomfield, CO 80023
Attorney for Personal Representative: Bruce Alan Danford Atty. Reg. 33701
James W. Noland Atty. Reg. 33935
The Law Firm of Bruce A. Danford, LLC
11971 Quay St., Broomfield, CO 80020
Phone No.: 303.410.2900
BruceDanford@BruceDanford.com

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DENVER PROBATE COURT
Denver County, Colorado
1437 Bannock St. Room 230
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022PR30442
Division: I
In the Matter of the Estate of: Margaret Gorham Hurich, a/k/a Margaret G. Hurich, a/k/a Margaret Hurich, a/k/a Peti Gorham Hurich, a/k/a Peti Hurich, a/k/a Peti G. Hurich, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to Denver Probate Court of the City and County of Denver, Colorado, on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Melissa D. Hurich, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: Julie Groves, #27314
Jessica R.L. Ziegel, #46306
Groves Law, LLC
281 S. Pearl St., Denver, CO 80209
Phone Number: 303-557-0199
FAX Number: 877-789-6229
E-mail: julie@grovesllc.com
E-mail: jessica@grovesllc.com

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April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

DENVER PROBATE COURT
Denver, Colorado
1437 Bannock Street, Room 230
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022PR30264
In the Matter of the Estate of: Marsey C. L. McCrory, also known as Marsey L. McCrory, also known as Marsey C. McCrory, and also known as Marsey McCrory, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to Denver Probate Court of the City and County of Denver, Colorado, on or before August 22, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Herbert Velez, Jr., Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative: David A. Simmental, Esq.
Atty. Reg. #: 32361
Simmental Law, LLC
9085 East Mineral Circle, Suite 190
Centennial, CO 80112
Phone Number: (303) 771-5158
FAX Number: (866) 607-8513
E-mail: DAS@Simmental-Law.com

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DISTRICT COURT
Arapahoe County, Colorado
7325 Potomac Street
Centennial, CO 80112

Case Number: 2022PR30422
Division: CLX
In the Matter of the Estate of: Mary Beth Bechtold, also known as Mary B. Bechtold, also known as Mary Eberle, and also known as Mary Eberle, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado, on or before August 22, 2022 or the claims may be forever barred.

James Eberle, Personal Representative
Attorney for Personal Representative: David A. Simmental, Esq.
Atty. Reg. #: 32361
Simmental Law, LLC
9085 East Mineral Circle, Suite 190
Centennial, CO 80112
Phone Number: (303) 771-5158
FAX Number: (866) 607-8513
E-mail: DAS@Simmental-Law.com

Published in Colorado Politics
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DISTRICT COURT
Broomfield County, Colorado
17 DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020

Case Number: 2022 PR 30048
Division: PR
In the Matter of the Estate of:
MATTHEW LEE BREEDEN A/K/A
MATTHEW L. BREEDEN A/K/A
MATTHEW BREEDEN, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Broomfield County, Colorado, on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Personal Representative:
Lelia Clark Breedon
335 Beryl Street, Broomfield, CO 80020
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Bruce Alan Danford Atty. Reg. 33701
James W. Noland Atty. Reg. 33935
The Law Firm of Bruce A. Danford, LLC
11971 Quay St., Broomfield, CO 80020
Phone No.: 303.410.2900
BruceDanford@BruceDanford.com

Published in Colorado Politics
April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
El Paso County, Colorado
270 S. Tejon St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Case Number: 2022PR164
In the Matter of the Estate of:
MELVIN EUGENE STRAUB, AKA
MELVIN E. STRAUB, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of El Paso County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Attorney or Party Without Attorney:
Caroline Beasley Baker
250 Ashland Place 31E
Brooklyn, NY 11217
E-mail: c.beasley.baker@gmail.com

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DISTRICT COURT
Douglas County, Colorado
Court Address:
4000 Justice Way Ste. 2009
Castle Rock, CO 80109

Case Number: 2022PR30215
Division: C
In the Matter of the Estate of: Michele
Jacqueline Currie, a/k/a Michele J. Currie,
a/k/a Michele Currie, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Douglas, County, Colorado, on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Valerie Angelico, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Julie Groves, #27314
Jessica R.L. Zaegel, #46306
Groves Law, LLC
281 S. Pearl St., Denver, CO 80209
Phone Number: 303-557-0199
FAX Number: 877-789-6229
E-mail: julie@grovesllc.com
E-mail: jessica@grovesllc.com

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April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
Adams County, Colorado
1100 Judicial Center Dr.
Brighton, CO 80601

Case Number: 2022PR30322
In the Matter of the Estate of:
Nicholas A. Onorato III, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Adams, County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Attorney for Personal Representative:
Creer Law LLC
Gregory R. Creer, #36630
6950 E. Belleview Ave, Suite 103
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Phone Number: 303.514.3436
E-mail: greg@creerlawoffice.com

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DISTRICT COURT
Arapahoe County, Colorado
7325 S. Potomac Street, #100
Centennial, CO 80112

Case Number: 2022PR030490
In the Matter of the Estate of: Jeanne M.
Buchner a/k/a Jeanne Marie Buchner
a/k/a Jeanne Buchner, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Arapahoe County, Colorado, on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Benjamin A. Buchner, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Kristin A. Dittus, Esq.
Life & Legacy Planning, Ltd.
44 Cook Street, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80206

Published in Colorado Politics
April 29 and May 6 and 13, 2022

PROBATE COURT
CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER
Room 230, City and County Building
1437 Bannock Street
Denver, Colorado 80202-5382

Case Number: 2022PR30328
Division: PR
In the Matter of the Estate of: Norman
Amsberry, a/k/a Norman Dean Amsberry,
a/k/a Norman D. Amsberry, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to the Probate Court of Denver County, Colorado on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Andrew St. Pierre, Attorney for Baysore & Christian Fiduciary Services LLC by and through its designated representative Roby Scott Christian, Personal Representative
Jeff Althaus, Esq., Atty Reg.# 45887
Andrew St. Pierre, Esq., Atty Reg.#: 53844
Althaus Law, LLC
11150 Huron Street, #102
Northglenn, CO 80234
Phone: (720) 340-2783
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andrew@althauslaw.com

Published in Colorado Politics
April 15, 22 and 29, 2022

JEFFERSON CO. COMBINED COURTS
County of Jefferson, Colorado
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401

Case Number: 2022 PR 30497
In the Matter of the Estate of:
DON EDWARD BRAY aka DON E.
BRAY aka DON BRAY RAY FINLEY
BITTLE aka RAY F. BITTLE aka RAY
BITTLE, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO §15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to the District Court of Jefferson County, Colorado on or before August 29, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

JAMIE S. BITTLE, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Amy E. Symons, Atty Reg. #38874
Bryant Ritsick Symons & Ratner, LLC
3773 Cherry Creek N. Drive, Ste. 600
Denver, CO 80209
Phone: 303.331.7969
Email: amy.symons@brslaw.com

Published in Colorado Politics
April 29 and May 6 and 13, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
Jefferson County, Colorado
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401

Case Number: 2022PR30432
Division: 11
In the Matter of the Estate of:
ROBERT JAMES DAVIS, a/k/a ROBERT
J. DAVIS, a/k/a ROBERT DAVIS, and
a/k/a BOB DAVIS, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO §15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above-named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Jefferson County, Colorado on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Ryan Edward Davis, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Golden Legal Advice, Inc.
Christopher C. O'Dell, No. 10638
P.O. Box 16545
Golden, CO 80402
Phone Number: 303-921-4555
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Published in Colorado Politics:
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DENVER PROBATE COURT
Denver County, Colorado
1437 Bannock Street, Room 220
City & County Building
Denver, CO 80202

Case Number: 2022 PR 030291
In the Matter of the Estate of: ROBERT
EMMETT O'HAIRE JR, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to Denver Probate Court of the City and County of Denver, Colorado on or before August 15, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Robert E. O'Haire, Personal Rep.
7815 Rampart Way, Littleton, CO 80125
Attorney for Personal Representative:
David M. Cook, #10808
Klancke & Cook, Attorneys
2833 S. Colorado Blvd.
Denver, CO 80222
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Senate approves \$30.5M in grants for law enforcement

BY HANNAH METZGER
hannah.metzger@coloradopolitics.com

The Colorado Senate unanimously approved a bipartisan proposal Wednesday to fund \$30.5 million in grant programs for state law enforcement, sending it to the House for consideration.

If enacted, Senate Bill 145 would establish three grant programs to fund: crime prevention and crisis intervention in high-crime areas; law enforcement recruitment, retention, tuition and training; and, improving law enforcement diversity.

The grant programs intend to address rising crime and increase public trust in law enforcement, said bill co-sponsors Sen. Janet Buckner, D-Aurora, and Sen. John Cooke, R-Greeley.

“Every Coloradan deserves to feel safe in their community, but like the rest of the country, crime has been on the rise here in Colorado, which is why we’re taking action,” Buckner said. “I am proud to champion this common-sense legislation, and I look forward

DISTRICT COURT
Adams County, Colorado
Court Address: 1100 Judicial Center Drive
Brighton, CO 80601

Case Number: 2022 PR 30310
Division: PR
In the Matter of the Estate of:
ROSIE MARIE KVERN A/K/A ROSIE
M. KVERN A/K/A ROSIE KVERN,
Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Adams County, Colorado, on or before August 22, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

Personal Representative:
Lyn Marie Goodrum
790 3rd Street, Bennett, CO 80102
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Bruce Alan Danford Atty. Reg. 33701
James W. Noland Atty. Reg. 33935
The Law Firm of Bruce A. Danford, LLC
11971 Quay St., Broomfield, CO 80020
Phone No.: 303.410.2900
BruceDanford@BruceDanford.com

Published in Colorado Politics
April 22 and 29, and May 6, 2022

DISTRICT COURT
Broomfield County, Colorado
17 DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, CO 80020

Case Number: 2022PR30021
In the Matter of the Estate of: DOUGLAS
B. MILLER, A/K/A DOUGLAS BROOK
MILLER, Deceased

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
BY PUBLICATION
PURSUANT TO § 15-12-801, C.R.S.

All persons having claims against the above named estate are required to present them to the personal representative or to District Court of Broomfield, County, Colorado, on or before August 31, 2022, or the claims may be forever barred.

DEANNA L. MILLER, Personal Rep.
Attorney for Personal Representative:
Benjamin L. Patterson, Attorney
Atty. Reg. #45030
750 W Hampden Ave, Suite 505
Englewood, CO 80110
Phone Number: (303)488-9888
FAX Number: (303)488-9889
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Published in Colorado Politics
April 15, 22 and 29, 2022



THE DENVER GAZETTE FILE

Police officers in riot gear at Civic Center in October 2020.

The grant programs intend to address rising crime and increase public trust in law enforcement, said bill co-sponsors Sen. Janet Buckner, D-Aurora, and Sen. John Cooke, R-Greeley.

to reducing crime and creating a safer Colorado for us all.”

Under the bill, the funds would be distributed over two years with \$15 million going to the crime prevention program and \$7.5 million going to each of the workforce programs. Another \$400,000 would pay for oversight from the Department of Public Safety and \$100,000 would fund a statewide forum to solicit suggestions on crime prevention measures.

Of the \$15 million for crime prevention, at least \$5 million would be reserved for community-based organizations and another \$5 million for law enforcement and local governments.

At least 20% of the grant funds would be required to go to rural communities if they apply, Cooke said. The \$30.5 million would come from the general fund and is already included in Gov. Jared Polis’s budget, Buckner said.

Though the bill united lawmakers in the Senate, many activists have raised concerns, saying providing more funding for law enforcement will not address issues like brutality and misconduct by police officers.

“This bill, and other similar ones around the nation, is window dressing for a deeper issue regarding the real training

officers should receive,” said Dr. Robert Davis, co-lead of Denver’s task force to reimagine policing. “We need a stronger collective will to overhaul how we approach policing and policing training.”

Public perception of law enforcement has taken a hit in recent years. In 2020, only 48% of U.S. adults said they had confidence in the police, according to a Gallup poll. That is an all-time low, and down from the historical high of 64% in 2004. In 2021, confidence slightly increased to 51%, but for Black adults, it was only 27%.

This change came in the wake of several high-profile incidents in which unarmed Black people were killed by police officers, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Colorado resident Elijah McClain. During the resulting protests, calls to defund the police spread throughout the country and state, contrary to the additional funding the bill would provide.

Cooke, the former sheriff of Weld County, said most people don’t want to decrease police funding, pointing to a 2021 Pew Research survey which found that 47% of Americans want police funding to increase and 37% want it to stay the same.

Cooke is also sponsor-

ing another law enforcement funding bill, Senate Bill 5, that the Senate passed on Wednesday. If enacted, that bill would spend \$5 million to expand mental health support for law enforcement.

“For members of law enforcement, serving on the frontlines of traumatic situations can have devastating effects on their mental health,” said Sen. Jeff Bridges, D-Greenwood Village, who is also sponsoring SB-5. “We’ll ensure they are well equipped to continue to show up for our communities whenever and wherever needed.”

Last year in Colorado, 2,400 law enforcement officers quit or were fired, while just over 1,700 officers were hired, Buckner said, citing data reported by Colorado Public Radio.

This comes as violent crime has increased in Colorado over the years. In 2021, there were 30,282 reports of murder, assault and robbery, compared to 21,743 reports five years prior, according to state data. This is part of a national trend — the nation’s murder rate rose 30% between 2019 and 2020, the largest single-year increase in more than a century, according to the Pew Research Center.

Concern over crime has similarly increased, hitting a four-year high late last year, according to a national Washington Post-ABC News poll. Of respondents, 59% said crime is an “extremely” or “very serious” problem in the U.S., the highest level since 2017.



The snowmelt is on – and that’s too soon in Colorado, say water watchers

BY MARIANNE GOODLAND
marianne.goodland@coloradopolitics.com

The concern over drought over the past couple of years has focused on the Western Slope and much of southern and southeastern Colorado, but water watchers said on April 19 that a lack of precipitation is now a factor for the Eastern Plains, as well, just when farmers are getting ready to plant.

Colorado’s drought situation is a little better than it was a year ago, but warm temperatures, windy conditions in April and almost no precipitation in parts of the state means the snowpack is melting a couple of weeks sooner than most water watchers would prefer.

The state’s Water Availability Task Force met on April 19 to look at the most recent numbers from the Colorado Climate Center at Colorado State University and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which is a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The climate center’s Peter Goble, who looked at temperature and precipitation over the past month, said March temperatures were average around most of the state, but compared to historic averages, just a tad cooler than normal.

It’s normal to have higher winds this time of year, he said, but when those winds come without moisture, it means lower humidity and more evaporation.

From October to March — the first six months of a water year that started October 1 — it’s been much drier than average in southern Colorado, the San Luis Valley and Rio Grande River basin and on the Eastern Plains, but wetter than normal

in northwestern Colorado, he said. April ends the wet season for the mountains and begins the wet season for the Eastern Plains. But the moisture has stayed away from the Eastern Plains, Goble said. “To see it ‘skunked’ for the month of April” is concerning, he said, given that’s when the agriculture season – and planting – start up. The precipitation for most of the state, he said, is likely to be “wimpy” for the rest of April. That means the long-term drought is not going away anytime soon, with precipitation below normal for the past two years.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, which reports drought conditions weekly, while the entire state is in some level of drought, compared to a year ago Colorado is not seeing the worst levels, known as exceptional drought.

That’s particularly true for the Western Slope, with snowpack in better shape now than a year ago, Goble said.

The next six weeks will be critical for the Eastern Plains, he added.

“You want a couple of good million-dollar rains to help facilitate growth of crops” and for forage lands, he said.

But Colorado could be heading into its third straight year of La Niña conditions, which is what’s driving warmer temperatures and less precipitation. Goble said a third La Niña year is anticipated.

“The deck is stacked against us,” he said. The drier conditions means the threat for significant wildfires in June is elevated across much of the state, including the high country.



Hal Bidlack



Jon Caldara



Miller Hudson



Paula Noonan



Kelly Sloan



Jimmy Sengenberger

Political junkies delight! Join in on the debate.

Colorado Politics hosts regular opinion columns from all sides of the aisle from the state’s leading insiders and political experts, including Hal Bidlack, Jon Caldara, Miller Hudson, Paula Noonan, Kelly Sloan and Jimmy Sengenberger.



U.S. Forest Service receives funding for forest fire mitigation along Front Range

BY SCOTT WEISER
scott.weiser@gazette.com

President Joe Biden signed an executive order Friday directing the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to spearhead efforts to protect, sustain and rebuild the nation’s old-growth forests, mitigate the threat of wildfire and support local communities’ response to forest fires.

“These magnificent ecosystems are threatened by the climate impacts that are already here, with intensifying wildfires demanding urgent action to protect our forests and the economies that depend on them. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides historic wildfire resilience funding and calls for prioritizing the restoration of old-growth forests,” says the executive order.

Initial investments will focus on communities at the highest risk. The Forest Service’s 10-year wildfire strategy calls for treating up to 20 million acres on national forests and grasslands and up to 30 million acres of treatments on other federal, state, tribal, private and family lands.

The Forest Service plans to treat a total of 36,100 acres out of some 3.5 million acres of national forest land along the Front Range in Colorado. It has allocated \$18.1 million for fiscal year 2022 and \$170.4 million for

the 2022 – 2024 fiscal years. That comes to some \$4,720 per acre to treat about 1% of the vulnerable forests in the Arapaho, Roosevelt and Pike and San Isabel national forests. The anticipated completion of “initial treatments” is 2027 to 2029.

Using an “integrated approach across the landscape,” and partnering with numerous local agencies and landowners, the U.S. Forest Service will use mechanical thinning followed by prescribed fire.

“Thanks to the investments made in President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, USDA is taking the next step in reducing wildfire risk, especially in Western states where communities, infrastructure and resources are at the most risk,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack during a visit to Lyons on April 11. “The people of Colorado need no reminding of the dire threat wildfire presents to states across the West.”

“In FY 2022 the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests expects to use four contracts, three timber sales, multiple prescribed fire projects, one Good Neighbor Agreement, and three new agreements. The Pike and San Isabel National Forests expect to use five contracts, one Good Neighbor Agreement, and two agreement modifications,” says the Regional Forest Service press release.

a look back

Colorado congressman calls for abolishment of IRS

BY RACHAEL WRIGHT
Special to Colorado Politics

Thirty-Five Years Ago This Week: U.S. Rep. Dan Schaefer, a Republican representing Colorado's 6th Congressional District, joined several congressional colleagues for "tea" in Boston Harbor aboard the Beaver II, a full-sized replica of the 18th century ship of the same name.

Dipping a copy of the United States tax code into a large basin, Schaefer and his conservative colleagues vowed to abolish the Internal Revenue Service. Re-creating the historical 'Boston Tea Party', in which three vessels were boarded and relieved of their cargo by colonial revolutionaries on December 16, 1773, Schaefer and company announced their decision to completely overhaul America's tax structure at the event.

"This is one of the most important reforms in American political history," Schaefer said.

Rep. Billy Tauzin, R-LA, and Schaefer were co-chairs of the National Retail Sales Tax



U.S. Rep. Dan Schaefer

Caucus and had introduced legislation that would repeal the federal income tax — both personal and corporate — and replace it with a "revenue neutral" retail sales tax of 15%.

"Last year, we vowed another Tea Party in America," said Schaefer. "This year, we are delivering on that promise. By tossing the U.S. Tax Code into Boston Harbor, we may well be making the strongest statement against an unfair tax system since 1773, when a group

of hostile colonists rebelled against the British Crown and dumped 342 chests of tea into this same harbor, from this same spot. It's a revolutionary idea — one we believe Americans will rally around, as they have here today."

Schaefer told the assembled press that the legislation had taken three long years to craft because NRST members had "carefully analyzed" all of the potential ramifications for such "a sweeping change."

In other news developing back in Colorado, state Sen. Mike Coffman, R-Aurora, a Persian Gulf War veteran, announced a Joint Resolution before the state Senate that called for a criminal investigation into the exposure of U.S. military personnel to chemical weapons during Operation Desert Storm.

Coffman served as an infantry major in the U.S. Marine Corps during the war and was joined on Military Appreciation Day with several Colorado veterans in uniform.

"There must be a full investigation into what is now widely known the 'Gulf War Cover Up,'" said Coffman. "The president and congress have an obligation to those who fought in the war. I'm not sure whether or not low-level exposure to chemical weapons is the cause of the reported symptoms of so many Gulf War veterans. We deserve to have our questions answered."

Coffman referenced a classified report that was leaked to the press in mid-1996 regard-

ing an order the 37th Combat Engineer Battalion received in 1991 to destroy a munitions depot in southern Iraq. The Central Intelligence Agency had prior knowledge that the depot contained a large amount of nerve agents and the Department of Defense acknowledged that a large number of American troops were exposed to the chemical agents Sarin and Cyclosarin.

"For more than five years, the information that every Gulf War veteran has had the right to know has been hidden from them," Coffman said. "Those responsible must be brought to justice. If not now, young men who may be called to serve in future wars will not have the full confidence in their military leadership."

Rachael Wright is the author of the Captain Savva Mystery series, with degrees in Political Science and History from Colorado Mesa University and is a contributing writer to Colorado Politics and The Gazette.

Lawmakers take preliminary action on PERA repayment

BY MARIANNE GOODLAND
marianne.goodland@coloradopolitics.com

Despite concerns around gubernatorial opposition to making up a missed 2020 payment to the Public Employees Retirement Association, the House Finance Committee took first action this week on House Bill 1029.

That measure would not only make up the \$225 million payment due in 2020 that was suspended due to the recession, but also add in \$78.57 million to cover interest the state pension plan claimed it lost due to the missed payment. The bill — payment plus interest — is based on a unanimous recommendation from the state's pension review commission and a bipartisan subcommittee that includes representatives from organized labor, the Independence Institute, investment banking and public finance sectors.

The annual payments started in 2018 under SB 18-200, which committed the state to paying \$225 million each year. That would help the pension plan pay down its unfunded liabilities, part of a 30-year plan to get the pension back to full funding.

It was a good compromise plan until COVID, said Rep. Shannon Bird, D-Westminster, the bill's sponsor. Failure to pay this obligation will cause PERA's unfunded liability to grow, she told the finance committee Monday.

Rep. Shane Sandridge, R-Colorado Springs, the bill's co-sponsor, said the 2018 legislation put PERA on the path to solvency, and with-

out its passage the state's credit rating could have been negatively impacted. That risk still exists without the passage of HB 1029, he explained.

The state has the money now and might not tomorrow, so it needs to be paid now, he said.

HB 1029 was introduced on the first day of the 2022 session, but has been on hold, in part because of concerns over the interest payment.

The payment will be made with general fund dollars, including a transfer of \$198.47 million from the general fund to a PERA cash fund set up for that purpose. That's added to \$380 million in general fund dollars that were put into the PERA cash fund in its inaugural year, 2021.

Sens. Chris Hansen, D-Denver and Bob Rankin, R-Carbondale, told Colorado Politics those funds will cover both the 2022 payment and prepay the following year payment.

But whether the interest portion — some \$78.6 million — is part of the equation is another matter. Hansen and Rankin, both Joint Budget Committee members, do not favor repaying that interest, and it's a view shared among many in the Senate.

Senate Majority Leader Dominick Moreno, D-Commerce City, commented last November during a Legislative Council meeting that state agencies that saw their budgets slashed during the 2020 recession didn't get those dollars back plus interest.

HB 1029 is now awaiting action from the House Appropriations Committee.

Bill banning courts from ordering juveniles to pay restitution to insurers OK'd in House

BY HANNAH METZGER
hannah.metzger@coloradopolitics.com

State House members approved a bill on Monday to ban courts from ordering juveniles to pay restitution to insurance companies.

House Bill 1373 seeks to prohibit courts from ordering juveniles to pay restitution to insurance companies, though it still allows the courts to mandate juveniles pay restitution to victims.

From 2016 to 2020, 234 juveniles in Colorado were ordered to pay over \$3.57 million in restitution fees to insurance companies, according to state data. Of that \$3.57 million, only \$146,348 — or 4% — has been paid.

"Insurance companies are not victims," said bill sponsor Rep. Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez, D-Denver. "This is very specific to insurance companies that also go after youth for restitution, even after a young person has paid restitution or is making payments to their victims, which is where the money should actually go."

Supporters of the bill said high restitution fees from insurance companies continue a cycle of crime and poverty for juveniles, pushing them to reoffend to pay off impossibly high

From 2016 to 2020, 234 juveniles in Colorado were ordered to pay over \$3.57 million in restitution fees to insurance companies, according to state data.

debts as they struggle to find work with criminal records. These debts also often get pushed onto parents, as many juvenile offenders are not old enough to legally work.

They added that restitution fees have 8% interest rates, are not dischargeable by filing for bankruptcy and can prohibit youth from activities, such as getting a driver's license or taking out loans for school or work.

The House passed the bill in a 38-25 vote, with all Republicans in opposition and all Democrats in support except for Rep. Marc Synder of Colorado Springs. Opponents to the bill argued that it would result in insurance companies raising rates and victims of crimes not being fairly compensated.

The measure's next stop is the Senate.

from our partners



President Joe Biden walks over to speak with members of the press after stepping off Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., on April 25. Biden is returning to Washington after spending the weekend at his home in Delaware.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Biden mutes display of clemency power amid pressure for more executive action

BY NAOMI LIM
Washington Examiner

President Joe Biden is coming under pressure to exercise the power of his pen before the 2022 midterm elections.

But while signing executive orders, proclamations, and memoranda may satiate an impatient Democratic base amid congressional gridlock, Biden and the party risk playing into Republican strategists' hands.

Biden flexed his executive muscle Tuesday by announcing the first three pardons and 75 commutations of his administration for Second Chance Month, concentrating on nonviolent drug offenders. The highly anticipated move comes months after negotiations on Capitol Hill between the likes of Sens. Cory Booker, a New Jersey Democrat, and Tim Scott, a South Carolina Republican, collapsed.

But the clemency celebrations staged at the White House by former President Donald Trump were not emulated by Biden. The incumbent did not promote his own work. Instead, senior administration officials hosted a virtual event in the afternoon, which was only added to the public schedule that morning and coincided with White House press secretary Jen Psaki's briefing.

And during that briefing, Psaki was careful to underscore the successful petitioners "had less than four years to serve" of their sentences.

"A good percentage of them, and I can find the exact number in here, are also already under home confinement," she

said.

Biden's balancing act regarding crime and criminal justice reform follows a campaign spent amplifying racial issues while dealing with criticism concerning Democratic calls to "defund the police" amid a crime surge. And now, more than a year in, he has the added complication of dismal poll numbers. On average, 41% of respondents approved of Biden as president, and 54% disapproved, according to a RealClearPolitics poll.

University of Minnesota Center for the Study of Politics and Governance Director Larry Jacobs agreed Biden is "walking a tightrope."

"Biden is working to hold on to progressives by using his powers to ease incarceration while focusing on nonviolent offenders in order to deflect attacks from the tough-on-violent-crime charges," Jacobs told the Washington Examiner.

Besides the pardons and commutations, Biden announced Tuesday that the Justice Department and Labor Department would be collaborating for the first time on a \$145 million job training program for the roughly 600,000 people released from prison every year and that the latter would be offering \$140 million in workforce development grants. The administration is aiming to remove barriers for federal government employment and opportunities to obtain small business capital as well.

Reporters had previously plied Psaki for information related to Biden's criminal justice reform executive action in-

tentions earlier this month after Minnesota authorities declined to charge the SWAT officer who shot dead 22-year-old black man Amir Locke while conducting a homicide investigation no-knock search.

"Since Republicans refuse to support the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, we are looking at additional steps we can take," Psaki said at the time. "We are continuing to look at them, on executive action, to advance police reform, obviously something we put a pause on while that was being negotiated."

But Biden is under pressure more broadly to deploy executive action in the hope of appealing to disappointed Democratic voters before November. Republicans have a 4-percentage-point average edge on generic congressional ballot polling and a historical trend advantage.

For context, Biden has signed 87 executive orders during his administration, from healthcare to gun edicts. In comparison, Trump issued 220 fiats, Barack Obama 276, George W. Bush 291, and Bill Clinton 254 over the course of their respective terms of different lengths.

But Republicans, such as former Kansas Rep. Tim Huelskamp, predicted that any rash decisions made by Biden and his aides may help the GOP this cycle.

"Although concerns about executive overreach could enhance Republican turnout, there is no doubt that the likely radical nature of Biden's executive actions will propel conservative voters this fall," the onetime Tea Party Caucus chair-

man said. "Anything that Biden might do to deliver something for Democrat voters will just further expose how far left the Democrats have been driven."

The most sustained, organized executive action pressure has been with respect to student debt forgiveness. The most vocal advocate has been Biden's former 2020 Democratic presidential nomination rival and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who has been urging Biden to cancel \$50,000 in federal student debt unilaterally.

"Democrats win when Democrats are in touch with the American people and what's happening to them," she told CBS last weekend. "Not everything has to go through Congress. We picked the example of student loan debt. That would affect about 43 million people. That matters."

Another policy area is immigration after multiple attempts to include legislative language in streamlined, simple-majority reconciliation spending bills failed. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus told reporters at the White House on Monday that they lobbied Biden in person for executive action covering temporary protective status and reuniting 4 million people with their families.

"The executive orders and actions presented will inspire younger generations to engage with us and the Biden administration [and] empower them — and send a clear message they are not forgotten," California Rep. Raul Ruiz, the caucus's chairman, said.

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opinion



THE PODIUM

COLORADO'S THOUGHT LEADERS ADDRESS KEY COLORADO ISSUES

End pay disparities for state employees

Over recent years, Coloradans and Americans have been forced to confront the persistent injustices that continue to permeate our society. From the large and powerful protests that have erupted across the country, to the day-to-day fights for such things as equal representation, access to quality health care, fair pay, benefits and opportunities, it is clear that we as lawmakers need to

OPINION



BRITTANY PETTERSEN



LESLIE HEROD

take action at all levels of government to address inequities.

Critically, we must include our own state departments and agencies in this work, as these

institutions should be designed to give all Coloradans a fair shot. Throughout the pandemic, state employees have taken on enormous burdens as communities statewide continue to rely on state services to navigate this crisis.

State employees have worked tirelessly to help their fellow Coloradans and yet, on average, Colorado state employee wages and benefits are 16.4% behind their peers who work outside of state government. State employees of color face an even greater wage discrepancy — the state's data demonstrates that Black, Latinx and Native American employees are paid, on average, 13% to 15% less than the state's white employees.

People of color represent a quarter of all state employees and work tirelessly to provide essential services to all Coloradans. It is crucial that we ensure pay equity for these

State employees have worked tirelessly to help their fellow Coloradans and yet, on average, Colorado state employee wages and benefits are 16.4% behind their peers who work outside of state government.

employees. That's why we are proud to have sponsored House Bill 1196, which was recently signed into law by Gov. Jared Polis.

This bill, also sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Dominick Moreno and House Majority Leader Daneya Esgar, directs the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, created through state employees' historic first contract with the state of Colorado, to conduct a study to assess pay inequities specific to gender, race and other protected classes within state departments.

The study will require that recommendations be made to address these pay inequities,

and a final report including the findings and recommendations from the study will be provided to the members of the general assembly, the Governor and to the state employee union, Colorado WINS.

State employees have been advocating for the completion of this study for years, so we are hopeful the state will move the research forward efficiently. This bill is an important step to honor our commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion in our state agencies and toward ensuring our employees earn a living wage across the state. Colorado is a nationally recognized leader in building

more equitable workplaces and ensuring pay transparency. We believe this study will provide the real data necessary to identify the crux of the issues causing pay inequities so the state can determine how best to address them.

All Coloradans want the same things: safety and security for our families, a fair chance to build a decent life, and a better future for our children. In that same vein, state employees deserve to be paid a fair wage for their service to our state to ensure that we live up to our shared values — that your circumstance, zip code, gender or race does not determine your ability to care for yourself and your family.

Brittany Pettersen, D-Lakewood, represents District 22 in the Colorado state Senate. Leslie Herod, D-Denver, represents District 8 in the Colorado state House.

Donor-conceived people should know their origin

There is a 1960 Doctor Seuss-like kids book that was popular in my childhood. "Are You My Mother" is a nail-biting, John le Carre style super-thriller.

See if you can follow the twists and turns in this one: Momma bird flies away from her nest for just a tiny moment to find a worm, and while gone her egg hatches. The baby bird goes looking for its mommy.

In this pre-gender-fluid time he asks all these other mommies, "Are you my mother?" In a stunning plot twist the duck mom says, "No, I'm not your mother." So does the dog mom, and cat mom and so on.

Without giving away the incredible suspense of this Jason Bourne-like action thriller, at the end the little birdie does, in fact, find his real biological mother, to the relief of every three-year-old being read the story. (For some reason child abandonment was a big theme in kids stories of my youth. Think Bambi. They sure knew

how to make us kids feel safe).

If the book were written today the little bird would be running around asking, "Are you one of my two-or-more mommies?" And when the bird was all grown up, he'd be making record requests to find his biological father.

And that's the story of Senate Bill 224. But first a bit of history.

Kids who are adopted tend to grow up. And as they do some of them want to know who their biological parents are. Until about eight years ago they would run into a brick wall. The information could be kept from them.

If we didn't have this natural craving to know where we come from, Ancestry.com would not exist.

For an adopted or foster child it can be far more than a curiosity. It might provide emotional closure to find out who their biological parents are. It can go a long way to help heal some pretty deep emotional scars.

Knowing more about one's genetic parents could be lifesaving. As science and healthcare progress, your genomic history is crucial for health care. If you're adopted,

Senate Bill 224 would require future donors to agree in writing to provide their information (identity) which could be accessed in the future by their adult, biological children. It would require the companies that do the work of "donor-conceived persons" to keep records so they could later be seen.

which box do you check on the medical form when it asks, "is there a history of cancer in your family?"

To their credit, the Colorado State Legislature really stepped up and advocated for adopted and foster kids. Updating the law, they allowed adopted people, when they became an adult, to find out who their biological parents are, if such information was available.

I instinctively understand why some adoptive parents are nervous about letting their kids find out who the "other" parents are. Which is why this authority doesn't come into play until the kids are grown.

Fine for adopted kids. Fine for foster kids. But what about "donor-conceived" kids? I'm talking about kids of a same-

sex couple. Our governor's family would be a good illustration.

To be clear, Jared Polis and his husband are deeply caring, great parents, and I doubt their kids would have such need. I'm using them to illustrate only because they are the best known same-sex couple with kids in the state.

For each of their kids, I assume one of them donated sperm and they arranged for a donor egg and a surrogate to bring the baby to term. As an adult that child might want to know which dad is his biological father and who his biological mom is. If Colorado's first couple refused to provide such information, as it stands now, Polis's then adult kid would be legally powerless to find out.

Hats off to Sens. Steve Fenberg, a Democrat represent-

ing Boulder County, and Bob Gardner, a Republican from El Paso County, for advocating for such a person to have the legal right to know, like any other adopted kid, once an adult.

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Of course, this only helps such kids conceived in Colorado. Other states should follow Colorado's example and pass similar protections.

If this transparency makes sense for adult adopted kids, it makes sense for donor-conceived ones. There isn't any difference. People should know who their biological parents are.

Jon Caldara is president of the Independence Institute in Denver and hosts "The Devil's Advocate with Jon Caldara" on Colorado Public Television Channel 12. His column appears Sundays in Colorado Politics.



JON CALDARA

COLORADO EDITORIALS

DENVER GAZETTE

Fentanyl's fate is in the Senate's hands

It's now the state Senate's turn to save lives in Colorado's epic fight against deadly fentanyl.

The House had its chance — and blew it.

House Bill 1326, approved by the lower chamber on Monday, was supposed to repair the damage done to our state three years ago when lawmakers recklessly decriminalized possession of up to four grams of the hyper-lethal opioid. That's enough to kill 2,000 people — and it was turned into a misdemeanor. Cops only can write a ticket.

Yet, that gaping loophole, incredibly, was left in place in the version of HB 1326 that made it through the meat grinder of backroom politics and into the House earlier this session. The loophole only was narrowed by a subsequent amendment, which still left possession of up to one gram a misdemeanor — enough to kill 500.

Worse still, the House majority actually compounded the bill's flaws last Friday. A House committee changed the legal standard for establishing intent, gutting the amended bill's attempt to re-criminalize possession of one to four grams. In the words of dissenting Colorado Springs Republican state Rep. Terri Carver, it will “make prosecution of felony possession almost impossible.”

And as insult to injury, the same committee also amended in an automatic repeal of felony possession altogether in 2025, when it reverts to a misdemeanor.

It's time for the buck to stop. The Senate must amend HB 1326 to:

Make possession of any amount of this deadly poison a felony.

Restore the previous standard for intent to possess a controlled substance.

Remove the senseless expiration date for felony possession.

Anything less is unacceptable — and an insult to all of fentanyl's overwhelmingly young victims and their survivors.

Ruling Democrats at the Capitol, along with a few Republicans, are blinded by their dogma of drug legalization. They refuse to see that their gambit in 2019 — decriminalizing fentanyl as well as other hard drugs like heroin and meth — helped foster Colorado's current calamity.

As of the end of 2021, our state had suffered 1,578 fentanyl-related deaths since 2015. That's a staggering 1,008% increase in a six-year time span. Since 2019, the increase in fentanyl deaths in our state has outstripped that of every other state but Alaska. It has surged 382% in that short time. There's also recent research directly attributing approximately 650 Colorado fentanyl deaths to the 2019 law.

Defenders of decriminalization insist it's needed to prevent the incarceration of addicts, who they say warrant treatment, not prison. But it is a myth that mere addicts ever have been jailed in any significant way. On the contrary, empowering law officers to treat possession as a felony gives them a lever to get users into rehab — and save their lives.

Underscore that point, another



COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

voice of reason in last week's House debate, Republican state Rep. Matt Soper of Delta, tried unsuccessfully to amend HB 1326 to make possession of any amount a felony — and to lower a felony conviction to a misdemeanor for possession of up to one gram if an offender successfully completes rehab.

Meanwhile, reinstating felony possession of any amount of fentanyl also pays another dividend. It lets police bust dealers who at present can claim misdemeanor possession and walk free.

Gov. Jared Polis recently told Colorado Public Radio, “I'm certainly for felonizing any possession of fentanyl...” Here's his chance to make that happen — by demanding it in HB 1326.

If lawmakers fall short, Polis should veto their bill and call them back in a special session.

DENVER GAZETTE EDITORIAL BOARD

COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE

Hunter ed — for safer schools and kids

As last week was the 23rd anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting, gun violence and firearm safety once again come to the forefront of many Coloradans' minds. Nearly a quarter century after the tragic massacre, and alongside other shootings since, the reality is there is still much disagreement on what our public policy and regulations should be on guns. In a politically divided state like ours where there are many citizens on both sides of the debate — some staunch Second Amendment supporters, others advocates for firearm regulation, confiscation and elimination — it's unlikely we'll reach resolution anytime soon.

That said, it's worth considering and recognizing where in the gun debate we can find common ground. One such place involves educating citi-

It's worth considering and recognizing where in the gun debate we can find common ground. One such place involves educating citizens — especially younger ones — on proper firearm handling, safety and training. At the least, it can instill a healthy respect and sober understanding of the lethal power of a firearm. As long as there are hundreds of millions of firearms in our country — and there's no way to get rid of them even if everyone wanted to — it makes a lot of sense to teach kids gun safety.

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For generations firearm handling, safety and education was a traditional part of a young American's upbringing. Much like learning about algebra or parts of speech, a maturing kid would learn about the core tenets of gun safety at, say, the local gun and rod club or in the family home itself. In large swaths of America, this rite of passage remains ingrained and fosters millions of responsible firearm users, namely

hunters.

But as Colorado has become increasingly urbanized, particularly along the Front Range, this ethos, tradition and emphasis has dissipated, perhaps inevitably. As a result, kids of varying backgrounds no longer have as firm a foundation regarding a proper respect for, and handling of, firearms.

Gov. Jared Polis on Thursday signed a bipartisan bill that will permit our state's public schools to provide — though not mandate — a hunter-education course to seventh-grade students. Students and parents will be able to take a Colorado Parks & Wildlife-certified course at their local public or charter school, as the bill stipulates schools can receive gifts, grants, or private donations sufficient to cover the cost. Via this 10-hour course, parents can elect if they'd like for their child to take the course with “hands-on” activities — such as an optional live-fire exercise — or not. Either way, these 12- and 13-year-olds will learn about hunter ethics, conservation, gun safety and basic first aid in a proper setting. For example, CPW has gone out of its way to prepare a teaching kit complete with inert firearms for use in the hands-on portion of the course.

Completing this course will do more than help children get one step closer to a hunting license. Students — particularly in more urban areas — are introduced to more of the great outdoors and the need for smart, sustainable wildlife management while also learning the safe use of firearms.

In the end, increased firearm safety and familiarity will be an important dividend to a Colorado culture in which these same kids will inevitably come into contact with guns at some point, in some context. Let's ensure it's a safe encounter.

COLORADO SPRINGS GAZETTE
EDITORIAL BOARD

opinion

Colorado Dems flip-flop on TABOR?

"Oh, what a difference a year makes!" I wrote those words a month ago — and yet again, Election Year Jared Polis is rearing his flip-floppy head.

OPINION



JIMMY
SENGEN-
BERGER

"Let's be real," I added. "Gov. Polis persists in an unabashed pattern of political ploys and reelection campaign cynicism. He shows no signs of slowing down. If you got fooled by Polis once, twice or even thrice last year, don't let yourself get fooled again."

Yet once again, it seems Polis has changed his tune. This time, it has to do with the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

In 2019, Democrats led an all-out attack on TABOR's provision that returns money to taxpayers when revenues exceed limits set in the state Constitution.

"(T)his year's attack — Proposition CC, put on the ballot by the Democrat-controlled General Assembly and backed by Gov. Jared Polis (D) — is particularly troublesome," I argued at the time. "CC is the Democratic legislature's attempt to get voter approval to breach those spending limits into perpetuity. As in, forever. It's a constitutional tactic, but pernicious."

If you listen to Polis and his merry band of Reborn TABOR Acolytes, you might think they love the idea. Then again, it's an election year.

Democrats announced Monday they're proposing refunds to taxpayers just in time for ballots to drop. While the mechanism used to return money to taxpayers is through TABOR, Democrats are moving up the timetable for the payment from 2023 to 2022 and making it a flat \$400 instead of the traditional tiered payments.

If their about-face from the failed effort to dupe Colorado voters into doing away with TABOR refunds isn't enough proof of playing politics, consider this: Colorado Politics reports the bill's sponsor is Sen. Nick Hinrichsen of Pueblo, "whose Senate seat is considered to be the most endangered for Democrats in the November election."

Additionally, Polis himself announced the bill in a clever tweet that implied the refund was some gift to taxpayers courtesy of "we" in the government. "Because of our healthy state budget surplus and strong economy we are putting money back into your pocket and proposing a Colorado Dividend for every taxpayer," he said.

It's remarkable how many omissions and deceptions Polis can cram into one sentence.

First, as the Common Sense Institute observes, inflation is a driving cause of strong state revenue growth. Colorado's

economy is growing, but that's in spite of Polis and the Democrats. Their pandemic policies and anti-business legislation and regulations have decimated Colorado businesses.

Second, "we are putting money back into your pocket" is plain-old false advertising. The TABOR refunds have absolutely nothing to do with government officials. They're a voter mandate.

Again, if Polis and Company had their way in 2019, we wouldn't even get "money back."

Third, this year we celebrate TABOR's 30th birthday. In all those decades, the phrase "Colorado Dividend" has never been used before. It's always been labeled a "TABOR refund" because it's a repayment to taxpayers when the government brings in more than it's allowed to keep.

During Andrew Yang's 2020 presidential campaign, he proposed a "Freedom Dividend," his version of the universal basic income. Polis is playing off this term in a vain effort to conceal the fact that this refund is courtesy of our unique Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

Let's be real: Polis and the Democrats are trying to have their cake and eat it too. They've persisted for years in their attempts to end TABOR's spending cap.

Now, Democrats are trying to take credit for that same refund by concealing its true origins, calling it a "Colorado Dividend" and taking credit for "proposing" it.

"It's money that would have to be refunded anyway," Michael Fields, president of the Advance Colorado Institute, told Colorado Politics. "This is an election year ploy to try to get Coloradans to forget about all the fees and taxes that Democrats have passed during the last few years."

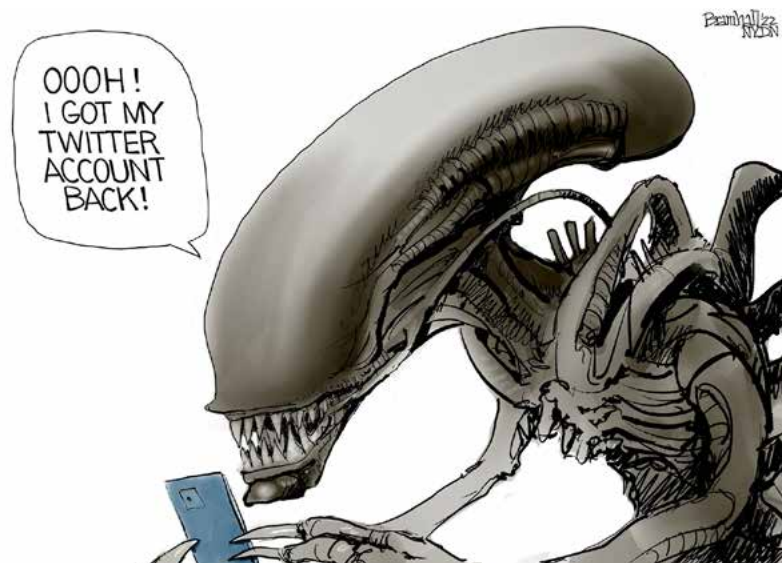
It's far from the first time Polis has played games with TABOR. Last year Polis signed a new gas "fee" into law. As I noted then, "it's hard to see what makes this fancy new gas 'fee' any different from the gas tax we already pay."

That's because it is no different. The word "fee" was simply chosen to dodge TABOR's other requirement — that voters must approve all tax increases.

This year, with the price at the pump skyrocketing, Polis has called for delaying the very fee he signed into law by one year. It must be an election year, huh?

When it comes to taxes, fees and TABOR, don't buy a word Polis and the Democrats are saying. Before you know it, they'll change their tune again. Probably after November.

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BILL BRAMHALL, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

The cost of assigning guilt to acts of God

Whether Americans are the most litigious society in human history is debatable. Shakespeare, after all, was author of the quip, "the first thing we do, is we kill all the lawyers."

Presumably, funneling our civil disputes into courtrooms offers benefits over trial by combat. Even the Bible is replete with tales of legal struggle. King Solomon's ruling to slice a child in half is most often cited as an exercise in judicial wisdom. There remains ample reason, however, to question the proposition that lawsuits serve

OPINION



MILLER
HUDSON

as a civilized route to reaching justice.

I've written several screeds about the propensity of our governments to sue each other, burdening taxpayers with the costs of attorneys on both sides. Surely many of these intramural squabbles would better be resolved through mandatory mediation or formal arbitration. The ingenuity of trial attorneys seemingly has few limits. Nowhere is this more evident than in the burgeoning arena of environmental litigation where advocates are proposing legal rights for rivers, ecosystems and wildlife.

While ecological damage is real, even measurable, it's doubtful jurisprudence can adequately protect against injury, even in instances as extreme as species extinction. The origins of climate change are too numerous, the trail of responsibility too recondite and motives too obscure for a fair assignment of blame.

As mitigation costs imposed by climate change burden governments, they have started to seek financial relief from alleged culprits, relying on a "deep pockets" strategy for cost recovery. What has worked for demonstrable medical injuries may not prove transferable in a petition against the industrial revolution.

This is not to say greenhouse consequences are without significant impact or significant costs. Assigning responsibility for environmental injuries is much murkier. A case filed by three Colorado communities, including Boulder, against Suncor Energy and Exxon Mobil in 2018 seeking damages for the costs of responding to climate change lacks solid linkages between

accused malefactors and specific damages.

Following more than three years of tossing this legal hot potato among themselves, the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in Denver recently remanded the suit back to Colorado state courts. All parties to this dispute readily acknowledge the energy industry does not possess sufficient financial reserves to pay for the costs of coping with global warming. What's their goal then? As Pat Parenteau, environmental science professor at the University of Vermont law school, observes in a recent Pew Center report, "The fact that this is a global phenomenon is obviously the thing that distinguishes these tort actions from any cases we've seen before."

The plaintiffs in Colorado, as well as other states, hope they can demonstrate in court that energy companies consciously continued to market fossil fuel products long after they were aware of their contribution to climate change. But allocating blame and demonstrating malice are a tricky business.

Parenteau also says, "If these cases go to their logical extreme, (the oil companies) all go bankrupt. They should!" This is clearly a value statement and not a legal opinion. The alternative to industry-wide bankruptcy would be the designation of oil and gas companies as de-facto tax collectors driving up the price of fuels. Governments would then skim these new excise "fees" to fund preparations for global warming disasters. This disguised funding scheme is particularly appealing in Colorado where TABOR requires voter approval of new taxes.

It might be a good idea for local governments to take a deep breath and quit searching for villains. Not only is the energy industry a major driver of Colorado's prosperity, but it may be best positioned to assist in a transition to a more sustainable future. It's been a decade since BP invested in the state's first major wind farm. Whenever the energy industry became aware of the costs of global warming, they're well aware today. We will all have to pay our fair share. Let's try that.

Miller Hudson is a public affairs consultant and a former Colorado legislator.



DANA SUMMERS, TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

'Innovation' schools are opposite of equity

Preferential treatment does not lead to equity. Denver's innovation management school zones argue that equity is one of their most important principles. Yet they want preferential treatment to get their way with the Denver Public School board.

OPINION



PAULA NOONAN

SB22-197, Innovation Schools and Alternative Governance, focuses mainly on DPS but it will have impacts across the state. Basically, the bill tosses the authority of elected school boards to manage the public purse and education policy out the window. Elected school boards will be

replaced by unelected boards operating Innovation Management School Zones.

This is how preferential treatment happens. SB22-197 is on a fast-track through the legislature. It was just introduced and jammed through the state Senate ahead of other priorities such as worker rights, wildfire management and, for Pete's sake, full funding of public schools. Why the big hurry?

Two Democratic state Senators from northeast Denver are sponsoring the bill: Chris Hansen and James Coleman. Hansen's children attend Northeast Denver Innovation Zone schools, as he stated at the Senate Education Committee hearing. He didn't mention that his spouse, Ulcca Hansen, is an unelected board member of the NDIZ management entity.

Ulcca Hansen joins Anne Rowe and Rachele Espiritu, both former members of the DPS school board, on the unelected NDIZ board. They want authority to stymie the currently-elected DPS Board before the legislative session ends in May. It's the state legislature and former DPS board members against the current DPS board, elected local school boards across the state, local control of education policy and management, and local public school accountability.

This will be the DNIZ authority of Ulcca Hansen, Anne Rowe, and Rachele Espiritu who was defeated for her board spot in 2017 by Jen Bacon. If SB22-197 passes and there is a dispute between the zone management people and the DPS school board, the NDIZ board members will call on a third-party arbitrator to negotiate

the conflict. DPS will no doubt have to pay for both sides of the negotiation.

The arbitration decision is the end of the oversight trail for the elected Denver School Board. It will have to live with the arbitrator's decision.

This forced divestiture of school board authority to an unelected cadre of board members is an unprecedented usurpation of the responsibilities and accountability of elected officials.

Plus, school districts get to pay for it. Three zones currently exist in Denver. The zone managers charge per pupil management fees. Luminary Learning Network assesses \$170-per-student, NDIZ assesses \$100-per-student, and Beacon schools charge 1.5% of the school budgets.

The schools also pay for services to DPS out of per-pupil fees. Some of the schools opt out of DPS supported services to save money. That doesn't mean they don't receive those services, according to the recently completed 'DPS Innovation Pause & Reflect' report. Often the zones will call in with a problem and DPS administration will provide support without charging for the service.

Here's a real world example of how bad the SB22-197 legislation is. DPS received word of issues with the NDIZ management agreement with Lyra and Empower Schools in Boston, the management entities. Sure enough, there were problems. The district issued a "notice of concern" that resulted in the resignation of the executive director and some board members. Two schools exited the zone with large majorities of the schools' faculty in agreement.

Under SB22-197, such an outcome is dubious. The NDIZ board would take the case to arbitration. The district would have to live with the arbitrator's decision and pay for it.

With SB22-197, DPS and any other district with innovation zones will be forced to put its precious taxpayer-per-student funding into schools over which they have no oversight authority. This state of affairs is undemocratic and defeats the public school ideal that has made America a prosperous, thriving nation.

Paula Noonan owns Colorado Capitol Watch, the state's premier legislature tracking platform.

The market should dictate Disney, not government

I'm willing to wager that if 20 years ago you were to suggest two decades hence Disney World would be at the center of a controversy involving a law concerning inappropriate sexual instruction to kindergarteners, and the State of Florida was preparing to pull Disney's special district status, you would be accused of peddling anti-American dystopian nonsense at best, of lunacy at worst.

OPINION



KELLY SLOAN

For best or worst, that is where we are in 2022.

The whole sordid episode raises several issues, but the central contention has pivoted somewhat away from the merits of the bill in question to state government's response to Disney's unfortunate weighing in on it. That response, of course, has been the threat of stripping Disney World of its "Special Independent District" status, through which it enjoys unique tax treatment, a high degree of autonomy, and other benefits bestowed on it by the state in exchange for its mere existence. Existence, that is, as an enormous economic driver and jobs-and-revenue generator.

First, a few points of order: Disney was stupid and wrong to bring this upon itself, which it did. The bill they went to the mattresses over simply says "Classroom instruction by school personnel or third parties on sexual orientation or gender identity may not occur in kindergarten through grade 3 or in a manner that is not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards." Hardly the stuff of Aldous Huxley's nightmares, and popular with an overwhelming majority of Floridians — and Americans in general, from both parties — if presented the actual wording of the law. That such a law is required in the first place serves as something of an indictment on modernity.

The legislative outcome was a decisive victory for Florida's Republican state government. The bill passed, was signed into law, and enjoys widespread support. It is a battle that Disney joined foolishly, lost convincingly, and if there are consequences to the company and its image, so be it. But should one of those be loss of its special district status?

There is the argument that special independent districts are merely distortions created by government in the course of playing economic favorites, and that argument is not without merit. But it is a little more complicated than that. They are hardly unusual... every state, including Colorado, has hundreds of special districts of one

sort or another; everything from airports, to massive sporting venues, to enterprise zones. Should each of those be pulled if their management runs afoul of the government of the day? What if it were the other ox getting gored — should Colorado's Democratic governor and legislature eliminate a special district in a rural area because the people who run it vocally disapprove of some new environmental policy? It's as tricky a proposition as that of how much a tax-exempt church should be permitted to speak out on political matters.

The argument against Disney's Special Independent District is a little shallower in any case. It was not an issue six months ago; there was no outcry about the structural manipulation of the economy done by special districts (whether there ought to have been or not) until Disney decided to go rogue on the bill. The almost comical hypocrisy of folks like California Gov. Gavin Newsom calling out Florida for being "anti-business" aside, it's difficult to argue that it's not political retribution.

This is a frightening power of government, no less frightening if the power happens to be concentrated in the hands of the party you align with.

Disney ought to face consequences for its bizarre foray into politics, but those consequences should come from parents who, angry and bewildered as to why a place that bills itself as the ostensible national shrine to the innocence of childhood would take such a stance, may choose to take their kids and dollars elsewhere — not from the government.

In the meantime, while it is a worthy enterprise for policy makers to periodically review the concept behind such machinations as special districts and to weigh the relative economic merits of incentive and distortion, the economic disruption occasioned by their sudden demise would be too great to justify. And no, Disney World is not relocating to Colorado, or anywhere else; regardless of what happens with its status, the relationship between The Sunshine State and Mickey is too symbiotic to be severed.

One hopes that Mr. DeSantis, who's judgment is normally far more measured and reasonable, will conclude that Disney has been chastised sufficiently, and will encourage the retention of the district, for economic reasons if not for fealty to governmental limits. And all of us can benefit from the cautionary tale; to be careful of what you ask from government.

Kelly Sloan is a political and public affairs consultant and a recovering journalist based in Denver.

courts

Judge agrees guards could block woman from entering courthouse for failing to answer question

BY MICHAEL KARLIK
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Security guards acted within their authority by requiring a woman to disclose which courtroom she was going to as a condition of entering the federal courthouse in Denver, a judge has ruled.

Tiffany Grays missed a court hearing in her civil case last fall because two court security officers, identified as CSOs Lee and Garcia, would not let her through without answering a “courtesy” question about her destination in the courthouse. Garcia then told the magistrate judge overseeing the hearing that Grays was belligerent, prompting a rescheduling of the proceeding.

Grays, who is representing herself, alleged that the denial of access infringed upon her rights to free speech and due process. However, U.S. District Court Judge William J. Martínez flatly rejected those claims in an order last week.

“There is simply no precedent to support Plaintiff’s position that the First Amendment prohibits a government officer from requiring a person entering a government building to answer basic questions about her business there,” Martínez wrote on April 21.

Darold Killmer, a civil rights attorney with Killmer, Lane & Newman, believed the judge decided correctly, noting that security measures placed on government buildings do not rise to the level of a constitutional violation.

“The First Amendment allows for reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on a per-



The William G. Rogers Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, in foreground.

son’s right to express himself or to access public facilities,” he said. “In this day and age, we have all been subjected to minimally intrusive inconveniences, such as walking through metal detectors, providing identification or other information prior to accessing facilities, and the like. I do not believe Ms. Grays’ constitutional rights were violated.”

Grays initiated her federal lawsuit against student loan servicer Navient in early 2020, alleging that the company incorrectly reported her payments and damaged her credit, affecting her ability to obtain auto loans or credit cards.

On Oct. 27, 2021, Grays arrived at the Byron G. Rogers U.S. Courthouse in downtown Denver for a hearing in the case. According to Grays, as she was proceeding through security, Lee asked her “What/why

are you here?”

“I’m here for court,” Grays replied. When Lee reportedly asked which courtroom Grays was going to, she replied that she did not have to tell him.

In a video that Grays began recording, she asked Lee which policy or rule required her to disclose her destination. She told Lee to “get your supervisor.” “The only thing I’m asking you —” Lee began to say.

“I don’t have to tell you that. I’m in the right courthouse,” Grays retorted.

As Grays was waiting for a supervisor, she repeatedly asked another person in the lobby why they were not wearing a face mask properly. When Garcia arrived, he acknowledged to Grays that there was no rule requiring her to disclose her courtroom, but “we do it out of courtesy.”

“Uh-oh, so you’re making up your own rules and you’re

preventing me from going to court,” Grays interrupted. “That is a violation of my constitutional rights to go to court.”

Garcia offered to explain why security officers ask for visitors’ destinations, but Grays said she did not want to hear it. She maintained there was no authority to ask that question.

“Let’s not play games here,” she said. She asked for Garcia’s last name, then his first name. He responded, apparently in jest, that there was “no rule or law that says I gotta tell you.” Grays laughed at the response.

Shortly after the encounter, Grays emailed U.S. Magistrate Judge S. Kato Crews, who was conducting the hearing in her case, saying she was “being denied access” and asked to have the hearing over the phone. During a brief, three-minute proceeding in his courtroom, Crews announced that Grays was not present because Garcia had informed him that she “became belligerent.”

Crews issued an order that same day explaining that the security guards often ask visitors where they are going because the presence of multiple federal buildings adjacent to the Rogers courthouse can confuse people.

“This is a federal courthouse, not a department store,” Crews wrote. “Ms. Grays is warned that she is required by the Local Rules of Practice, and is ordered by this Court, to comply with all customary requests, inquiries, and procedures of the CSOs anytime she is required to access the courthouse for settings where she is required to appear in person.”

Grays filed several requests to

the court, asking for all future hearings to be by phone to limit her “exposure to PTSD” and to be excused from answering future “courtesy questions.” She also submitted a letter pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act asking for video and audio from the courthouse lobby on the day of the encounter.

Martínez, the district court judge assigned to her case, dispensed with all of her concerns, writing that there was no impending hearing requiring her to appear in person and that the court was exempt from FOIA requests. The judge also quoted from Local Rule 83.2(b), which requires anyone seeking to enter a court building to “provide identification or information” upon request of a court security officer.

“The Court agrees with Judge Crews that the CSO’s question about what courtroom she was planning to attend falls within the scope of the questions that anyone seeking entry to any court building must answer if asked,” Martínez concluded. “Therefore, Judge Crews acted properly by ordering Plaintiff to comply with such requests in the future.”

Grays disputed that she was belligerent and told Colorado Politics she intended to pursue the alleged infringement on her rights to the appellate courts.

“I don’t have to answer courtesy questions to get to court,” she said.

The clerk of the U.S. District Court said that neither he nor the U.S. Marshals Service tracked how many people had been prevented from entering Colorado’s district courthouses in the past year.



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