



Legislative Newsletter



October 31, 2016

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*An up-to-date review of Colorado government and politics especially for the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.
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Happy Halloween

10 days until Election Day! Have you voted???

Go Behind The Scenes Where Ballots Are Counted

CBS Denver

Colorado's Department of Revenue admits it incorrectly sent 7,700 Colorado taxpayers letters last week denying them their TABOR refund or incorrectly computing their tax refund.

"The Department of Revenue apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused." wrote Dept. of Revenue Communications Director Lynn Granger.

Denver poll workers get active shooter training ahead of general election

Colorado News

For the first time ever, Denver's 350 election judges will have to complete training to teach them how to respond to an active shooter. The training happens to coincide with one of the most contentious campaign seasons.

The online course teaches anyone faced with the worst-case scenario... to run, hide and if you have to... fight.

CBS4 Investigation Finds People Voting Twice

CBS Denver

An ongoing CBS4 voter fraud investigation has uncovered a dozen cases where Coloradans are suspected of voting twice. Previous CBS4 Investigations revealed ballots cast in the names of Coloradans who had been dead for months- sometimes years- before votes were cast in their names.

In six of the new cases, voting records show the same people voting twice in Colorado elections. In another six cases, people are suspected of voting in Colorado and another state during the same election cycle.

Ballots Mailed Across Colorado: 'Don't Wait Until The Last Minute'

CBS Denver

Ballots were placed in the mail on October 17th, addressed to voters across Colorado.

The ballots should show up in mailboxes this week. Some three million ballots will be mailed out across Colorado.

Colorado Has Highest Percentage Of Registered Voters In U.S.

CBS Denver

A day after the most watched presidential debate in history, Colorado is marking National Voter Registration Day on September 27th.

Eighty-seven percent of voters in Colorado are registered to vote, which is the highest percentage of any state in the country.

What's at stake in Colorado's statehouse races

Denver Business Journal

Forget the presidential and U.S. Senate races. The battle for control of the state Senate could be far more important for Colorado business on issues like roads, construction and energy.

State battles are hot; election isn't just about White House

Colorado Statesman

Years of losses have left Democrats at historic lows in state legislatures. But now they're seeking to wrest control of as many as a dozen chambers from Republicans, a key step in gaining more influence in redistricting.

The battle for statehouse control is playing out in more than half the states with tens of millions of dollars of planned political spending before the Nov. 8 general election. Democrats are hoping the turmoil surrounding Donald Trump's presidential campaign can boost their fortunes in down-ballot races, although Hillary Clinton remains unpopular in many Republican-leaning regions.

John Elway's TV ads begin on three Colorado ballot initiatives

Colorado Springs Gazette

John Elway is taking snaps on three Colorado ballot initiatives with two TV ads that will begin appearing across the state Sunday.

Elway supports Amendment 71, which would make it harder to amend the Colorado Constitution via future ballot initiatives. He opposes Amendment 69 to create a single-payer health care system, called ColoradoCare, and Amendment 70 to raise the state's minimum wage from \$8.31 per hour to \$12 per hour by 2020.

Election 2016 - Colorado Senate District 8 heats up

Craig Daily Press

With Colorado Republicans holding onto a majority by just one seat, the results of this year's senatorial elections has the potential to shift the balance of power in the Colorado General Assembly.

In District 8, it's a familiar matchup as Democrat Emily Tracy returns to run against incumbent Republican Sen. Randy Baumgardner, who defeated Tracy in 2012 with 51.1 percent of the vote.

Ellen Roberts resigns from state Senate

Durango Herald

Republican state Sen. Ellen Roberts of Durango announced October 16th that she is resigning to focus more on family and her private law practice.

Her move is likely to set into motion shifts within the district, as Republican Rep. Don Coram of Montrose has expressed interest in moving up to the position. Coram's move to the Senate District 6 seat would also leave a vacancy in House District 58, where he currently serves.

Coram eyes Roberts' Senate Seat

Grand Junction Daily Sentinel

State Sen. Ellen Roberts, a Durango Republican, has announced that she will resign from her southwest Colorado district seat at the end of this year.

That decision leaves open an opportunity for local state Rep. Don Coram, R-Montrose, to move into the Colorado Senate, something he said he planned to seek when a vacancy committee is formed early next year.

New top aide has worked for Gov. John Hickenlooper, Hillary Clinton's campaign in Colorado

Denver Post

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock on Wednesday appointed Alan Salazar, a longtime Democratic political strategist, as his new chief of staff.

Salazar will become the mayor's second chief aide after working this summer and fall as a senior adviser for presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's Colorado campaign, focusing in part on appealing to Latino voters. He had taken a leave of absence in June from Gov. John Hickenlooper's office, where he served as chief policy officer and strategist.

Backers of failed anti-oil-and-gas initiatives decide against challenge

Denver Business Journal

Supporters of two initiatives that would have tightened regulation of oil and gas operations in Colorado said September 28th they will not challenge the decision by state officials that not enough valid petition signatures were gathered to place the measures on the state's fall ballot.

Instead, a group that backed those measures said it will now direct its efforts toward defeating Amendment 71, a measure that did make the ballot which would tighten rules for amending the state constitution.

Colorado won't bolt from PARCC just yet, state board chairman says

Chalkbeat Colorado

The chairman of the State Board of Education said October 12th that Colorado is likely to stick with its current math and English tests for at least the next two school years, after earlier suggesting that the state consider moving in another direction immediately.

Republican Steve Durham of Colorado Springs, however, made clear that the board eventually wants to discuss abandoning PARCC, a multi-state testing group that has already lost a majority of its founding members.

"Immediate change is very difficult and probably impractical," Durham told Chalkbeat after a lengthy board discussion about the state's future involvement with PARCC. "After 2018, it's appropriate to look at all of our options."

GRANTHAM: Legislature plays role in affordable housing

Pueblo Chieftan

Not a week goes by that Colorado's affordable housing crunch isn't in the news.

Yet almost all the remedies proposed in response, typified by Denver's recent imposition of an "affordable housing tax" on builders and homeowners, are only designed to mask the symptoms, not address the underlying causes. That's why the problem persists despite decades of similarly-flawed fixes.

Here are the top Colorado legislative races to watch in 2016

Denver Post

Control of the Colorado General Assembly is one of the highest-stakes questions that will be settled by the 2016 ballot.

Republicans now have an 18-17 edge in the Senate, and Democrats would have to hold on to a couple of key seats in tight districts while flipping at least one seat from GOP control. To break the Democrats' 34-31 majority in the House, Republicans would have to win two Democratic seats for the majority while also beating back challenges to some of its own endangered incumbents.

New Guidelines Now In Effect For Marijuana Products In Colorado

CBS Denver

As of Oct.1 new guidelines are in effect for medical and recreational pot products.

Packing on marijuana-infused products must say "Keep out of the reach of children," cannot say "candy" or "candies," and every package must feature the universal symbol indicating the product contains marijuana.

Report: Colorado weed is now a behemoth with a \$2.4 billion economic impact

Denver Post

Colorado's burgeoning legal marijuana industry has quickly made gains on the state's largest industries - including the mighty oil-and-gas sector - and contributed an economic impact of \$2.39 billion in 2015, according to research released Tuesday.

The cannabis industry, the fastest-growing business sector in the state, also is credited with funding 18,005 direct and ancillary full-time jobs in 2015, according to the report from the Marijuana Policy Group, a Denver-based economic and market research firm that consults with businesses and governments on marijuana policy.

Colorado gets called out in political ads in states trying to legalize retail marijuana

7 News

How do you feel when you find out someone's been talking behind your back?
Residents of Colorado, we're getting talked about behind our back!

Gov. Hickenlooper Announces Boards and Commission Appointments

Office of the Governor

The CollegelInvest Board of Directors administers the state's 529 college savings programs and students studying in- and out-of-state. CollegelInvest is a not-for-profit division of the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

For terms expiring July 31, 2020:

- Rita C. Felde of Evergreen, reappointed;
- Jason B. Maples, CLU, ChFC, CFP of Greenwood Village, reappointed;
- Frederick Taylor of Denver, appointed.

The Colorado Medical Board reviews applications for medical licenses. In cases involving any professional or ethical violations of the Medical Practices Act, the board holds hearings and assists the state's district attorneys in the prosecution of all persons, firms, associations, or corporations charged with improper conduct.

For a term expiring May 3, 2019:

- Michael Angelo Moll, MD, FAAFP of La Veta, to serve as a doctor of medicine and occasioned by the resignation of Fernando J. Kim, MD, MBA, MHA of Denver, appointed.

The Governor's Council for Active and Healthy Lifestyles provides citizens with information and programs necessary for the acquisition and maintenance of physical fitness, encourages a healthy lifestyle for the people of the State of Colorado, and assists diversification of the economy of the state by enhancing its attraction as a place to live and work.

For terms expiring September 1, 2018:

- Joshua Lee of Louisville, and occasioned by the resignation of Kristen Anne Volek of Golden, appointed;
- Shawna Romero of **Aurora**, and occasioned by the resignation of Tracey Laura Benjamin of Englewood, appointed;
- Dana Wood of Rifle, appointed;

for terms expiring September 1, 2019:

- Tawny C. Espinoza of Grand Junction, and occasioned by the resignation of Karen R. DiMarco of Boulder, appointed;
- Christine Noel Fallabel of Denver, and occasioned by the resignation of Suehila "Sue" Glass of Centennial, appointed;

for terms expiring September 1, 2020:

- Tiffany Alisha Coolidge of Wheat Ridge, appointed;
- Amber Cote of Colorado Springs, appointed;
- Colleen Grandis of Denver, appointed;
- Timothy Houston of Arvada, appointed;
- Amit R. Shah of Denver, appointed.

The Colorado Beef Council Authority Board of Directors promotes the increased consumption of Colorado beef. The Board researches beef production methods and advancements with economic impacts on the beef industry and makes this information available to interested parties.

For a term expiring July 1, 2020:

- Lily Edwards-Callaway of Fort Collins, to serve as a processor, a distributor and as an Unaffiliated, appointed.

The Chemical Demilitarization Citizens Advisory Commission provides citizen input and expresses state concerns regarding the U.S. Army program for the disposal of chemical warfare agents and munitions at the Pueblo Army Depot.

For a term expiring at the pleasure of the Governor:

- Doug L. Knappe of Arvada, to serve as a representative from the Department of Public Health and Environment and occasioned by the resignation of Joseph W. Schieffelin of Wheat Ridge, appointed.

The Board of Directors of the State Historical Society is the governing body for the State Historical Society. The Society is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization and an agency of the State of Colorado under the Department of Higher Education. It offers public access to museums and programs for individuals and families; collection stewardship of Colorado's historic treasures; educational resources for schools, students and teachers; and services related to preservation, archaeology and history.

For a term expiring July 1, 2019:

- Cathy Lee Carpenter Dea of Golden, appointed.

The State Board of Licensed Professional Counselor Examiners adopts rules and regulations, conducts examinations and grants or denies licenses.

For terms expiring August 31, 2020:

- David E. Bell, MA, LPC, LAC of Colorado Springs, to serve as a licensed professional counselor, appointed;
- Carrie Crandall, MA, LPC of Colorado Springs, to serve as a licensed professional counselor, appointed;
- Doreen G. Hills, MS, NCC, LPC of Wiggins, to serve as a licensed professional counselor, appointed;
- Ramey Kandice Johnson of Lakewood, to serve as a member of the general public, appointed.

The Transportation Commission formulates general policy for the Colorado Department of Transportation with respect to the management, construction and maintenance of public highways and other transportation systems in the state. The Commission also works to assure that the preservation and enhancement of Colorado's environment, safety, mobility and economics is considered in the planning of all transportation projects

For a term expiring July 1, 2019:

- Robert Keith Scott of Colorado Springs, to serve as a commissioner from the Ninth Transportation District, and occasioned by the resignation of Nolan E. Schriener of Colorado Springs, appointed.

How do you feel when you find out someone's been talking behind your back?

Residents of Colorado, we're getting talked about behind our back!

The Forest Health Advisory Council provides a collaborative forum to advise the State Forester on a broad range of issues, opportunities and threats with regard to Colorado's forests.

For terms expiring September 1, 2021:

- Carol Linda Ekarius of Cripple Creek, to serve as an individual employed by or associated with an environmental organization, appointed;
- Jason Lawhon of Nederland, to serve as an individual employed by or associated with an environmental organization, appointed;
- Michael Lester of Fort Collins, to serve as the State Forester and as Chair, appointed;
- Mark Allen Morgan of Wellington, to serve as an owner or employee of a wood products business, appointed;
- Charles C. Rhoades, PhD, of Fort Collins, to serve as a scientist or employed in a scientific research position, appointed;
- Tom Spezze of Gunnison, to serve as an individual employed by or associated with a wildlife organization, appointed;

- John Edward Swartout of Highlands Ranch, to serve as a senior-level policy advisor on water or natural resources in the executive branch, appointed.

The Private Occupational School Board advises on standards for educational services in private occupational schools and grants accreditation to schools that meet the standards established by the Board.

For a term expiring July 1, 2019:

- Ryan Zivorad Minic of Thornton, to serve as a representative of a private occupational school, and occasioned by the resignation of Richard Semakula of Centennial, appointed.

The Colorado Board of Veterans' Affairs studies problems facing veterans and makes recommendations to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Division of Veterans' Affairs, concerning programs needed to assist veterans.

For a term expiring June 30, 2019:

- Patricia Jane Hammon, RN, of Eagle, a Democrat and a veteran who has been honorably released or separated from the armed forces of the United States, and occasioned by the resignation of Christopher Michael Holden of Colorado Springs, appointed.

The Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice engages in an evidence-based analysis of the criminal justice system in Colorado and annually reports to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate and the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court.

For a term expiring June 30, 2018:

- Valarie Van Kam of Aurora, to serve as a representative of victims' rights organizations, and occasioned by the resignation of Kathleen Horn-Murphy of Thornton, appointed.

The Ground Water Commission determines the boundaries of designated ground water basins by geographic description and considers well permit applications for persons desiring to appropriate designated ground water for beneficial use. The Commission is responsible for the development of policies and procedures for maximum economic development, as well as the protection of the vested rights of the designated ground water basins of the state.

For a term expiring May 1, 2020:

- James M. Noble of Denver, to serve as a representative of municipal or industrial users, and occasioned by the resignation of Eric Hecox of Denver, appointed.

The Fire and Police Pension Association Board of Directors is a local governmental unit that administers a statewide pension plan for full-time paid police officers and firefighters.

For terms expiring September 1, 2020:

- Adilberto Antonio "Guy" Torres III of Littleton, to serve as a member of the state's financial or business community with experience in investments, appointed;
- Tyson Lynn Worrell of Lakewood, to serve as a representative of full-time paid police officers, reappointed.

The Forest Health Advisory Council provides a collaborative forum to advise the State Forester on a broad range of issues, opportunities and threats with regard to Colorado's forests.

For a term expiring September 1, 2021:

- Normand Harold Birtcher of Mancos, to serve as an owner or employee of a wood products business, appointed.

The Colorado Health Service Corps Advisory Council is the state advisory body of the Colorado Health Service Corps and reviews applications received from health care professionals to participate in the program, subject to available appropriations. The Colorado Health Service Corps is a state, federal, and private partnership that seeks to improve access to health care professionals by repaying

the educational loans of providers who agree to practice in areas with a health professional shortage. The program emphasizes long-term retention of health professionals in underserved communities and seeks to increase health equity for all Coloradans.

For terms expiring November 20, 2019:

- Polly Elizabeth Anderson of Denver, to serve as a representative of a membership organization representing federally qualified health centers in Colorado, reappointed;
- Pradeep Dhar, MD of Superior, to serve as a person with expertise in providing health care in rural and other medically underserved areas of the state, appointed;
- Karen A. Funk, MD, MPP of Broomfield, to serve as a person with expertise in providing health care in rural and other medically underserved areas of the state, reappointed;
- James Edward Hagins, M.Ed of Montrose, to serve as a representative of behavioral health organizations that operate in Colorado, appointed;
- Brian Ross Turner, MPH of Littleton, to serve as a representative of a membership organization representing community behavioral health centers, reappointed.

The Regional Air Quality Council is the lead agency for air quality planning with the responsibility to prepare air quality plans for the Denver metropolitan region to demonstrate and ensure long-term compliance with federal air quality standards.

For a term expiring April 30, 2019:

- Linda Kathleen Bracke of Fort Collins, to serve as a representative of the region's transit management agencies, and occasioned by the resignation of Tracy S. Winfree of Boulder, appointed.

The School Safety Resource Center Advisory Board advises and recommends policies concerning the newly created School Safety Resource Center. The Center was created "to assist schools in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and crisis situations and to foster positive learning environments."

For terms expiring August 15, 2018:

- Lorrie Furman Odom, MD of Wheat Ridge, a member of a parents' organization, appointed;
- Honorable Dave Joseph Young of Thornton, a District Attorney, appointed.

The Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council advances recommendations that strengthen healthy food access for all Coloradans through Colorado agriculture and local food systems and economies. It is the state conduit for hearing, reviewing and advancing critical food systems issues in which state government does or could play a role.

For terms expiring October 7, 2019:

- Catherine Tiller Blackford of Denver, to serve as a representative of anti-hunger and food assistance programs, reappointed;
- David Eastland Carter of Westminster, to serve as a representative of food wholesalers or food retailers, appointed;
- Trudy L. Kareus of Boulder, to serve as an individual with knowledge of a local, state, or federal agency and who has expertise in rural community and regional development programs or community and economic development programs, reappointed;
- Tom Parks of Yuma, to serve as a representative of agriculture producers, appointed.