



Legislative Newsletter



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*An up-to-date review of Colorado government and politics especially for the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.
Compiled and edited by Axiom Strategies, Inc.*

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect."

- Mark Twain

2018 Legislative Session Opening Day Speeches

[Gov. Hickenlooper State of the State](#)

[Senate President Grantham](#)

[House Speaker Duran](#)

[Senate Minority Leader Guzman](#)

[House Minority Leader Neville](#)

Colorado lawmakers on course to fix pot-tax glitch that hit RTD and led to doomed special session

Denver Post

Three months ago, a special legislative session to fix a mistake Colorado lawmakers made regarding pot taxes disintegrated into partisan finger-pointing and blame.

Now, with a new session underway, the discord is mostly resolved and the legislation to allow special districts to collect a voter-approved tax on recreational marijuana sales - one that lawmakers inadvertently repealed in May - is poised for easy passage. "We have a new solution," said Senate Majority Leader Chris Holbert.

Legislature begins the fight, again, over how to pay for transportation

Colorado Politics

The Colorado Senate Transportation Committee last Tuesday afternoon served up the official opening volley of another contentious fight over how to pay for transportation to keep up with Colorado's growth.

The first bill Senate Republicans filed this session would ask voters next November to borrow \$3.5 billion and repay it with about \$300 million a year from the state budget for the next 20 years. The bonds would jumpstart major projects such as widening Interstate 25 north of Monument and Denver, as well as find solutions to the constant snarls on I-70 through the mountains.

Democrats contend that while Colorado can afford to invest in roads while the economy is booming, when money gets tight obligating that much every year from the budget would mean cuts to schools, social programs and a host of state agencies that also are struggling to keep up with growth.

Colorado's condo market is growing slowly after state's 2017 actions

Denver Business Journal

The combination of a construction-defects reform bill and a favorable Colorado Supreme Court decision is behind the spurt, some housing officials say.

Gov. John Hickenlooper unveils Colorado's plan to charge up electric vehicles

Colorado Politics

Gov. John Hickenlooper said he doesn't drive himself around as governor, but next year when he's term-limited out of office and is again a civilian, he'll motor around the state in an electric vehicle.

He'll be able to do that more reliably because of the plan he rolled out Wednesday morning to spur the placement of fast-charging stations across major Colorado corridors to serve the "avalanche," he said, of electric vehicles coming onto the market.

"It really does, I think, a great job of capturing Colorado's vision," he told a crowd gathered outside the Alliance Center in LoDo in Denver Wednesday morning. "We're going to have a network of fast-charging stations. We're going to be able to address what's often referred to as range anxiety, and we're not talking about wild buffalo."

He said it's the anxiety that electric-vehicle drivers have that they might not be able to get a recharge to get home.

"We're fixing that," Hickenlooper said.

The state's new plan calls for strategies and partnerships to build out electric-vehicle charging corridors and to connect with similar corridors in eight Western states. The state also will put up signs telling people where to get charged up.

Colorado lawmakers propose 25-cent plastic bag tax for affordable housing

KRDO

Two Colorado lawmakers are hoping to combat the state's growing housing affordability problem by putting a tax on plastic bags at grocery stores.

House Bill 18-1054, introduced Jan. 10 and sponsored by state Rep. Paul Rosenthal and state Sen. Lois Court, proposes a 25-cent tax for plastic bags used at large stores. The tax would cover any amount of bags used during that transaction.

Colorado lawmakers look to protect personal information under 3 new bills

Colorado Politics

Finding out your identity and your personal information are under attack is a nightmare. And it's one that Republican state Rep. Cole Wist of Centennial has experienced - twice.

A couple of years ago, Wist found out someone was trying to file false tax returns using his Social Security number, and false returns using his wife's number and his children's.

It wasn't the breach at Equifax, the national credit reporting agency, that caused problems for Wist. It was through a health insurance company, an experience he called both frightening and daunting.

Wist said his experience, and a second one where his Social Security number was stolen by a meth ring, points to the need for greater protection for consumers in Colorado. Wist and Democratic Rep. Jeff Bridges of Greenwood Village teamed up with the attorney general's office to come up with a measure, House Bill 1128, that will provide more protection for consumers.

Colorado Energy Office revamp takes big bipartisan step forward

Denver Business Journal

State legislators appear on their way to re-starting funding for the Colorado Energy Office, after a bill to re-vamp the agency underwent slight alterations in its first committee hearing and received bipartisan approval.

Senate Bill 3, sponsored by state Sen. Ray Scott, R-Grand Junction, is an attempt to pump state money back into the office eight months after a stalemate over its mission at the end of the 2017 legislative session left it without reauthorization and without the \$3.1 million in state funding that had financed most of its programs.

Since then, the office has survived on federal grant money and on the temporary re-purposing of \$3.1 million in money from the 2009 stimulus package that has limited uses.

Rep. Dan Thurlow challenging Sen. Ray Scott in GOP primary, flirted with unaffiliated bid

Colorado Politics

State Rep. Dan Thurlow, a Grand Junction Republican, planned to announce last Saturday he's challenging state Sen. Ray Scott in the GOP primary, although he first considered running for the seat as an unaffiliated candidate, Colorado Politics has learned.

Thurlow, who has represented House District 55 for two terms, asked supporters in an email last Friday to join him at 10 a.m. Saturday on the steps of the Old Mesa County Courthouse in Grand Junction to hear Thurlow "discuss his future plans for representing Mesa County in our Colorado State Legislature."

Those plans were made clear in a candidate affidavit Thurlow filed last Friday with the Colorado secretary of state's office declaring his intentions to run for the Senate District 7 seat held by Scott, who is seeking a second term.

Gov. Hickenlooper Announces Boards and Commission Appointments

Office of the Governor

Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2018 - Gov. John Hickenlooper today announced Boards and Commissions appointments to the Board of Trustees of the Colorado School of Mines and State Board of Stock Inspection Commission.

The Board of Trustees of the Colorado School of Mines makes policy for the school and oversees its operation.

For terms expiring Dec. 31, 2021:

- Thomas Eugene Jorden of Cherry Hills Village, an Unaffiliated graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, reappointed;
- Lucinda McWilliams Sanders of Boulder, a Democrat who is not a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, appointed

The State Board of Stock Inspection Commission makes rules regarding brand inspection and livestock laws and regulates fees for stock inspections. The commission also sets service charges and procedures, administers the Estray Fund, licenses public livestock markets, and secures bond and surety on butchers and slaughters.

For a term expiring May 1, 2021:

- Daniel Patrick McCarty of Rifle, to serve as a representative of the non-confinement cattle industry, reappointed.

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018 - Gov. John Hickenlooper today announced Boards and Commissions appointments to the eHealth Commission and Tony Grampsas Youth Services Board.

The eHealth Commission supports the implementation of the state's Health IT strategy and interoperability objectives by setting goals for Health IT programs. The Commission also creates a process for developing common policies and technical solutions.

For terms expiring Feb. 1, 2021:

- Morgan Gray Honea of Colorado Springs, to serve as a member with expertise in operability and data exchange, reappointed;
- Marc Lassaux of Clifton, to serve as a representative of non-profit, health IT-related community organizations, reappointed;
- Dana Eugene Moore of Greenwood Village, to service as a representative of health care facilities, reappointed;
- Wesley Morgan Williams, PhD of Denver, to serve as a representative of behavioral health, appointed;
- Justin Daniel Wheeler, MD of Lafayette, to serve as a representative of primary health care providers, appointed.

The Tony Grampsas Youth Services Board (TGYS) oversees the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program. The TGYS Board develops program guidelines for proposal design, local public-to-private funding match requirements, and application review processes. They also develop criteria for awarding grants and for measuring the effectiveness of programs. The TGYS Board establishes timelines for submission and review of grant applications. The Board also reviews all applications for funding and chooses the entities that receive grants. The TGYS Board submits grant recommendations to the Governor for final approval.

For a term expiring July 1, 2020:

- Erin Medina, MSW, LCSW of Centennial, to serve as a representative of child abuse prevention and occasioned by the resignation of Minna Castillo-Cohen of Parker, appointed.

Thursday, Jan. 18, 2018 - Gov. John Hickenlooper today announced Boards and Commissions appointments to the Air Quality Commission, Colorado Dental Board and the Third Judicial District Performance Commission.

The Air Quality Commission develops and maintains a comprehensive program for the prevention and control of air pollution in Colorado. The major goal of this program is to meet national ambient air quality standards.

For terms expiring Jan. 31, 2021:

- Thomas Roy Gonzales of Colorado Springs, a person with appropriate scientific training or experience, and a Democrat, appointed;
- Curtis Otto Rueter of Westminster, a person with appropriate technical and industrial training or experience, and a Republican, reappointed;
- Tony Carroll Williams of Centennial, a person with appropriate scientific and technical training or experience, and a Democrat, appointed.

The Colorado Dental Board makes rules and regulations, examines and licenses dentists and dental hygienists, and conducts hearings regarding the suspension or revocation of licenses.

For a term expiring Jan. 1, 2021:

- Lisa Ann Carlson-Marks, DDS, FAAPA of Denver, to serve as a dentist and occasioned by the resignation of Lisa Mehelich Fox, DDS of Castle Pines, appointed;

For terms expiring Jan. 1, 2022:

- Gregory Stuart LaBerge of Denver, to serve as a public member, appointed.
- Thomas H. Pyne, DDS of Arvada, to serve as a dentist, reappointed;

Commissions on Judicial Performance were created in 1988 by the Colorado General Assembly for the purpose of providing voters with fair, responsible and constructive evaluations of judges and justices seeking retention. The results also provide judges with information to help improve their professional skills as judicial officers.

Third Judicial District

For terms expiring Nov. 30, 2021:

- Lola Spradley of La Veta, to serve as a non attorney, reappointed;
- Sharon Vezzani of Walsenburg, to serve as a non attorney, appointed.

**Correction: We incorrectly announced the appointment of Sarah Ruybalid to the Third Judicial District Performance Commission in a news release dated Dec. 11, 2017.