

State Representative Chris Kennedy

2017 Legislative Session – End-of-Session Report

The 1st Regular Session of the 71st General Assembly was quite productive. We had many bipartisan successes, but we have much more to do next year. Here's a snapshot of what were up to for a frantic 120 days!

Big Headlines

- We enterprised the hospital provider fee, keeping rural hospitals open and freeing up general fund dollars for education, transportation, and other priorities ([SB267](#))
- We passed a budget that increases K-12 funding by \$242 per kid and invests in housing for the chronically homeless ([SB254](#))
- We reached the long-awaited compromise on informed consent requirements for construction defects litigation ([HB1279](#))
- Women will now be able to get a 12 month supply of birth control pills instead of refilling every 1-3 months ([HB1186](#))
- We funded testing for lead in public school drinking water ([HB1306](#))
- We got rid of the 9th grade PARCC test in favor of the PSAT ([HB1181](#))

Valiant Attempts

It was disappointing but not that surprising to see the Senate kill some really good bills this year:

- A referred measure to fund our transportation infrastructure ([HB1242](#))
- Paid family leave ([HB1307](#))
- Regulation of student loan servicers ([HB1352](#))
- Increased setbacks for fracking operations near schools ([HB1256](#))
- Accelerated closure of coal plants in a way that reinvests in rural Colorado's economy ([HB1339](#))
- Our entire health care cost package, our entire campaign finance transparency package, and most of our affordable housing package

My Bills

- I worked on all kinds of health care bills this session including a bill to prohibit insurance companies from overriding a doctor's prescription ([SB203](#)) and a bill instructing the Division of Insurance to study reinsurance programs and the potential premium reductions they might bring ([SB300](#))
- I passed some little bills including making it easier for counties to fill surveyor vacancies ([HB1017](#)), making license fees more fair for wholesale food manufacturers ([HB1079](#)), continuing the licensure of landscape architects ([SB218](#)), and making sure there's a fair process for verifying petition signatures on citizens' initiatives ([SB152](#))
- I supported the work of my colleagues and helped negotiate compromises on bills to reduce grey market diversions from marijuana home grows ([HB1220](#)) and to ensure citizens can access government open records in digital or searchable formats ([SB40](#))
- Some of my big priorities were killed by partisanship and special interests, including my hospital transparency bill ([HB1236](#)), my county contribution limits bill ([HB1260](#)), and my rental application fee limits bill ([HB1310](#))

Bad Bills Killed

We played a little defense, too, killing bills to:

- Make life harder for women who need an abortion ([HB1085](#), [HB1099](#), [HB1086](#), [HB1108](#), [SB284](#))
- Repeal the health insurance exchange ([SB3](#))
- Demonize immigrants and refugees ([HB1184](#), [SB281](#))

With many lessons learned, we look ahead to the 2018 session with much work to do to adequately fund priorities like education and transportation, boost renewable energy development, and address the rising costs of housing and health care. I'm already getting started on my bills, and will look forward to seeing you around the district this summer and fall!