

House Democrats' 2018 Legislative Report

In the 2018 legislative session, Democrats fought for hard-working Colorado families. Here are some of the key bills House Democrats brought forward to protect and enhance the Colorado way of life:

Bills to provide fairness and opportunity for hard-working Colorado families:

- Expand Colorado's **income tax credit for child care expenses** to help make it more affordable for middle-income Colorado families. (HB 1208/Duran and Winter **PASSED**)
- Extend the **income tax credit for child care contributions** (HB 1004/Coleman **PASSED**)
- Provide **paid family leave** for Coloradans, so they don't have to choose between caring for a sick relative and paying their bills (HB 1001/Winter and Gray **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Expand the WORKS program, which partners with Colorado businesses to provide **skills training for Colorado workers** (HB 1316/Pabon and Exum **PASSED**)
- **Reauthorize the Colorado Civil Rights Division** and Civil Rights Commission, to protect the civil rights of all Coloradans in employment, housing and public accommodations (HB 1256/Duran and Herod **PASSED**)
- Establish a **Colorado Secure Savings Plan** Board to study giving employees a convenient way to save for retirement through payroll deductions at work (HB 1298/Pettersen and Bridges **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Help achieve **equal pay for equal work** (HB 1378/Danielson and Buckner **KILLED IN SENATE** and HB 1377/Pettersen and Coleman **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Allow localities to set local **minimum wage laws** to reflect local cost of living (HB 1368/Danielson and Melton **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Provide emergency employment support** to help people in economically disadvantaged areas to keep their jobs when they face unexpected emergencies (HB 1310/Coleman **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Protect **net neutrality** so that Coloradans can continue to have open and equal access to digital information (HB 1312/Hansen and Herod **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Prohibit the discredited and dangerous practice of "**conversion therapy**" for patients under the age of 18 (HB 1245/Rosenthal and Michaelson Jenet **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Allow **birth certificates to reflect a gender change** (HB 1046/Esgar **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to help Colorado students, schools and teachers:

- **Increase per pupil funding** for Colorado kids, buy down the "negative factor" by \$150 million and provide **extra slots for early childhood education** (HB 1379/Pettersen **PASSED**)
- Provide meaningful **solutions to teacher shortages** across Colorado, including expanding financial incentives to work in rural areas where the shortage is most severe (SB 085/McLachlan **PASSED**); expanding **teacher residency programs** (HB 1189/Pettersen **PASSED**); "**grow your own**" programs for school districts to attract teachers to underserved areas (HB 1309/Coleman **PASSED** and HB 1332/Hamner **PASSED**); **professional development opportunities for school principals** (HB 1367/McLachlan **KILLED IN SENATE**); and incentives to help **retain experienced, talented teachers** (HB 1412/Buckner **PASSED**)
- Improve **school safety** with physical security improvements and training (SB 269/Bridges **PASSED**), fund a **school safety incident response** grant program (HB 1413/Lee **PASSED**), and increase the ability of schools to **communicate with first responders** (SB 158/Duran **PASSED**)
- Make it easier for **experienced teachers** who have taught in other states to become licensed in Colorado (HB 1095/Arndt **PASSED** and HB 1130/Arndt **PASSED**)
- Help schools develop **bullying prevention** policies (SB 151/Buckner **PASSED**)
- Expand free and reduced **school lunch program** to cover 20,000 more kids (SB 013/Michaelson Jenet **PASSED**)

- Provide **emergency assistance grants to higher education students** who face financial emergencies that threaten their ability to finish school (HB 1414/Buckner and Exum **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Provide **additional funding to public colleges and universities** to help protect Colorado students from tuition increases (HB 1322/Hamner and Young **PASSED**; SB18-262/Duran and Bridges **PASSED**)
- Require **licensing for businesses that service student loans** (HB 1415/Winter **PASSED**)

Bills to address the affordable housing crisis in Colorado and protect renters' rights:

- Expand **affordable housing tax credits** to stimulate new construction (SB 007/Duran **PASSED**; HB 1195/Pabon and Bridges **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Strengthen tenant rights** to require that landlords make needed repairs (HB 1397/Jackson **KILLED IN SENATE**) and hand out rent receipts and a copy of a lease (SB 010/Exum **PASSED**)
- Make **mobile homes more affordable** by removing an extra tax when they are purchased (HB 1315/McLachlan **PASSED**)
- **Help low-income seniors and people with disabilities to pay property-related expenses** like heating bills (HB 1380/Weissman and Exum **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Prohibit exorbitant rental application fees** (HB 1127/Jackson and Kennedy **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Ban income source discrimination** so landlords must accept child support, military benefits and other non-employment income in calculating a tenant's ability to pay rent (HB 1432/Herod **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to help struggling areas of rural Colorado share in our state's economic growth:

- Boost the development of **broadband service in rural Colorado** to give rural families and businesses vital digital access to education, healthcare and global commerce (SB 002/Duran and KC Becker **PASSED**; HB 1099/McLachlan **PASSED**; SB 104/McLachlan **PASSED**)
- Provide **temporary financial assistance** to rural Coloradans who spend more than 20 percent of their household income on health insurance premiums (HB 1205/Roberts **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Help hard-hit rural communities** that suffer job losses when a mine or a plant closes to access a single state site to learn about available resources (SB 005/Roberts **PASSED**)
- Provide incentives to **attract teachers to rural areas** (SB 085/McLachlan **PASSED**; HB 1002/Hamner **PASSED**)
- Initiate an **agricultural workforce development** program (SB042/McLachlan **PASSED**)

Bills to help the keep Colorado's environment clean, healthy and safe:

- **Reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions** by at least 80 percent by 2050 (HB 1274/KC Becker and Bridges **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Prepare for the impacts of climate change**, including drought, flooding and increased wildfires (HB 1297/Winter and Petterson **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Adopt innovative ways to **reclaim and reuse our water resources** (HB 1069/Arndt **PASSED**; HB 1093/Arndt **PASSED**; HB 1053/Arndt and Hansen **KILLED IN SENATE** ; SB 038/Esgar **PASSED**)
- Continue the ability of Coloradans to create **conservation easements** to provide incentives for landowners to preserve their farms and ranches (HB 1291/Winter **PASSED**; HB 1290/Roberts **PASSED**)
- Stabilize the state **parks and wildlife** department and protect access to outdoor recreation and public lands (SB 143/Arndt **PASSED**)
- **Protect waterways** from zebra mussels and other invasive aquatic species (HB 1008/Esgar and Arndt **PASSED**)
- **Hold mine operators accountable** for water pollution (HB 1301/Roberts and McLachlan **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Help the transition to **renewable energy** sources by use of energy storage systems (HB 1270/Hansen **PASSED** and SB 009/Winter **PASSED**)
- **Reauthorize the Colorado Energy Office** (SB 003/Hansen **PASSED**)
- Require **increased reporting of oil and gas incidents** (HB 1157/KC Becker and Singer **KILLED IN SENATE**)

- Require operators to provide **financial assurances and reclamation plans for new oil and gas development** (SB 063/Benavidez **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to address the soaring cost of health care and improve transparency:

- Provide tighter regulation of **freestanding emergency departments** and their sticker-shock bills (SB 146/Singer **PASSED**; HB 1282/Lontine **PASSED**; HB 1212/Kennedy **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Explore a reinsurance program to reduce insurance premiums (HB 1392/Kennedy **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Initiate a study of **affordable health care options**, including a Medicaid buy-in option, for Colorado residents (HB 1384/Roberts **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Require drug companies to **provide 90 days' warning when they significantly increase the price of a drug** (HB 1260/Ginal and Jackson **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- End prohibitions on pharmacists' ability to inform patients of **affordable alternative drug options** (HB 1284/Buckner **PASSED**)
- Provide notice to consumers about increased **prices for insulin** (HB 1009/Roberts **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Address the shortage of **healthcare professionals in rural areas** (SB 024 Singer and Pettersen **PASSED**)
- **Require hospitals to disclose more of their financial information** (HB 1207/Kennedy **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to combat the opioid epidemic:

- Seek federal approval to provide residential and inpatient **substance abuse treatment** for Medicaid recipients with drug dependencies, accessing mostly federal dollars (HB 1136/Pettersen **PASSED**)
- Require **faster insurance approval** of medication-assisted treatment for substance use so patients don't go back to opioids while waiting for approval to begin treatment (HB 1007/Kennedy and Singer **PASSED**)
- Look into ways to establish **programs to prevent and reduce opioid use** and to increase training for providers on best practices for prescribing opioids (HB 1003/Pettersen **PASSED**)
- **Restrict the number of opioid pills in a prescription** (SB 022/Kennedy and Pettersen **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Require an **electronic prescription for opioids** (HB 1279/Esgar **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to protect consumers' rights and data privacy:

- Require businesses to **keep data safe and promptly notify consumers** of a breach (HB 1128/Bridges **PASSED**)
- Give parents tools to **freeze credit reports for minors**, protecting them against identity theft that can go undetected for years (HB 1232/Duran **PASSED**)
- Provide **fairness in arbitration** of disputes between companies and consumers (HB 1261/Weissman **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Require transparency for consumers to **access information about arbitration providers** (HB 1262/Jackson and Roberts **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to protect public health and safety:

- **Reduce youth suicide** by training people who work with children to recognize children in need of help, improving a crisis hotline and lowering the age limit for children to access counseling without notifying their parents (HB 1177/Michaelson Jenet **KILLED IN SENATE** and HB 1416/McLachlan **KILLED IN SENATE**) and SB 272/McLachlan **PASSED**)
- Modernize Colorado's **newborn disease and hearing screening** program (HB 1006/Hamner **PASSED**)
- Create an ombudsman office to help **connect Coloradans to mental health resources** (HB 1357/Michaelson Jenet **PASSED**)

- **Expand the Colorado Road and Safety Act** to increase accessibility of drivers licenses for Dreamers and other immigrants, making our roads safer (SB 108/Singer and Arndt **PASSED**)
- Provide a way to **temporarily impound the guns of people who are judged to be a danger to themselves or others** (HB 1436/Garnett **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Keep oil and gas development a safe distance from schools** (HB 1352/Foote and Gray **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Disclose the location of underground gas lines** (HB 1419/Foote and Jackson **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- Require **oil and gas regulators to prioritize public health and safety** (HB 1071/Salazar **KILLED IN SENATE**)
- **Crack down on “swatting”** – the false reporting of a deadly situation as a prank (**SB18-068/Bridges PASSED**)
- **Reduce sexual misconduct on campus** and provide resources and a clear, fair process for schools to respond to incidents (HB 1391/Duran and Winter **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bills to reform Colorado’s criminal justice system:

- **Stop incarcerating juveniles for truancy** to prevent them from entering the school-to-prison pipeline (HB 1156/Lee **PASSED**)
- **Reduce mandatory parole** from 5 years to 3 (leaving judicial discretion for longer paroles) for nonviolent crimes. Recidivism rates wither after more than 2 years on parole (HB 1029/Weissman **PASSED**)
- **Remove barriers to employment and community reintegration for ex-offenders** (HB 1344/Weissman **PASSED**; HB 1418/Weissman **PASSED**; HB 1176/Lee **PASSED**)
- **Help inmates with mental illness to access treatment** (SB 249/Lee and Young **PASSED**; SB 250/Lee and Young **PASSED**; SB 251/Lee and Young **PASSED**)
- Remove barriers to **placing offenders in community corrections** to help them transition from prison to the community and relieve prison crowding (HB 1251/Lee **PASSED**)
- Create the **Community Crime Victims Grant Program** to provide supportive services to crime victims (HB 1409/Lee and Herod **PASSED**)
- Study prison population and capacity issues and ways to **reduce the number of people incarcerated and the financial burden on the state** (HB 1425/Lee **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Other important bills:

- Help to **keep families together when parents have a disability** (HB 1104/Danielson **PASSED**)
- Continue and expand the **Colorado Veterans’ Service-to-Career Program** (HB 1343/Lee **PASSED**)
- Offer grants to provide **firefighting equipment** to hard-pressed districts (HB 1423/Valdez **PASSED**)
- Send two ballot measures to the voters to reform the way Colorado will draw legislative district lines after the 2020 census, to **prohibit gerrymandering** (SCR 004/Duran and SCR 005/Duran **PASSED**)
- Require **disclosure of presidential candidates’ tax returns** (HB 1318/Hooton and Hansen **KILLED IN SENATE**)

Bad Republican bills that House Democrats killed:

- Restrict access to **reproductive rights** (HB 1082; HB 1120; HB 1225)
- Roll back reasonable **gun safety measures** (SB 052; SB 097; HB 1015; HB 1037)
- Reduce local communities’ ability to place reasonable safety protections on **oil and gas development** (SB 192; HB 1150)
- Make it harder to protect **public lands** (HB 1122; HB 1123; HB 1194) and **clean air** (SB 226)
- Discriminate against **LGBT Coloradans** (HB 1206; SB 241)
- Provide public tax support for **private and religious school tuition** (HB 1221; SB 083)
- Restrict the ability of **workers** to advocate for themselves (HB 1030) and allow businesses to get around **minimum wage** laws (HB 1106)