



Colorado House Democrats went into the 2019 session focused on building a fair economy that expands opportunity for all, no matter what corner of the state you live in; investing in our future; and protecting the Colorado Way of Life. This year, we were able to turn many of our popular proposals into law, moving forward on measures to build a fair economy, lower the cost of health care, invest in education, address climate change, tackle the opioid crisis, reform our criminal justice system and help hardworking Coloradans get ahead.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY & BUILDING A FAIR ECONOMY

Colorado's economy is booming for some but not for all. Too many hardworking Coloradans aren't seeing the benefit of our state's economic success and feel like they can't get ahead. This year Democrats made important progress on leveling out the playing field for all Coloradans:

- Women, especially women of color, should be paid equally for equal work. We are committed to fighting for every Coloradan to be treated with the dignity, fairness and respect they deserve. That's why we passed [SB19-085](#) to ensure equal pay for equal work, and we will continue working on solutions to expand opportunity for all.
- After years of trying, Democrats passed [HB19-1210](#) to allow local governments to adjust their minimum wage up to address the cost of living in their communities, rather than have to adhere to a statewide standard when local real estate markets and health care costs vary dramatically.
- We renewed our push to ensure access to paid family and medical leave for hardworking Coloradans who need to take care of a sick relative or a new child. [SB19-188](#) will lay the foundation to help ensure an effective implementation of the best possible family leave policy for Coloradans.
- America is in a retirement crisis—people are not saving enough. In our fast-growing economy, Colorado needs a plan to make sure workers can save for the long term and retire securely. That's why we passed [SB19-173](#) to help Coloradans who don't have access to a workplace retirement savings plan.

INVESTING IN COLORADO'S FUTURE

Fighting for historic investments in [K-12](#) and higher education: This year the legislature passed bills to fund full-day kindergarten for Colorado's youngest learners, invest in skills for Colorado's emerging workforce, attract and retain early childhood and [rural educators](#), and allow school capital construction funding to be used for career and technical education projects in public schools.

We also added an additional \$100 million to buy-down the budget stabilization factor and better invest in our K-12 schools, increasing funding by \$183 per student. Democrats also kept [higher ed tuition flat](#) and provided more oversight for student loans.

Helping to lower the cost of health care: This session we passed legislation to increase transparency for health care costs in Colorado's [hospitals](#), prohibit budget-busting [out-of-network billing](#), reduce the price of [insulin](#) and lower prescription drug costs by allowing for the importation of [prescription drugs](#) from Canada.

Democrats also reached across the aisle to create a new affordable and competitive [health care option](#) in the state of Colorado that will be available to families and individuals when purchasing health insurance. Colorado will become the first state in the nation to ever set in place a process for offering a public health insurance option. We also passed a bill that will allow healthcare cooperatives to incorporate consumer protections like coverage for

preexisting conditions and allow the State Insurance Commissioner to work with groups seeking to create co-ops so that they can get up and running as soon as possible to provide health care cost relief for Coloradans.

PROTECTING & ENHANCING THE COLORADO WAY OF LIFE

Protecting Colorado's Environment: Coloradans are concerned about the impacts of climate change on our economy and environment. That's why Democrats passed reasonable, science-based legislation to put carbon reduction goals in statute ([HB19-1261](#)), and comprehensive energy legislation ([SB19-236](#)) increasing PUC oversight and requiring consideration of the social cost of carbon in electric resource planning. SB236 also secures an 80% reduction in carbon pollution for our state's largest power company - the most ambitious trajectory for any utility in the country - while [HB19-1314](#) ensures workers and communities dependent on the fossil fuel industry are not left behind as Colorado transitions to a cleaner economy.

We also passed [SB181](#) to update Colorado's antiquated oil and gas laws to put health and safety first by reforming the mission of the COGCC, increasing local government authority over oil and gas and empowering affected communities to protect our clean air and clean water. Democrats also took steps to deploy more renewable energy, protect [clean water](#) and mitigate the impacts of [wildfires](#) on Colorado's mountain communities.

Addressing the Opioid Crisis: The opioid epidemic in the United States has claimed more lives than the entire Vietnam War. Democrats continued to pass [bipartisan bills](#) to help battle this epidemic by getting people the care and treatment they need and addressing prescribing practices.

Delivering Transportation Solutions: Coloradans are tired of the lack of investment in roads, bridges, and transit. House Democrats worked on creative and collaborative solutions to our transportation problems. This year the legislature was able to secure more than [\\$300 million](#) for transportation funding without jeopardizing education or higher ed funding. We expanded opportunity in the transportation sector by lowering the age threshold for getting a commercial driver's license. And in November, voters will decide on a [bipartisan ballot measure](#) to better fund public schools, higher education and transportation.

Standing Up for Rural Colorado: Legislators on both sides of the aisle have worked to address the unique needs of rural Colorado. Democrats passed legislation to deploy more [broadband](#) infrastructure, lower the cost of health care, improve access to mental health resources, expand access to [affordable housing](#), address the [rural teacher shortage](#), increase access to immigrants [driver's licenses](#), and combat the [opioid crisis](#).

Supporting open and transparent government, fair campaigns, and access to the ballot: Democrats passed bills that would significantly increase access to the ballot and make our elections more secure through the passage of the [Colorado Votes Act](#), [Restore Voting Rights to Parolees](#), and [Automatic Voter Registration](#). House Democrats also took on transparency and fairness in [lobbying disclosures](#), [campaign finance reform](#), [electioneering communications disclosure](#), [outreach for a complete count in the upcoming census](#), and more.

House Democrats also delivered on bipartisan efforts to [reform](#) Colorado's criminal justice system and [passed life-saving gun safety legislation](#); put a measure on the ballot to protect Colorado's [water](#); [banned](#) the dangerous and discredited practice of 'conversion therapy'; and cut through red tape for transgender and non-binary Coloradans to have access to identity documents that reflect their [authentic selves](#).