



COLORADO

SENATE REPUBLICANS

2019

SESSION IN REVIEW

Democrats abused their newfound power during the 2019 legislative session of the Colorado General Assembly, passing dozens of pieces of legislation that are **harmful to small businesses, infringements upon your constitutional rights,** and that **jeopardize the Colorado way of life.**

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“Consider just how quickly **Democrats are turning Colorado into a progressive state right now.** Now, some of you love this, some of you hate it, either way, it’s just a fact.”



KYLE CLARK - 9NEWS ANCHOR

“I think the slogan for the Democratic party at the Capitol this year is, quite frankly, go big or go home, and **they are going big in almost every respect** and on **almost every issue.**”



ERIC SONDERMANN - POLITICAL ANALYST

“Frankly, it feels like we’re negotiating with children sometimes. **Taking the rules at their literal meaning** and perverting them to get their way.”



STEVE FENBERG, SENATE MAJORITY LEADER (D-BOULDER)

■ SMALL BUSINESS & REGULATIONS

Democrats passed legislation that expanded the bureaucratic state, overregulated businesses, and made it more difficult to hire new employees in the State of Colorado.

■ SENATE BILL 19-078 // NET NEUTRALITY

Further restricts the free market when it comes to internet service providers. While this legislation doesn't have the teeth of federal net neutrality efforts, the new law will punish service providers that do not ensure "net neutrality" by taking away their rural development grants. The result will be both further restricted markets and potentially less rural internet access.

■ SENATE BILL 19-173 // SECURE SAVINGS BOARD

Creates a "Secure Savings Board" that will investigate the potential to offer retirement plans via the state government. Yet again, government trampled on a free market. As we know, there isn't a shortage of retirement plan options for Coloradans, but Democrats want to spend \$800,000 on a study to figure out how to save your money for you. *Who are they trying to kid?*

■ SENATE BILL 19-188 // PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Thankfully, this legislation was gutted, leaving a simple study committee in place to explore the option of a compulsory, taxpayer-funded family leave plan. The original proposal included an income tax increase (which was disguised as a fee), a potential massive unfunded liability, and would have been a substantial burden on those employed by Colorado's mom and pop shops.

■ HOUSE BILL 19-1025 // BAN THE BOX FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Yet again, government told businesses what they could and could not do. This legislation bans employers from asking potential hires if they have been convicted of a felony on their application, with a few exceptions. Certain employers, such as childcare centers or elderly care facilities, will no longer be able to ask this on the employment application.

■ HOUSE BILL 19-1210 // LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL MINIMUM WAGE

Because it's worked so well in cities such as Seattle, Democrats have given localities the ability to increase their minimum wage beyond what is set at the state level. Of course, if this was about local control, then cities would be able to set their wage lower than the state standard, but that is not the case. This will most likely result in less take-home pay for lower-income Coloradans.

EDUCATION

For all the talk of helping teachers, Democrats killed nearly every bill aimed at putting more money in the pockets of Colorado educators. Instead, they opted to push through more top-down solutions.

SENATE BILL 19-022 // BONUSES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

A great piece of legislation proposed by Senator Paul Lundeen (R-Monument) that would have provided bonuses for teachers that are considered “highly effective.” It was the only measure to increase teacher pay in any fashion that was introduced in the 2019 session. Unfortunately, Democrats killed this legislation in committee before it could reach the Senate floor.

SENATE BILL 19-025 // TEACHING THE SAFE HAVEN LAW

One of the few bright spots of the 2019 session, Senator Jim Smallwood’s (R-Parker) bill to ensure that Colorado’s Safe Haven law is taught in schools passed both chambers unanimously after the media exposed Democrats’ plot to kill the bill. The Safe Haven law allows for a newborn to be given up at a fire station, hospital, or freestanding emergency room.

SENATE BILL 19-060 // EDUCATOR SUPPLY TAX CREDIT

Another great bill brought forth by Senator Owen Hill (R-Colorado Springs) would have given all educators (public, private, charter, homeschool) an additional \$500 tax credit for supplies they purchase for teaching (such as books, pencils, pens, and other items). Unfortunately, Democrats killed this legislation in committee before it could reach the Senate floor.

SENATE BILL 19-087 // STUDENT TRANSFERS FOR SAFETY INCIDENT

Senator Rob Woodward’s (R-Loveland) bill would have allowed students who were bullied or involved in a school safety incident to transfer to a new district in order to receive a proper education without worrying about their safety. Of course, this is just too much choice for the people of Colorado to handle, so Democrats killed the bill in committee.

SENATE BILL 19-039 // INTERDISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

This legislation will repealed a law that was enacted last year that allowed for students who have transferred to another district to receive transportation from that district. Unfortunately, this reversal means that lower income students may not be given an option for transportation if their home district denies buses from another district from entering their jurisdiction.

EDUCATION CONTINUED

HOUSE BILL 19-1032 // COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL EDUCATION

This bill establishes content standards for comprehensive sexual education in Colorado schools. If a school chooses to teach sex ed, these are the guidelines that the school must follow. Thankfully, the bill was amended to remove many of the more controversial content standards (i.e. potentially teaching students K-3rd grade about sexuality).

HOUSE BILL 19-1312 // VACCINATIONS REQUIREMENTS

This bill would have made it more difficult for parents to receive an exemption from vaccinations, requiring parents to see a physician to acquire an exemption, even if the exemption was on religious or moral grounds. The bill was successfully killed on the floor of the Senate.

ELECTIONS

Despite being heralded across the nation for our electoral process, Democrats decided that they had solutions to problems that didn't exist, and even began to tear away at the Electoral College system.

SENATE BILL 19-042 // NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE

Democrats in the legislature thought themselves more wise than our founding fathers, passing a bill that would circumvent the United States Constitution by giving Colorado's Electoral College votes to the winner of the national popular vote via the Interstate Popular Vote Compact. This won't go into effect until at least 270 electoral votes are committed to the compact.

SENATE BILL 19-232 // CAMPAIGN FINANCE ENFORCEMENT

The most egregious part of this piece of legislation is that it makes the Secretary of State - a partisan position - the sole judge and jury of campaign finance complaints. The current Secretary of State - Jena Griswold - just banned her employees from traveling to Alabama due to their abortion law. *But don't worry, surely she won't bring her personal bias to campaign finance...right?*

HOUSE BILL 19-1278 // "OMNIBUS" ELECTION BILL

This bill makes it significantly more difficult for unaffiliated candidates to reach the ballot by increasing their signature threshold requirements. Weird - we thought that Democrats were all about hearing the the voices of ALL Coloradans? *Apparently some voices are more equal than others.*

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

It was very important that Democrats hammer our energy and manufacturing sectors in order to make the point that climate change is an existential threat - *unless you live in Pueblo.*

SENATE BILL 19-053 // PROHIBIT AQCC OVERREACH

Colorado's unelected Air Quality Control Commission has recently adopted standards that will increase the cost of most vehicles and begin pushing Colorado towards low and zero-emission vehicles. Senator John Cooke's (R-Greeley) bill would have stopped them from doing this without the legislature's approval. Democrats killed the bill in committee.

SENATE BILL 19-181 // OIL & GAS REGULATIONS

One of the most talked about bills this session, it is yet to be seen exactly what impact the new oil and gas regulations will have on the Colorado economy. We've already seen cities like Broomfield and counties like Adams place moratoriums on drilling, but now we wait to see what regulations the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission will put into place and what court battles stem from that.

SENATE BILL 19-236 // PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION SUNSET

A "sunset" bill is a simple bill that is used to evaluate a program's effectiveness and either extend the sunset date or let the program expire. At the last minute, Democrats added HB19-1313, a bill to reduce carbon emissions (that already died), to the text of SB19-236. The amended bill seems to violate the single subject rule set forth in the Colorado Constitution.

HOUSE BILL 19-1261 // CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Establishes targets for reducing statewide greenhouse gas pollution, calling for a 90% reduction in emissions by 2050 (relative to 2005 rate). Such an important issue that President Leroy Garcia (D-Pueblo) carved out one of the largest employers in his district by running an amendment to *carve out metal producers* such as EVRAZ Rocky Mountain Steel of Pueblo, CO (Senate District 3).

HOUSE BILL 19-1314 // OFFICE OF JUST TRANSITION

Prior Democrat legislation has put people out of jobs. Now, their solution is the creation of the Orwellian "*Office of Just Transition*" to coax those people to "*transition justly*" to new careers. Democrats finally admit that their legislation killed jobs and forced career changes. We believe it's best to simply *not kill their original jobs in the first place.*

FIREARMS & MENTAL HEALTH

An important issue that needs serious attention - unfortunately, Democrats trampled on individual liberty in pursuit of band-aid solutions instead of searching for the cure to the underlying disease.

SENATE BILL 19-093 // FIREARM RIGHTS FOR MMJ PATIENTS

Senator Vicki Marble (R-Fort Collins) took a stand for the Constitution with her bill to ensure that medical marijuana patients still preserved their right to bear arms. Despite bipartisan support with a Democrat House sponsor, Democrats in the Senate were (unsurprisingly) unwilling to protect the firearm rights of any individuals, and killed the bill in committee.

HOUSE BILL 19-1169 // MENTAL HEALTH HOLDS

The legislation, sponsored by Senator John Cooke (R-Greeley) would have reformed mental health holds and allow licensed professionals (such as the police, mental health professionals, etc) to remove an individual who is going through a mental health crisis for evaluation. Instead of focusing on objects - like guns - we could have focused on the people. Democrats killed the bill.

HOUSE BILL 19-1177 // "RED FLAG" GUN CONFISCATION

Another massive piece of controversial legislation that has led to over half of Colorado counties and/or Sheriffs to declare that they will not enforce the law. This bill allows almost anyone to accuse you of being a threat, to request an "Extreme Risk Protection Order" against you, and to have your guns confiscated. Thus, it puts the public and law enforcement at greater risk.

HEALTHCARE

More government solutions to problems that government created. While addressing rising healthcare costs remains a top priority, history has taught us that more government doesn't equal better results.

HOUSE BILL 19-1004 // PUBLIC OPTION STUDY

Healthcare in America is in such bad shape that Democrats have decided to return to the idea of government being the solution - which is why they will be studying a public option for health insurance, offered by the State of Colorado. This threatens to drive out competition completely, of course, as government programs don't need to be financially solvent but businesses do.

TAXES

Few hobbies are enjoyed as much by Democrats as thinking up new tax schemes to ensure that you have less money in your pocket.

SENATE BILL 19-055 // REDUCE THE STATE INCOME TAX

Senator Jerry Sonnenberg (R-Sterling) proposed legislation this year that would have lowered the state income tax rate by approximately 3%. Despite initial support from Governor Polis (gasp!), Democrats of course killed this bill in committee. Their reasoning was simple: *Why allow you to keep more of your own money when Democrats think they know how to spend it better than you?*

HOUSE BILL 19-1257 // “DE-BRUCING” BALLOT MEASURE

This ballot measure will ask voters to essentially undo the revenue cap in our Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) by allowing the state government to keep and spend excess revenue rather than refund those dollars back to taxpayers.

HOUSE BILL 19-1258 // “DE-BRUCING” MONEY ALLOCATION

This companion bill to HB19-1257 seems to require that those revenues could only be used for K-12, higher education, and transportation. This is the same promise made with Referendum C in 2005. Billions were supposed to go towards our roads and bridges and it didn't happen. ***Don't fall for this empty promise again.***

HOUSE BILL 19-1333 // TOBACCO & VAPING TAX INCREASE MEASURE

Governor Polis' brainchild - an increase in the tobacco tax and a new tax on vaping products - thankfully met the fate it deserved with only 10 Senators, all Democrats, voting in favor of it. While the tax on cigarettes was certainly regressive, it is also worth noting that the new vaping tax would have been set at 62% - only further pushing people farther away from quitting smoking.

TRANSPORTATION

Republicans were successful in bringing more money for Colorado's roads and bridges - but it's unfortunately a drop in the bucket compared to the funding we need.

SENATE BILL 19-207 // MONEY FOR TRANSPORTATION

Republicans took a strong stand during the budget debate to ensure that a total of \$300 million went to repairing and improving Colorado roads and bridges.

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■ TRANSPORTATION CONTINUED

■ **SENATE BILL 19-092 // EMISSIONS INSPECTION “CHECK ENGINE” LIGHT**

In Colorado, the “Check Engine” light is grounds for an automatic failure during emissions test. This bill by Senator John Cooke (R-Greeley) would have changed that. As we all know, those pesky lights can turn on simply due to expensive sensors failing or for the silliest of reasons, and we shouldn’t be taking cars off the road because of it. Democrats killed the bill in the House.

■ **SENATE BILL 19-101 // CONSTRUCTION OF MANAGED LANES**

Senator Paul Lundeen (R-Monument) proposed this legislation to ensure that the Department of Transportation isn’t placing toll lanes across Colorado without taking input from citizens and doing the proper research to identify if such “managed lanes” are really necessary. Democrats killed it.