

DATES TO KNOW:

October 5: ballots mailed and 24-hour drop boxes open

October 12: in-person voting begins

October 26: last day to return your ballot by mail

November 3: election day; polls close at 7pm

The **2026 CO ballot** has 10 candidate races & 14 statewide ballot measures for you to vote on.

AMENDMENTS: proposed changes to Colorado's Constitution that are hard to reverse. Need a **super majority (55%)** of all votes cast to pass. Once it becomes law, no one can change it without another vote of the people. Amending the constitution makes any future efforts to revise or repeal state laws go to a vote of the people instead of resting in the hands of the legislature.

BALLOT MEASURES: aka: public questions. Refer to the fundamental concept of asking citizens to approve new state laws or issues through the process of voting. Need a **simple majority (50% plus one vote)** to pass. Once it becomes law, state lawmakers can change it.

PROPOSITION: a ballot measure that has been assigned a specific number & title for clarity.

- **LABELED WITH A LETTER:** Items with letters – Amendment X, for example – were referred to the ballot by state lawmakers. Lawmakers need a two-thirds majority to get an amendment on the ballot and a regular majority to refer a proposition onto the ballot.
- **LABELED WITH NUMBERS:** Items with numbers – Prop 110 or Prop 112, for example – are citizen-driven initiatives and went through the signature-gathering process to get on the ballot.

AMENDMENTS:

81: IMMIGRATION REPORTING IN CERTAIN CASES should local law enforcement be required to notify the federal US Department of Homeland Security when a person is charged with a crime of violence AND that person's immigration status cannot be determined? This would only apply to a person who is charged with a violent crime OR has a prior felony conviction AND when it cannot be verified that the person is lawfully present in the USA. Local authorities would be required to report within 72 hours.

YES = require notification to DHS

NO = do not require it; leave current notification practices unchanged. (WHICH ARE: there are no requirements and, in most situations, it restricts that kind of reporting.)

82: NATURAL GAS should we make it a right for consumers to buy, and utilities/distributors to sell, natural gas for home and business cooking or heating? Some cities and states have been banning gas to push electrification. This would block CO governments from ever doing that.

YES = make it a right for citizens to choose natural gas as an energy source

NO = don't make it a right; let government decide which energy sources the citizens are allowed to use

83: HUNTING AND FISHING should we make it a constitutional right to hunt and fish in Colorado? This amendment defines the practices as preferred wildlife-management tools...that are STILL subject to regulation for conservation and safety. This has been placed on the ballot in response to recent efforts to restrict hunting and fishing in CO.

YES = make it a right to hunt and fish; future restrictions are harder

NO = don't make it a right; let government decide if people are allowed to hunt and fish

84: MAIL-BALLOT VOTER ID should we require voters in federal and statewide elections to add an identification number to their mail-ballot envelope, in addition to their signature? This would require election officials to compare that information against the statewide voter registration database and includes a cure process for any discrepancies.

YES = require an additional identification number to vote by mail

NO = keep CO's current system for mail-in ballots: signature-verification only

85: PLAIN LANGUAGE should we require ballot questions to be written at an eighth-grade reading level and limit statutory language that is required in current ballot titles?

YES = require ballot titles to be written in plain language that people can understand

NO = keep the current rules for ballot titles

86: CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING should we enforce our current laws as to how we approach off-cycle congressional redistricting? This would make it really hard for anyone to redraw Colorado's congressional maps between the normal once-every-ten-years redistricting. If someone tried, they would be prohibited from making any changes to our final maps unless:

- at least 3 public meetings are held (public process)
- the changes do not divide communities or purposefully favor one political party (anti-gerrymandering rules)
- BOTH the independent redistricting commission AND the CO Supreme Court

****Note:** these rules already exist for once-a-decade redraws

YES = add new rules to our constitution; politicians can't just redraw maps for advantage whenever they want

NO = don't change our constitution; it only spells out the once-every-ten-years process after each census and says nothing about mid-decade changes so any future off-cycle redraw would play out under existing law

87: GRADUATED INCOME TAX should we replace Colorado's flat income-tax with graduated rates? A flat tax is a system that applies the same percentage rate to all taxpayers equally regardless of income. A graduated or "progressive" tax is a system where you pay more as your income increases. This changes the way in which Coloradans are taxed AND is a MASSIVE tax increase (\$~2.7B just in the first year).

A lot of economists view this as the beginning of the end for the CO economy. This amendment would raise income taxes up to 8.4% on people earning more than \$500K per year. It would MINIMALLY reduce taxes on people and businesses earning less than \$100K per year. Think about our small local businesses (doctors, dentists, sports athletes and other professionals). They all work so hard and would have to pay the state nearly 10% in income taxes – a high cost just to do business in CO.

Those who can leave, will. 100% of them will pass any increases in taxes onto their customers and any money that would normally go to raises and benefits will now be going to the government.

So...again...the losers will be the average Coloradan.

The flat tax is what has made Colorado so attractive for so many years. In a time when individuals and businesses are fleeing states with high taxes for those with lower ones, this puts CO among the highest tax states in the nation! If this passes it is effectively the end of TABOR as it would remove the current constitutional requirement that taxable income gets taxed at one rate.

Also...and very importantly, it is **NOT TIED TO INFLATION!** So...with enough time **this is a tax increase for everyone**. Because people's incomes will increase pushing them into higher brackets but their purchasing power won't keep up because of inflation.

Supposedly these funds would go towards K-12 schools, healthcare and early childhood programs. "Do it for the kids!"

***Note:** this amendment only requires a simple majority (50% + one vote) to pass because the Title Board found this amendment only repeals constitutional language. The normal, higher requirement for amendments (55% majority) does not apply to measures limited to repealing (in whole or in part) a provision of the state constitution.

YES = amend our constitution and put in a graduated income tax rate – which is vulnerable to future fluctuations as to who that will apply to in the future

NO = keep CO's long-standing, simple, flat income tax rate at 4.4%

PROPOSITIONS:

NN: INCREASE TABOR CAP FOR K-12 EDUCATION MEASURE **should we allow the state to keep additional tax revenue (roughly \$4.6 Billion) and direct those funds to K-12 education?** This would raise the TABOR cap and allowing the government to keep more of your money. Supposedly this money would be spent on education programs, teacher pay and preparing students for the workforce. In the first 10 years, most of the money goes to education. BUT...this is a PERMANENT AND MAJOR increase in the TABOR limit as well as a change to the TABOR formula. After 10 years, only 1/5th of the money is required to go to education...the rest will serve as blank checks to the government.

****Note 1:** for those of you paying attention....didn't we just vote on this??? Yes. We did. See 2025 ballot propositions LL and MM. More spending has NOT led to better outcomes but..."do it for the kids!" seems to be an effective battle cry.

****Note 2:** Denver is at an all-time low for public school student enrollment. So why do we need more money for less students? Not to mention the most recent statistics for math and English proficiency rates....

****Note 3: LONG TERM STRATEGY:.....if it wasn't a tax they wouldn't be asking you.....**

YES = raise taxes; increase the TABOR cap and increase the amount of money the state of CO is allowed to keep from you!

NO = do NOT raise taxes; do NOT increase the TABOR cap and require the state of CO to return refunds that rightfully belong to you!

****REMINDER OF SOMETHING COOL IN COLORADO****

The State's Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, aka: TABOR.

A constitutional amendment that restricts government by saying the government cannot just raise taxes or keep extra tax money whenever it feels like it. The State must provide voters with an estimate of the money it will collect from new taxes **AND REFUND** any money collected ABOVE said estimate to the taxpayers.

TABOR does three important things:

- Requires voter approval for tax increases – government has to **ASK US FIRST!**
- Limits how much money the government can keep – a **YEARLY CAP**.
- Requires **SPECIFIC BALLOT WORDING** and election rules for fiscal questions.

****It generally requires a flat state income tax (one rate; not higher rates for higher incomes.)**

132: PENALTIES FOR FENTANYL CRIMES **should we increase felony classifications & sentencing penalties for making, dispensing, selling, and possessing fentanyl AND should we require court-ordered treatment for fentanyl possession?** This would also apply to other synthetic opioids.

YES = increase penalties for fentanyl related crimes and require treatment

NO = keep the current penalties the same (WHICH ARE: <1g of fentanyl is a misdemeanor; Drug Felony Levels (1,2,3 or 4) are based on the amount of fentanyl being distributed or sold; discretionary court-ordered treatment.)

133: PENALTIES FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF A MINOR **should we increase the penalty to life in prison without parole for persons convicted of human trafficking of a child for sex?** This would also expand the definition of trafficking to include knowingly trading anything of value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor.

YES = require life in prison without parole for people convicted of human trafficking of a child for sexual servitude

NO = keep current laws the same for human trafficking of a child for sex (WHICH ARE: a Class 2 Felony - punishable by 8-24 years in prison)

134: MALE AND FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPORTS should we require student athletes to participate on athletic teams (K-12 school & college) that match their sex assigned at birth? This would require sports teams to be designated male OR female OR co-ed and restricts participation based on biological sex at birth. The measure would prohibit penalties against the schools that follow this law. Biological females can be on a male team if there is no equivalent female team offered for that sport. Participation on a mixed team is open to all.

YES = require that schools maintain separate sports teams: men, women or co-ed

NO = do not require this; allow biological men to participate in women's sports

135: PROHIBIT CERTAIN SURGERIES FOR MINORS should we prohibit healthcare providers from performing surgeries on minors (persons under the age of 18) that alter biological sex characteristics? This also would restrict the use of public funding for specified gender-affirming procedures.

YES = prohibit this; do not allow these surgeries to be performed on minors

NO = allow these surgeries to be performed on minors

136: INCOME TAX LIMIT should we cap state income-tax rates at 4.4% (the current rate)? This measure would begin in tax year 2027 and would apply to both individuals and corporations. Raising the rate later would still need voter approval. **Importantly, it will prevent endless efforts by the legislature to continually raise your taxes.** Maintaining a simple, flat tax system keeps Colorado economically competitive. CO currently has the fourth-highest cost of living in the United States. Eight states replaced their graduated income taxes with flat rates between 2021 and 2025. Why would Colorado move in the opposite direction?

YES = cap the state income tax rate

NO = do not cap the state income tax rate

137: SPORTING-GOODS SALES-TAX MONEY→ CONSERVATION should we let the state retain sales-tax revenue from sporting goods and supposedly dedicate it to conservation, water, wildfire prevention, outdoor equity and recreation? This would direct money collected from state sales taxes on sporting-goods AWAY from the general fund and into designated conservation and wildfire funds, rather than refunding any excess money to taxpayers as required under TABOR.

YES = dedicate sales-tax money to conservation programs; INCREASE TAXES by allowing the government to keep more of your refunds

NO = keep that revenue in the state general fund; DECREASE TAXES by NOT allowing the government to keep more of your refunds

CANDIDATE RACES

All candidates are hyperlinked on their names to their websites.

There is a long-term strategy here!! Don't get fooled by the unknowns – that's one way they siphon off enough votes in order to get a candidate to win by super slim margins. The goal is to get you to focus on a smaller number of candidates who have a real shot at winning. **For this purpose, we indicate who these candidates are by placing their names in bold.** We are refraining from telling you who is a better candidate in our opinion **ON PURPOSE.**

YOU CAN DO THIS! Pick who you like.



CANDIDATES ENDORSED BY:

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA

(*website is hyperlinked)

Denver DSA requires candidates to identify as **SOCIALISTS** and be active chapter members to earn a full "endorsed" label. (Non-member Democrats who are sympathetic to their cause just get a "recommend yes" label.)

The DSA platform asks you to imagine a future without capitalism...where your job isn't just a job to pay bills. Speaking of bills...you won't really have them anymore. Their website says that in the future, you won't pay a mortgage or have a landlord, because comfortable housing is a human right. (So....the government pays for all housing for everyone everywhere? Sounds expensive.) But not just housing. Also... health insurance, food, education, medicine, transportation, free universal daycare...etc. How much will this fantasy cost? The estimates are between \$72 and \$212 TRILLION dollars...which, of course, will cause astronomical inflation.

****These candidates are in red below.****

FEDERAL ELECTIONS:

US SENATE, COLORADO:	<u>Mark Baisley (R)</u> <u>John Hickenlooper (D)</u> (<i>incumbent</i>) Bob Chew (CO Forward Party) Christopher Baum (Approval Voting Party) Blake Huber (Libertarian) Adam Withrow (Unity Party)
US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COLORADO, DISTRICT 1:	<u>Milat Kiros (D)</u>  <u>Christy Peterson (R)</u> Critter Milton (Unity Party) Chad Humphrey (Libertarian) <u>Shimon Blau (Unaffiliated)</u>

STATE ELECTIONS:

CO GOVERNOR / LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR: <i>***(<u>Jared Polis / Dianne Primavera</u> – incumbents are termed out)</i>	<u>Victor Marx / George Washington Market (R)</u> <u>Phil Weiser / Lesley Dahlkemper (D)</u> Stephen T. Hamilton / James K Treibert (American Constitution Party) Eric Mulder / Wayne Harlos (Libertarian) Jeff Peckman / T.J. Cole (Unity Party) Erik Underwood / Frank Atwood (Approval Voting Party) <u>Greg Lopez / Taralyn Romero (Unaffiliated)</u>
CO SECRETARY OF STATE: <i>***(<u>Jena Griswold</u> – incumbent is termed out)</i>	<u>Amanda Gonzalez (D)</u>  <u>James Wiley (R)</u> Sean Vadney (Libertarian) Amanda Campbell (American Constitution Party) Celeste Landry (Forward Party)
<u>CO TREASURER:</u> <i>***(<u>Dave Young</u> – incumbent is term-limited)</i>	<u>Jeff Bridges (D)</u> <u>Kevin Grantham (R)</u> Jodie Barr (Libertarian) Marilee Langner Sturgis (Approval Voting Party)
CO ATTORNEY GENERAL: <i>***(<u>Phil Weiser</u> – incumbent is termed out)</i>	<u>Jena Griswold (D)</u> <u>Michael Allen (R)</u>
CO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, DISTRICT 1: This seat corresponds to the state's 1st Congressional District, which covers Denver. Its member is elected on a statewide basis every four years.	<u>Lisa Escarcega (D)</u> (<i>incumbent</i>) <u>Frederick Espinoza (R)</u> Clayton Casciato (Libertarian)
CO STATE SENATE, DISTRICT 31: (**Special Election)	<u>Matt Ball (D)</u> (<i>incumbent</i>)
CO STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DISTRICT 2:	<u>Scott Baldermann (D)</u> <u>Carey Marin (R)</u>
RETENTION OF JUDGES:	*see THIS LINK for information about specific judges

DENVER VOTERS:

DENVER BALLOT MEASURES:

More of Mayor Mike Johnston's "Vibrant Denver Bond" Package.

The remainder of his eight **BOND MEASURES (2H-2J)** are on this ballot and do NOT raise taxes. They change how Denver's government is written into the Charter. These have been referred to the voters by City Council.

2H: CHARTER AMENDMENT: AUDITORS OFFICE – should we clarify the Auditor's authority to enforce wage and worker protection laws? This is basically a legal clarification of the Auditor's existing labor-enforcement role.

YES = make these changes

NO = do not make these changes; leave the current language as is

2I: CHARTER AMENDMENT: "BUDGET TOGETHER DENVER" – should we let the city change to a two-year budget planning process? The current Charter requires an ANNUAL budget, which City Council amends and adopts. This is a process change: it would let the city move to a biennial process and updates both the budget calendar and reporting rules. It keeps the option to revert to annual budgeting in times of economic uncertainty.

YES = make these changes; let the city develop a budget every other year

NO = keep it the way it is; make the city come up with a yearly budget

2J: CHARTER AMENDMENT: CIVIL SERVICE / DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY – should we revise our civil service rules? This includes dropping the citizenship requirement for Civil Service Commission members; adjusting disciplinary review timelines; changing probation rules for police and fire staff on approved leave; and removing charter caps on police and fire command staff positions.

YES = make these changes

NO = do not change our civil service rules

2K: XCEL ENERGY FRANCHISE RENEWAL – should we approve a 20-year franchise with Xcel Energy? This would allow Xcel (Public Service Company) to use city streets/rights-of-way for electric and gas service, to continue undergrounding utility lines, and to pay the city for that use. (The current contract expires at the end of 2026.) This is only the city's permission and contract terms for Xcel to occupy public property. This does not change your rates; those are set by the Colorado PUC.

Xcel will pay: a 3% franchise fee (~\$34M/year); roughly 1% of electric revenue (~\$10M/year) for undergrounding utility lines; a one-time \$2.5M bill-assistance contribution; low-income energy assistance funding; and added transparency/audit requirements.

YES = approve a 20-year franchise to Xcel

NO = do not approve a 20-year franchise. Service will continue but parts of the franchise will have to be renegotiated project by project.

INITIATED ORDINANCE 311: FOIE GRAS AND FORCE-FEEDING BAN – should we write a new law to prohibit force-feeding birds and ban the sale of products from force-fed birds, like foie gras, in Denver? This is sponsored by the same people who ran two 2024 Denver animal measures that failed (308-ban fur sales and 309-ban slaughterhouses).

YES = ban it; let the government decide what the citizens are allowed to eat

NO = allow it; let the citizens choose what they want to eat

BALLOT ISSUE 4A: DPS MILL LEVY OVERRIDE – should we raise our taxes to fund \$44 million in employee raises, career/technical education, mental health and special education? This would raise the mill-levy override cap from 25% to 29%. It equates to roughly \$72 MORE per year for a typical homeowner. See above comments under State Prop NN about DPS enrollment and performance outcomes

YES = raise taxes to pay for this

NO = do not raise taxes to pay for this

BALLOT ISSUE 7A – FRONT RANGE PASSENGER RAIL DISTRICT - should we increase our sales tax .333% in the district to fund operations and maintenance of the PROPOSED Colorado Connector passenger rail?

YES = raise taxes to pay for this

NO = do not raise taxes to pay for this

DENVER CANDIDATE RACES:

***Note: Regular Denver mayor and full City Council elections are in April 2027, not this November.*

AT-LARGE CITY COUNCIL – SEAT B

SEAT B **Special Election: seat is vacant following the early resignation of Sarah Parady  . Whoever gets the most votes wins outright and will serve a short term until the regular April 2027 election. **Even though the people voted last year for run-offs to fill these seats, there will be no runoff... because it is a "special election."	• Alfredo Reyes — community leader, former Citizen Oversight Board member • Whitney Traylor – attorney, educator, advocate • Jeff Walker — attorney and former RTD director, previously ran for at-large council in 2023 • Julissa Soto — founder of a Latino health-equity consulting firm • Gabriel Konkle — community organizer • Cynthia Diaz — small-business owner and economist • Melissa Mejia  — former Denver City Council aide and Planning Board member • Jake Browne — freelance journalist and communications professional • Monica Martinez — longtime executive director of the Fax Partnership • Raymon Anthony Doane
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RTD BOARD – Denver’s Regional Transportation District has 15 seats with members serving staggered four-year terms. RTD is the agency that runs buses, light rail and paratransit. The board are the policy bosses, not the day-to-day operations team. [RTD District Map](#)

DISTRICT B	John Glenn Bianka Emerson
DISTRICT C	Joe Meyer
DISTRICT J	Coleman Erickson
DISTRICT K	Michael Farrington Jessica Sandgren
DISTRICT L	Ian Harwick - incumbent
DISTRICT N	Cindy Arcuri - currently serving by appointment
DISTRICT O	Jack Rosenthal Audrey DeBarros

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOARD OF REGENTS - The CU Board of Regents has nine seats – one for each of the state’s eight congressional districts plus one statewide at-large seat – with members serving staggered six-year terms. The job of the Board is general supervision of the university along with exclusive control and direction of all funds to the university.

DISTRICT 2	Edie Hooton (D) Marty Neilson (R) Donald Comstock (Constitution Party)
DISTRICT 6	Ilana Spiegel (D) – incumbent Veanessa Burbage (R)
DISTRICT 7	Nolbert Chavez (D) – incumbent Paul Mueller (R)

MORE INFORMATION/ARTICLES (all items are hyperlinked):

- [\(83\) CO Voters to Decide on Constitutional Hunting and Fishing Rights - Menachem Kossowsky](#)
- [\(86\) Conservative Group's Anti-Redistricting Measure Makes CO's 2026 Ballot - Chase Woodruff](#)
- [\(87\) **A Lesson on Wealth Taxes from Charles Dickens - WSJ Op-Ed** - ****WORTH YOUR TIME**](#)
- [\(87\) Graduated Income Tax is a Flat Tax in Disguise - Jon Caldera](#)
- [\(87\) Title Board Gives OK for Proponents to Move Ahead on Progressive Income Tax Measure - The Sum & Substance](#)
- [\(87\) **VIDEO:** TABOR TALK 1 - Independence Institute](#)
- [\(87\) **\(NN\) VIDEO:** TABOR TALK 3 - Independence Institute](#)
- [\(87\) **\(NN\)** CO Voter, Are You a Sucker? Props 87, NN Think So - Mark Hillman](#)
- [\(87\) **\(NN\)** Hard NO on Amendment 87, Proposition NN - Op-ed Denver Gazette](#)
- [\(136\) State of CO Proposition 136: Income Tax Rate Cap - Richard Valenty](#)
- [\(136\) The High Cost of a 'Progressive' Tax Hike - Op-ed Denver Gazette](#)
- [\(136\) Income Tax Rate Cap - Common Sense Institute](#)
- [\(136\) 'Progressive' Tax Hike Would Fleece Colorado' - Op-ed Denver Gazette](#)
- [\(87\) \(136\) Capped or Graduated Income Tax Rate? Voters to Decide - Marianne Goodland](#)
- [\(137\) Prop 137 and Why I'm Opposed - Cory Gaines](#)
- [\(137\) Sporting Goods Sales Tax for Conservation - CPR](#)
- [\(NN\) **VIDEO:** TABOR TALK 2 - Independence Institute](#)
- [\(NN\) **VIDEO:** TABOR TALK 4 - independence Institute](#)
- [\(NN\) CO Schools Face New Reality as Student Enrollment Keeps Falling – Rocky Mountain Voice](#)
- [\(NN\) If the Backers Are Confident More Money Means Better Education, Why Not Put That in Writing? - Colorado Accountability Project](#)
- [\(4A\) DPS Board Sends \\$44M Tax Increase to Denver Voters - Denver Gazette](#)
- [\(DENVER VOTERS AT-LARGE SEAT\) Denver DSA City Council Vacancy Election - The Denver Post](#)

VOTER GUIDES:

[Multiple Guides for CO Voters 2026](#) – *****MULTIPLE GUIDES ON THIS LINK**

[The Denver Foundation Voter Guide](#) – *****MULTIPLE GUIDES ON THIS LINK**

[BRIGHTER COLORADO VOTER GUIDE](#)

[FREE STATE COLORADO 2026 VOTER GUIDE](#)

[Independence Institute Voter Guide](#)

[KIM MONSON 2026 VOTER GUIDE](#)

[DSA DENVER VOTER GUIDE](#)

[2026 Ballot Information Book \(Blue Book\) – the official booklet from the CO General Assembly](#)

[Election Information - CO Secretary of State](#)

