



# UNDER THE DOME

WITH THE NCLA  
JANUARY 13, 2014

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION OPENS WITH NORTHERN COLORADO FEATURED

Northern Colorado featured prominently in the opening day remarks by legislative leaders and the Governor during the first days of the opening of the 2014 Legislative Session. Each of the leaders, from President of the Senate Morgan Carroll and Speaker of the House Mark Ferrandino to Senate Minority Leader Bill Cadman and House Minority Leader Brian DelGrosso, highlighted the devastating flood as an example of the strength and resolve of Coloradoans and of how Colorado came together to assist neighbors.

In addition to remarks about the flood, the opening sessions brought about the usual pomp and circumstance but cracks in the customary call for bi-partisan collaboration were evident in each of the remarks. Below is a brief summary of key tenets of the speeches by each leader. Copies of the entire speeches by the leaders are provided by hotlink on the Leaders' name.

### [Speaker Mark Ferrandino](#)

In 2014, Speaker Mark Ferrandino (D-Denver) and his House Democratic Caucus will focus upon:

- 1) Enhancing the economic security of all Coloradoans
  - a) Focus upon advanced industries by expanding the AI Grant Program
  - b) Expand skills training programs
  - c) Increase the BPPT Exemption
- 2) Strengthening our education system to prepare students and make college more affordable
  - a) \$100 M in funding to Higher Education
  - b) Limit tuition increases to 6% per year
- 3) Helping Coloradoans recover from the floods and wildfires
  - a) First bills will be related to flood and wildfire recovery

### [President of the Senate Morgan Carroll](#)

The second woman President of the Senate, Morgan Carroll's (D-Aurora) primary theme of her first opening day address was education and the "freedom to succeed" as she laid out her agenda:

- 1) College Affordability Act
  - a) \$100 M reinvestment in Higher Ed
  - b) Increase in need-based and merit based scholarships
  - c) Restore 6% cap on tuition rate increases
- 2) Job Creation and Economic Recovery
  - a) Rural access to high-speed internet

- b) Workforce development
- c) Job growth incentives
- d) IT and Hospitality Career Pathways
- e) Assist small business better compete for contracts
- f) Expand investment in advanced industries
- g) Increase investment in Colorado Careers Act
- h) Reduce the BPPT while protecting local government share
- 3) Child Care
  - a) Explore models around country that support employers who choose to provide daycare for workers

### **Senate Minority Leader Bill Cadman**

Senate Minority Leader Bill Cadman (R-Colorado Springs) primary theme focused upon the unfortunate history created in the aftermath of the 2013 hyper-partisan and divisive legislative session. He challenged members to do better, to stay focused upon shared values and common goals, and to do better by Colorado.

- 1) Revive rural Colorado
- 2) Remove barriers to higher education access
- 3) Rebuild our infrastructure
- 4) Reform K-12 education where 26% of Colorado students attend a school that is rated D or F

### **House Minority Leader Brian DelGrosso**

Newly elected House Minority Leader Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) used his experience as a business owner and entrepreneur to set the stage for the House GOP agenda while also reminding the majority that despite being in the minority, the House Republican Caucus represents over 2 Million people in Colorado who have a right to be heard.

- 1) Flood and wildfire recovery
  - a) Assure funding and aid to rebuild flood damaged communities
  - b) Educate on fire mitigation
  - c) Increase statutory reserve
    - 1) Invest in Colorado Act
      - a) \$100 M into roads and bridges
- 2) Economic Recovery/Thriving business
  - a) Business asked to be left alone.
    - 1) "Businesses do not need another competitor in the form of government getting in their way and erecting barriers to success."
  - b) Reduce regulatory burdens
    - 1) Rep. Libby Szabo will introduce bill regarding first time violations
  - c) Boost local economies
- 3) Energy
  - a) Repeal and/or modify SB 252 renewable energy mandate in rural Colorado
  - b) Classify hydro-electric power as renewable energy

- c) Oppose attacks on oil/gas industry
- 4) Education
  - a) Reform education to improve schools using existing financial resources
  - b) Spending transparency
  - c) English Language Proficiency Act