



## 2020 Legislative Session Underway

The 2020 Legislative Session got underway last week with legislative leaders and the Governor outlining their goals, agendas and objectives for the 120-day policy making session. The NCLA will be a vigilant presence and loud voice as a myriad of measures affecting the northern Colorado business community take center stage. From employee-employer relations, health care issues to climate, environment and oil and gas measures, NCLA is your advocate, your voice in the political fray.

Below, an overview of the key priorities related to business that legislative leaders and the Governor laid out in their opening day speeches and State of the State address, respectively.

### Governor Jared Polis

- Education
  - Create economic equity
  - Commitment to free preschool for all by the end of his first term
  - Reduce Education negative factor
  - Raise teacher pay
  - Safe Schools and control
  - College savings/loan forgiveness program
- Tax policy
  - TABOR reduction of state income tax rate to 4.5% for individuals and corporations
  - Work to make tax code fairer by “broadening the base and lowering the rate leading to higher wages for Coloradans and room to invest in roads and schools.”
  - Establish Bipartisan study group to make tax code more fair
    - Make income tax cuts permanent
    - Eliminate tax breaks for “special interests”
- Spending
  - Increase state reserves by \$118M
  - Rural Economic Development
  - Colorado Secure Saving Plan
  - State Parks
  - Colorado Water Plan
  - Immigrant and refugee population
- Health Care
  - Affordable healthcare with public option
  - Mental health and addiction services
  - Increase competition in the market through consumer choice
- Paid Family – Medical Leave

- Construct a unique Colorado solution that provides paid time off to many more Coloradans as soon as possible, without straining state resources or forcing taxpayers to bear the financial risk.
- Transportation and Air Quality
  - “Think big and do more to fund our roads”
  - Place more emphasis on other modes of transportation to address air quality
  - Support Regional cooperation
  - new users and changing technologies will need to pay their fair share into the system,
- Climate
  - Expand opportunities in renewable energy and help ensure that no worker and no community is left behind.

### Speaker of the House, KC Becker, (D-Boulder)

- Theme:
  - Improve the affordability of housing, health care, higher education and retirement
  - Create a stable and ‘just economy”
- Climate and Jobs: “Heed the call on climate change and protect workers and communities impacted by a changing climate and energy economy”
- Paid Family Leave: Work out a program that is “fiscally sustainable, workable for business, and makes a real difference for working families.”
- Retirement: Set up a state-sponsored “modern and flexible retirement savings system”
- Income tax cuts: “Permanent tax cuts only further inequalities, exacerbate the achievement gap, make our higher ed institutions less competitive, and hinder our ability to meet our already dire transportation needs”
- Education: Pay down the budget stabilization factor and continue to work on longer term school funding solutions.
- Transportation: Work towards a realistic bi-partisan funding solution
- Health Care: Work to lower cost of prescription drugs

### President of the Senate, Leroy Garcia (D-Pueblo)

- Theme:
  - Compassion
  - Put people before profit and personal gain; protect Coloradans from unchecked corporate price gouging
- Health care:
  - Increase competition and drive down insurance costs;
  - Promote innovation, addresses the widening affordability gap; l
  - Legislate corporate transparency around prescription drugs and healthcare billing
- Climate and Jobs:
  - Take meaningful steps towards a more sustainable future;
  - Lead the charge with innovative solutions that protect Colorado’s natural resources and the people who rely on them.
  - Prioritize a “just transition” while in pursuit of environmental stewardship;
  - Work towards solutions that “invigorate our economy, and provide new, high-paying jobs in the community.”

- Environment:
  - “Dramatically improve our air and water quality in the state, by implementing harsher penalties for negligence and irresponsibility.”
- Employee safeguards
  - It is time that we “attack the root of the problem and address predatory practices that keep our people in debt, limit their power as workers, and take them from their families during times of need.”
  - “Provide opportunity for affordable higher education, stable housing, paid family leave; quality teachers, job training, and a streamlined transportation system.”

### Senate Minority Leader Chris Holbert (R-Castle Rock)

- Theme:
  - Respect the Minority Party and their concerns
  - The constitution and Senate rules are to be respected in the process
- Transportation
  - Continue support for \$300M allocation from the General Fund
  - Governor’s request is really only \$50M, not the \$605 he has suggested
    - Prior legislative commitment and proceeds
    - Governor’s request is a \$250M reduction from last year’s budget
  - Support bonding to leverage hundreds of millions into billions of dollars
  - Use any increase in the gas tax as repayment for bonding package
- Education
  - Support and encourage concurrent education for college credit
  - Pay teachers more, especially those “who excel at teaching.”
  - Buy down the budget stabilization factor in education funding
  - Education bill package to include school choice, innovation, taxpayer accountability and transparency, support of great teachers, student/teacher/staff safety within public schools.
- Higher Education
  - Help institutions of higher ed to “think outside the box, be more entrepreneurial, and achieve goals in new and innovative ways.

### House Minority Leader Patrick Neville (R-Douglas County)

- Theme:
  - Do no harm. Politics matter. So does principle.
- Education.
  - Statistics demonstrate students are unsuccessful in the classroom despite 37% of the 2018 General Fund being funneled toward public education.
  - GOP bill will provide “financial supplement to insure great teachers” in rural and urban districts
- Business,
  - Condemned SB19-181, regarding oil and gas, as directly and immensely hurting businesses, jobs, and citizens of Colorado.
  - Will fight on behalf of the “average man and women” on issues such as vaccinations, dictated sex education, unworkable gun laws, expensive paid family medical leave, state healthcare, and climate alarmists.