



2021 Legislative Session Underway

The 2021 Legislative Session reconvened this week with legislative leaders and the Governor outlining their goals, agendas, and objectives for what will be a fast-paced, jam-packed session. The NCLA will continue to be a voice at the table on all issues that affect business. With over 250 bills introduced as of today, we have a full plate of legislation to influence. We will play a fair amount of defense given majority agenda and we will be strategic and laser-focused on our efforts' best use. We see avenues for creating wedges during these unprecedented times within the majority.

As we recover from the pandemic and emerge from the COVID19 economic impacts, destructive wildfires, social reform initiatives, and the focus on climate change, there are ample opportunities for our business community voices to influence our policy outlook. We look forward to having NCLA as your advocate, your voice in the political discussions.

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 State of the State Address](#)

- COVID-19 Economic Recovery - opportunity to imagine a better future
 - Fewer deaths (5,655) per capita compared to other states
 - Almost 60% of 70 and older vaccinated
 - \$1 billion federal stimulus funds
 - Shovel ready infrastructure projects
 - Education investments to remediate learning losses
 - Efforts to save small business
 - Infrastructure investment
 - Rewriting school finance formula to ensure equitability
- Tax policy & fiscal reform
 - Eliminate tax expenditures to offset overall beneficial tax rate and targeted reductions
 - Eliminating the business personal property tax
 - Eliminating state income tax on social security
 - Double the state earned Income tax credit, provide up to \$600 through the Colorado Child tax Credit per child.
 - Creating new gas tax or fees to fund transportation
- Transportation
 - Road expansions and repairs - Eisenhower Tunnel
 - Increase EV Infrastructure- focus on reduced travel emissions
 - Reduce vehicle registration fees but support a broad funding package
- Renewable Energy - Climate Change
 - Maintain goals for 100% renewable energy by 2040
- Education
 - Pay down the education budget deficit to the lowest historical levels.
 - Expand rural broadband

[Speaker of the House, Alec Garnett, Opening day comments \(26:08\)](#)

- Call for bipartisanship!
 - Public stewardship to uphold our democracy
 - Strive to embody camaraderie and dignity

- Transportation Funding
 - Completion of CDOT road-heavy 10-year plan
 - Local multimodal needs
 - Rural road improvements
 - Electric vehicle infrastructure
- Climate Change
 - Urgent threat and a need to face head making lasting change
 - Wildfires that raged across the state is the evidence
 - Clean energy economy

[President of the Senate, Leroy Garcia, Opening day comments \(43:20\)](#)

- Importance of this legislative session in the wake of COVID recovery
 - Aftershocks will ripple through long after immunity
 - Social transformation
- Most important issues to Coloradoans
 - lower the cost of living
 - increase access to affordable health care
 - bring direct relief to struggling small businesses
 - support students in getting back to school.
- Colorado is NOT Washington DC
- Duty above political agendas

[Senate Minority Leader Chris Holbert \(58:15\)](#)

- Congress vs. Colorado Legislature
- Stimulus Spending -Last spring, spending cuts
 - \$2Trillion dollars federal = \$5B for Colorado
 - Don't count eggs until they are chickens- restore where cuts were made
- Education Funding
 - Count day - 30k missing students? PPR/\$8,000/student
 - Budget stabilization factor
 - Holbert Spreadsheet - PPR and Total Funding
- Quorum requirement best effort of minority
 - Cautious of stimulus spending
 - Governor's power during disasters
- Limited Government beyond COVID
- Restore cuts before we spend - open schools

[House Minority Hugh McKean \(57:37\)](#)

- Walking down the middle of the aisle
- Call for diversity-need for the other voice in the room
- Transportation Funding
 - Roadway expansion - lane miles and capacity are vital to growing out of the COVID downturn.
 - Need for gasoline fee to go before voters for approval to ensure trust
- Further Oil and Gas Regulations
 - Unintended caution of consequences
 - High demand for electricity during frigid temperatures and low production of solar and wind energy.
 - Inclusion of nuclear, fossil fuels, and pumped hydro

With the NCLA Board's dedication, we have already taken positions on nine bills and look forward to our member's input on a productive legislative session. Please feel free to reach out to us with any concerns or comments as you refer to the [NCLA 2021 Legislative Tracking report](#).

Additionally, we will be inviting our Chamber and EDC member's participation in committee hearings as we progress through this legislative session. As a result of the pandemic, and social distancing encouragement by the legislative leadership, there will be the opportunity for remote testimony. Remote testimony will require planning to facilitate, and we encourage the NCLA members to review [these protocols](#) to familiarize yourself with the timing and technological requirements.

We look forward to working with you to continue to champion the business interests of Northern Colorado.