



# 2022 LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR  
HARDWORKING COLORADO  
FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES



## BIG WINS FOR HARDWORKING COLORADANS DURING THE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

During the spring 2022 legislative session, Colorado lawmakers worked hard to pass key legislation to reduce health care costs, provide economic security, and strengthen our democracy. Centennial State Prosperity is proud to have worked with partners across the state and everyday Coloradans to find solutions so that hardworking people can earn a good life, provide for their families, and participate in our democracy.

### ABOUT CENTENNIAL STATE PROSPERITY

Colorado became a state 100 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed, and from that historic occasion our Centennial State nickname was born. Coloradans take pride in our heritage and in supporting the people who have made this state what it is today, and Centennial State Prosperity is no different. We work for the prosperity of our friends, families, and neighbors, and to find solutions that ensure hardworking Coloradans can earn a good life and provide for their families. We believe it's time for hardworking Coloradans to prosper, not just the wealthy and well-connected.

### CENTENNIAL STATE PROSPERITY BROUGHT THE VOICES OF HARDWORKING COLORADO FAMILIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES TO THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

-  • We generated 1,900 calls into lawmakers urging them to take action!
-  • We generated 1,355 emails to legislators asking them to support critical bills for Colorado families.
-  • We published ads in more than 16 papers across Colorado in key districts to grab the attention of both legislators and the public
-  • We engaged 471 supporters to let their voice be heard!
-  • We reached 1,877,809 Coloradans online to help them stay engaged with the legislative process.
-  • We partnered with more than 2 dozen groups to pass important bills.
-  • Engaged and trained 20+ Coloradans to testify before Committees.

## LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS

Access to affordable, high quality health care is critical to living a long, healthy life. As healthcare costs continue to rise, insurance and pharmaceutical companies are enjoying hefty profits while hardworking Coloradans struggle to afford basic care. This session, lawmakers passed major legislation to help reduce the costs of care.

**HB22-1370: Making Healthcare More Affordable and Dependable**, Just like any insurance, consumers expect health insurance to be there when they need it the most. For many Coloradans – and especially those living with chronic diseases – their health and often their lives depend on it. However, all too often hidden and confusing aspects of health insurance leave consumers stuck with treatment denials or unaffordable out-of-pocket costs.

HB-1370 makes prescription medicine and health care more affordable and dependable for Coloradans by requiring transparency and accountability when it comes to costs, cutting red tape that stands in the way of better care, and ensuring cost savings go back in the pockets of consumers.

This legislation prevents insurance carriers and parts of the pharmaceutical supply chain from pocketing prescription drug rebates that should provide financial relief for consumers, resulting in huge cost savings for Coloradans on expensive medications. It also limits a practice called step therapy where a patient has to try and fail a treatment before they can get the medicine their doctor recommends. Finally, it prevents insurers from raising the price of medications or dropping them from coverage mid-way through a consumer’s contract, and requires 25 percent of plans to have set dollar amount co-pays, rather than unpredictable percentage-based coinsurance payments.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1370

MAKING HEALTHCARE MORE AFFORDABLE AND DEPENDABLE



Sen. Faith Winter



Sen. Janet Buckner



Rep. Iman Jodeh



Rep. Emily Sirota

## LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS (CONT'D)

**HB22-1284: Protecting Coloradans from Surprise Billing**, Surprise billing can hit Coloradans with hundreds or even thousands of dollars in unexpected or inflated medical bills, sometimes when they shouldn't have been responsible for paying in the first place. This often happens when the patient can't control who is involved in providing health care, like in an emergency situation or when an out-of-network provider is operating within an in-network facility.

This year, lawmakers passed HB-1284, which aligns our state laws with the federal No Surprises Act to protect patients from surprise billing resulting from out-of-network care in an emergency and for some scheduled services without prior consent. It also ensures patients get a good faith estimate for what they'll be expected to pay three days in advance.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1284

PROTECTING COLORADANS FROM SURPRISE BILLING



Rep. Daneya Esgar



Sen. Brittany Petersen



Sen. Bob Gardner



Rep. Marc Catlin

## LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS (CONT'D)

**HB22-1269 Bringing Transparency to Health Care Cost Sharing Arrangements,** Health Care Sharing Arrangements or HCSAs are programs where individual members pay monthly into a pool designed to help cover other members' medical expenses. While they may help some, HCSAs are unregulated, and consumers often have to pay huge portions of their medical bills out-of-pocket. Unfortunately, consumers are sometimes unaware that they're not purchasing insurance when they pay into an HCSA.

House Bill 1269 requires HCSAs to submit information about their operations to the Division of Insurance (DOI) so we can learn about the impact these programs have for consumers, ensure truth in advertising, and help Coloradans make informed decisions when signing up for health care cost-sharing arrangements.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1269

BRINGING TRANSPARENCY TO HEALTH CARE COST SHARING ARRANGEMENTS



Sen. Chris Hansen



Rep. Susan Lontine

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY

While corporations are making record profits, and the rich are getting richer, many Coloradans — folks with good paying jobs — are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet. Colorado families and businesses were hit hard by COVID-19, and many are still struggling to bounce back. Critical legislation was passed in 2022 to grow our economy, protect hardworking Coloradans, and keep money in the pockets of working families - and even put some extra money back.

**SB22-97 Protections for Workplace Health and Safety Whistleblowers**, Current law provides whistleblower protections for workers who raise a reasonable, good faith concern that their employer is committing a workplace violation of a government health or safety rule or a significant workplace health or safety threat related to a public health emergency.

Senate Bill 97 expands the protection to all health and safety concerns regardless of whether there is a declared public health emergency.

### SPONSORS OF SENATE BILL 97

#### PROTECTIONS FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY WHISTLEBLOWERS



Sen. Brittany Petersen



Rep. Leslie Herod



Sen. Robert Rodriguez



Rep. Tom Sullivan

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY (CONT'D)

**SB 22-99: Giving 1.3 Million Coloradans a Clean Slate**, Too many Coloradans are burdened with a criminal record that inhibits their ability to find housing and employment and lead productive lives. Many types of non-violent criminal records are already eligible for sealing under Colorado law, but the vast majority of Coloradans don't have their records sealed due to unnecessary barriers including filing a court petition, paying filing fees, attending hearings, and securing legal representation.

Senate Bill 99 removes those barriers by creating an automatic sealing process for eligible records, giving an estimated 1.3 million Coloradans a clean slate to better provide for themselves and their families. Colorado is now the 7th state in the country with a clean slate law.

### SPONSORS OF SENATE BILL 99

GIVING 1.3 MILLION COLORADANS A CLEAN SLATE



Sen. Dennis Hisey



Sen. Robert Rodriguez



Rep. Kerry Tipper



Rep. Colin Larson

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY (CONT'D)

**SB22-233: Putting Hundreds of Dollars Back in Coloradans' Pockets**, Coloradans can expect financial relief in 2022 thanks to Senate Bill 233, which makes it so instead of much of our tax rebate going to the wealthiest Coloradans, now hardworking families will get real relief to help cover life's expenses like groceries, rent, and gas,

Senate Bill 233 sends \$750 in rebate checks to individual tax filers and \$1,500 to joint filers.

### SPONSORS OF SENATE BILL 233

PUTTING HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS BACK IN COLORADAN'S POCKETS



Sen. Nick Hinrichsen



Sen. Robert Rodriguez



Rep. Tony Exum



Rep. Lindsey Daugherty

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY (CONT'D)

**HB22-1295: Universal Preschool for Colorado Families**, Early childhood is a critical time for children and families, but many families can't afford quality care. A lack of support during this time can create long-term barriers to success for children. Access to high quality childcare and positive early childhood experiences is critical for giving our youth a strong foundation.

Thanks to HB-1295, every Colorado 4-year-old will be able to attend preschool at no cost to their parents starting in 2023. The program guarantees 10 hours weekly in classrooms and childcare centers.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1295

#### UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL FOR COLORADO FAMILIES



Rep. Emily Sirota



Rep. Alec Garnett



Sen. Janet Buckner



Sen. Stephen Fenberg

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY (CONT'D)

**HB22-1049: Limiting Transcript Withholding to Help Students Thrive**, Thousands of Colorado students have their transcripts or diplomas withheld each year as a result of unpaid fees, preventing students from getting jobs, transferring schools, and more. This traps students in a vicious cycle that makes it even more challenging to pay off debt and move toward their goals.

House Bill 1049 restricts this practice of transcript withholding and requires colleges and universities to provide a transcript when students need to apply to a job or continue their education.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1049

LIMITING TRANSCRIPT WITHHOLDING TO HELP STUDENTS THRIVE



Sen. Brittany Petersen



Rep. Jennifer Bacon



Rep. Naquetta Ricks



Sen. Jeff Bridges

## PROVIDING ECONOMIC SECURITY (CONT'D)

**SB22-86: Consumer Debt Protections**, Prior to the passage of Senate Bill 86, homeowners were allowed \$75,000 in exemptions on the value of their home from a debt collector. SB-86 increased those exemptions to \$250,000 and expanded the definition of a home to include non-traditional forms of housing like trailers and tiny homes. This modernized our laws to accommodate rising home values and the proliferation of non-traditional housing.

### SPONSORS OF SENATE BILL 86

#### CONSUMER DEBT PROTECTIONS



Rep. Julie Gonzales



Sen. Faith Winter



Rep. Matt Gray



Rep. Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez

## STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Lawmakers have a duty to ensure the system works for hardworking Coloradans and that, no matter what we look like or where we are from, our voices are heard. As we have seen unfold this year, working to strengthen and protect our democracy is our most critical responsibility.

**HB22-1273: Election Worker Protection**, Since the 2020 election, we've watched the state of Colorado become a target of election conspiracists, risking the safety of election workers and our democracy as a whole. Those who oversee our elections should never have to worry about their personal safety or the safety of their families. House Bill 1273 makes it a crime to threaten an election worker or post their personal information online in an attempt to prevent them from doing their job or intimidate them.

### SPONSORS OF HOUSE BILL 1273 ELECTION WORKER PROTECTION



Rep. Monica Duran



Rep. Emily Sirota



Sen. Stephen Fenberg



Sen. Brittany Petersen

## STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY (CONT'D)

**SB22-153: Colorado Election Security Act**, In a response to the election security breach in Mesa County in 2020, lawmakers took action this year to prevent insider threats to the state's election system. Senate Bill 153 makes it a felony to tamper with voting equipment or publish confidential voting system information in Colorado. It also adds training requirements for county clerks and certain election staff, bars counties from copying voting machine hard drives without state permission, and requires full-time video monitoring of election equipment.

### SPONSORS OF SENATE BILL 153 COLORADO ELECTION SECURITY ACT



Sen. Stephen Fenberg



Sen. Kevin Priola



Rep. Susan Lontine

## UPDATES ON RECENT LEGISLATION

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### THE STANDARDIZED HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN COLORADO OPTION

#### WHAT IS IT?

In 2021, lawmakers created the Colorado Option, which will be available to those who buy insurance on the individual market in 2023. The Colorado Option will lower premiums by 15% over the next couple of years to ensure residents in every county have an affordable health insurance option.

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

In June, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services gave the green light to the Colorado Option by approving it under a state innovation waiver made possible by the Affordable Care Act that allows states to take innovative approaches to providing affordable care to their residents. The waiver takes effect January 1, 2023 and lasts through December 31, 2027. Colorado Option plans will be available for purchase during open enrollment between November and January and plans will become effective at the start of 2023.

### THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY BOARD

#### WHAT IS IT?

In 2021, lawmakers passed Senate Bill 175 to establish a prescription drug affordability board tasked with addressing the high costs of prescription drugs, a crucial step in making health care more affordable for all Coloradans. The board researches, reviews, and limits costs for the most expensive and unaffordable prescription drugs and investigates when drug companies sharply increase the cost of a specific drug.

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

The Governor has appointed the 5 members of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board as well as the 15 members of the stakeholder advisory council. The Board began meeting in June.

## UPDATES ON RECENT LEGISLATION (CONT'D)

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### THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM

#### WHAT IS IT?

Colorado voters approved Proposition 119 in 2020, which created the Colorado Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program, called FAML. The program ensures Colorado workers have access to paid leave in order to take care of themselves or their family, whether that means welcoming a new family member or caring for a loved one.

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

Both employers and employees will contribute premiums for the program. Premium collections start in January of 2023 and workers will become eligible for benefits in January of the following year.

### THE COLORADO SECURE SAVINGS PROGRAM

#### WHAT IS IT?

In 2020, Colorado lawmakers passed Senate Bill 200, which created the Colorado Secure Savings Program to give nearly all Colorado workers access to a workplace retirement savings plan and provide a pathway to economic security in retirement. All employers who are not offering a workplace retirement savings plan will be required to enroll.

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

The Colorado Secure Savings Board in the Office of the State Treasurer finalized rules for the program in July. The pilot program will launch in October of this year, and enrollment is set to begin in 2023.

# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD AND BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR HARDWORKING COLORADANS!

Learn more about Centennial State Prosperity and get involved at  
<https://centennialstateprosperity.org/>

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