

**COLORADO COMMON CAUSE MEMBER NEWSLETTER: SPRING / SUMMER 2018**

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**A Letter From Our Executive Director**

Dear friends,

When I moved to Colorado ten years ago, I was struck by how much pride Coloradans have in their state. From the flag apparel to the “native” bumper stickers, it's clear that we love the Centennial State.

When I joined the staff at Colorado Common Cause four months ago, I realized that it isn't just our mountains and hiking trails that we should be proud of. *We can also take pride in the way our community works together to improve our democracy.*

**I feel honored to join an organization that has led so much of this work over the past decades.** Since the early 1970s, Colorado Common Cause has been a driving force to make Colorado government more representative of – and more responsive to – the residents of our state.

Our track record is impressive. Colorado has one of the best election systems in the nation—in fact, the Washington Post just named Colorado “**the safest state to cast a ballot.**” We successfully **banned gifts from lobbyists to state legislators**, established a state-wide **Independent Ethics Commission**, and continue to improve how we **limit and disclose money in our political system.**

*While we should be proud of our many accomplishments, I am more excited about what lies ahead.*

In 2018, we are taking on several exciting projects. We’re working with coalition partners to establish an **Independent Redistricting Commission** to fight back against gerrymandering in our state. In partnership with the Secretary of State, we are rolling out **automatic voter registration** in all 64 counties. And we are fighting back against the Trump administration to ensure that every Coloradan is accurately counted in the **2020 Census.**

I look forward to working along side you to improve our democracy in the years to come. Thank you for your ongoing support!



**Amanda Gonzalez, Executive Director**  
**Colorado Common Cause**

## FIGHTING BACK AGAINST GERRYMANDERING

Over the past year, two different groups introduced separate ballot initiatives to reform the process for drawing legislative and congressional maps in Colorado. Rather than placing competing initiatives on the ballot, the two groups worked with each other—and Colorado Common Cause—to draft new redistricting measures, which combine the strongest aspects of each proposal.

These measures were recently presented to the Colorado legislature, where they received bipartisan support and passed both houses of the legislature unanimously. **Now these two measures – Amendments Y and Z – must be approved by voters in November.**

Colorado Common Cause believes that the goal of redistricting should be to draw districts that fairly represent the interests of the communities in our state. Such districts should not be drawn to advantage incumbents or to favor a political party. The best way to accomplish this goal is through an independent commission process that is **transparent, accessible to, and inclusive of, Colorado citizens.**

Amendments Y and Z will create **independent citizen redistricting commissions.** These commissions will be empowered to draw legislative and congressional district lines in order to achieve fair and equal representation for all Coloradans. Colorado Common Cause supports these measures because they are in line with our principles for redistricting reform and improve our current redistricting systems.

**For more information, visit [FairMapsColorado.com](http://FairMapsColorado.com).**



## REMEMBERING GARY



If you volunteered with Colorado Common Cause anytime since 1995, you may have crossed paths with Gary Fornander. Gary was a teacher, friend, and an outstanding advocate for effective, open and transparent government. When he passed away on February 3, 2018, he left a mark on our hearts and the

Colorado Common Cause community.

Gary served on our board of directors for 23 years—almost a quarter of a century. **During this time, he was instrumental in crafting and implementing our election, voter protection, and campaign finance work in Denver and Colorado Springs.** His passion for creating a more responsive, transparent and accountable government was palpable—and was matched by his in-depth knowledge of law and policy.

Several groups will be holding a small celebration of Gary's life and work in Colorado Springs later this summer. For more information, contact Caroline at 303-292-2163.

President Trump wants to RIG THE 2020 CENSUS by adding an untested question about citizenship - which experts say will cause an INACCURATE COUNT of Americans

How would a citizenship question on the 2020 Census hurt **Colorado?**



### REPRESENTATION

Seats in Congress are allocated to states based on Census data - an under-count could mean less political representation



### FUNDING

Failing to count all state residents would result in less federal money for vital state programs



Fight back against this dangerous, untested proposal

**Take Action:**

**[CommonCause.org/CensusCO](http://CommonCause.org/CensusCO)**

## 2018 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Colorado's 2018 legislative session adjourned *sine die* on Wednesday, May 9 – ending the four months each year when state bills are introduced, debated and voted on in Colorado.

**Below are a few of the bills we drafted, lobbied for or against, or built coalitions around this year:**

### Redistricting & Gerrymandering

Perhaps the most exciting bills we worked on this session were Senate Concurrent Resolutions 4 and 5, which put initiatives on the 2018 ballot proposing to **create independent redistricting commissions** in Colorado. These bills received bipartisan support, and were **passed unanimously** in both houses of the Colorado legislature. We are excited to bring redistricting to the voters of Colorado this November!

### Voting & Elections

We worked on several bills this session to expand the right to vote. We helped pass Senate Bill 150, which allows a **person on parole to pre-register to vote**— so that they are automatically registered to vote after completing their sentence. The bill also requires parole and probation officers to provide information about registering, voting, and other election activities to Coloradans completing parole and entering probation. We also passed Senate Bill 233, which requires the statewide voter registration system to communicate with the DMV's database, so that our **voter rolls are kept up to date** (bill signing pictured here).



### Constitution & Courts

We successfully defeated two bills that would have called for a **dangerous nationwide constitutional convention**. We oppose calling an Article V convention for any issue, as there are no protections to limit the convention's scope, guard against special interest influence, or protect fundamental civil rights.

### Money & Influence

Unfortunately, several good bills that would have improved our campaign finance system were killed this session. We supported Senate Bill 75, which would have established **contribution limits for school board candidates** in Colorado. Currently there are no contribution limits for school board, meaning that candidates can accept unlimited amounts of money for their campaigns. We also supported House Bill 1403, which would require **online political ads to follow the same disclosure requirements** as TV and radio advertisements in Colorado. Both bills were killed in Senate State Affairs.

### Media & Democracy

After the FCC reversed **net neutrality protections** last December, states across the country introduced legislation to protect a free and open internet—including here in Colorado. House Bill 1312 would have incentivized Internet Service Providers (ISPs) offering service in rural Colorado to abide by net neutrality rules. These rules prohibit ISPs from blocking or throttling lawful content or engaging in paid prioritization of internet content—which is now legal. Unfortunately, this bill was killed in Senate State Affairs—but we are continuing our fight for net neutrality here in Colorado and nationwide.

**Read our full legislative summary at [ColoradoCommonCause.org](http://ColoradoCommonCause.org)**



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CHAMPIONS FOR DEMOCRACY LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

Purchase your tickets today - prices increase on August 1!

COMMONCAUSE.ORG/CHAMPIONSCO

CHAMPIONS FOR DEMOCRACY FUNDS OUR WORK TO:

- Implement automatic voter registration to register thousands of new voters
Fight gerrymandering by creating an Independent Redistricting Commission
Teach hundreds of Coloradans how to follow the money behind political ads
Restore net neutrality by mobilizing hundreds of activists around our state
Ensure that the 2020 Census is designed to count every Coloradan

JOIN US AT OUR 2018 CHAMPIONS FOR DEMOCRACY LUNCHEON
Tuesday, September 25
11:30 am - 1 pm
Dazzle
1512 Curtis Street, Denver
Tickets on Sale Now!
Early Bird: \$40
Prices Increase August 1
PURCHASE TICKETS:
CommonCause.org/ChampionsCO