

COLORADO COMMON CAUSE 2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Introduction

In 2021, Colorado Common Cause led a diverse coalition to pass the Ballot Access for All Act which expanded ballot translation requirements and created a ballot translation hotline. This legislation will allow over 80 thousand eligible Coloradans to access their ballots and fully participate in our democracy. We also organized and advocated for fair maps throughout the once-in-a-decade redistricting process. Going into 2022 we are focused on keeping Colorado's democracy strong by combating election mis- and dis-information throughout the year and during our nonpartisan election protection program. During legislative session, we will enthusiastically support any legislation designed to protect the safety of voters and election workers. Increased threats of violence and harassment have made it clear that this type of legislation is necessary to secure our elections. We are prepared to protect our gold standard election system and robust options for voters and will oppose any bills that try to limit or remove existing options. We will not let baseless conspiracies and dangerous extremism be used to undo decades of work and erode the integrity of our state's democracy.

Combating Election Mis- and Disinformation

Colorado Common Cause is committed to finding ways to combat and mitigate mis- and disinformation about our elections. In 2022, we will deploy and manage Colorado's largest nonpartisan voter protection program, JustVote! Colorado. The program provides a hotline and other resources to help Coloradans ensure they have accurate and up-to-date information about Colorado's 2022 Election. We will also be ready to hold elected officials accountable for helping spread inaccurate or misleading information. In 2022 it is critical that Coloradans have access to accurate information about our elections, the integrity of our democracy depends on it.

Maintaining Strong Options for Voters

Colorado has one of the country's strongest voting and elections system. We have robust, secure, and equitable options for voters to access their right to vote. Colorado Common Cause is committed to maintaining these strong options and will strenuously oppose any legislation that threatens to scale back options or impede access to voting. Our systems have been proven to be among the most secure in the nation and prioritizing ballot access for eligible voters has led to consistently high voter turnout. We believe high citizen participation is the foundation of a healthy democracy. In recent years, false and disproven claims of voter fraud have been used as justification for voter suppression legislation in the name of "election security." We are ready to fight against these bills and other bills that would insert partisanship or otherwise undermine our gold standard election system.

Protecting The Safety of Voters and Election Workers

The events of January 6th in Washington, D.C. and other violence and threats that occurred while citizens are exercising their fundamental right to protest have created a dangerous cloud over our democracy. Since 2016, extremists and even some elected officials have promoted dangerous lies, conspiracy theories, and vigilantism. This has led to unprecedented threats and harassment against our election workers. These workers provide a critical service to our democracy, our elections would not be possible without them. The increased threats of violence and harassment are unacceptable. This same rhetoric has led to aggressive "poll watchers" and other agitators to intimidate and harass Coloradans voting in-person or dropping their ballots of at drop boxes. Colorado Common Cause is prepared to support legislation that will strengthen protections for our election workers and make voting safer for everyone. This type of legislation is important to protect everyone's right to vote and secure our state's democracy.

Other Priorities:

Open Government

An open democratic process is necessary for a responsive democracy. We act as a resource about our state's open government laws, and work to increase awareness about these laws so all Coloradans can participate fully in our state's democratic process. We support policies that:

- Enhance electronic record retention policies;
- Ensure that the public has timely and adequate notice for public meetings;
- Require that all actions taken by public bodies are transparent;
- Facilitate remote/virtual participation in public meetings.

Money in Politics

Big money plays a major role in every social, environmental, and economic issue in our country. Millions of dollars are poured into our political system from special interests and wealthy donors, who have greater access to our elected officials. In Colorado, we are working to pass laws that limit contributions and require full disclosure of who is spending money on elections – and implement innovative public campaign finance programs.

Accessible Internet Options for All

In the 21st century, fast, reliable, and affordable Internet service is essential to modern life and our democracy. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that solutions to address the digital divide are critically needed to ensure everyone can safely and equitably access our society. Over 180,000 Coloradans do not have access to broadband that meet's the FCC's minimum definition. As technology advances, many of our basic democratic values depend on robust connectivity. Broadband enhances civic engagement, participation in the democratic process, and a responsive government. Affordability remains the most significant barrier to broadband adoption while those on the wrong side of the digital divide are disproportionately low-income, people of color, seniors, people with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. Without broadband, these communities live in a democracy where their voices go unheard, and their needs are unmet.

We will ensure that efforts to expand broadband access through state legislation or new federal funding opportunities are equitable. Our focus is to see high-quality broadband access for all, regardless of their income or zip code.

About Colorado Common Cause

Common Cause is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring the core values of American democracy, reinventing an open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest, and empowering ordinary people to make their voices heard in the political process. Colorado Common Cause, founded as the first state chapter in 1972, works to advance our mission in Colorado.

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