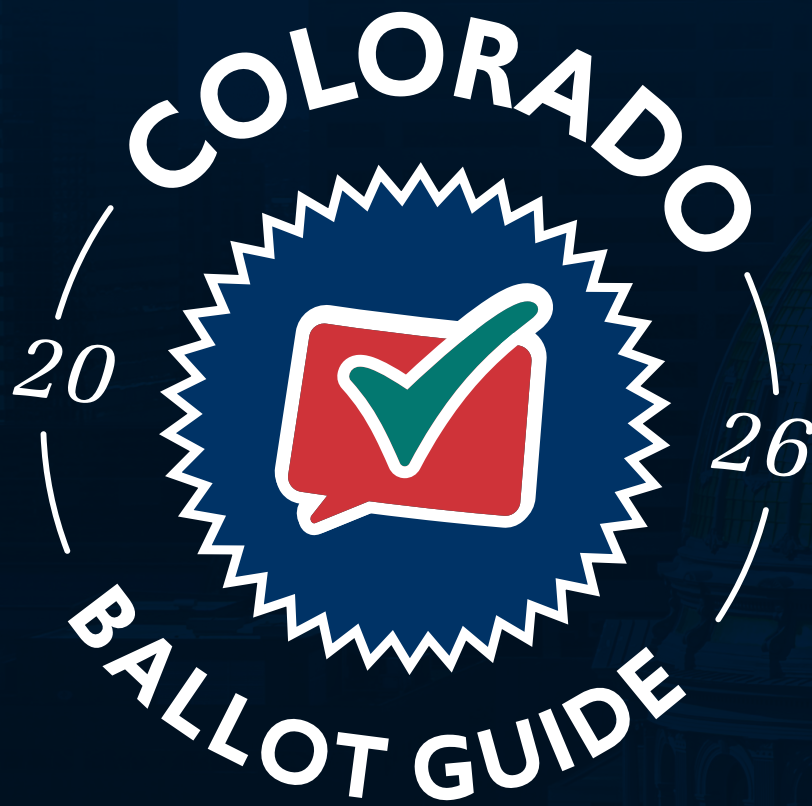






AMENDMENT 82:

The Right to Natural Gas

SUMMARY

Amendment 82 would enshrine in Colorado's Constitution a right to buy natural gas for cooking and heating, and a right for utilities to supply it, barring any future state or local ban. The measure is meant to protect against mandated electrification as Colorado pursues its decarbonization goals. As a constitutional amendment, it needs at least 55% of the statewide vote to pass.



70%

OF COLORADO HOMES ARE HEATED
WITH NATURAL GAS

\$59.1B-\$68.4B

COST TO ELECTRIFY EVERY HOME IN
COLORADO

KEY FACTS

- Amendment 82 would amend the Colorado Constitution to establish a right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking and heating, and a corresponding right for utilities and distributors to provide it, while restricting state and local governments from banning natural gas use in homes and businesses.
- An estimated 70% of Colorado homes are currently heated by natural gas.
- Colorado's average retail electricity price rose **31.8%** between May 2020 and May 2026, climbing from 9.96 to 13.13 cents per kilowatt-hour.
- Electrifying all of Colorado's residential homes, including the necessary infrastructure upgrades, would cost an estimated **\$59.1 billion to \$68.4 billion**.
 - Converting a single home to all-electric costs roughly \$30,000, with a whole-home heat pump alone running \$17,000 to \$23,000 before incentives.
 - Under a scenario combining full residential electrification with a 100% renewable grid by 2040, a typical household's monthly electricity bill would average \$566 by 2050, up from \$92 in 2021.
- Households that cannot afford to convert would face higher natural-gas prices, as fixed pipeline costs spread across a shrinking pool of ratepayers.
- **Six of Colorado's seven neighboring states** have enacted laws protecting the right to natural gas or barring discrimination against specific energy sources; a similar bill died in committee in New Mexico in 2023.

BOTTOM LINE

Amendment 82 would enshrine in Colorado's Constitution the right to purchase and use natural gas.

AMENDMENT 83:

Constitutional Right To Hunt And Fish

SUMMARY

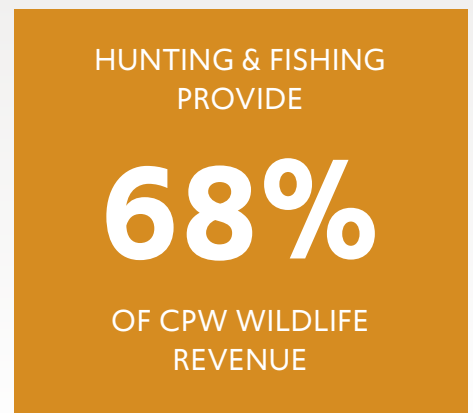
Amendment 83 would enshrine the right of Colorado residents to hunt and fish into the state constitution, joining 24 states that already provide this protection.

The measure would designate hunting and fishing as the preferred means of managing fish and wildlife populations, bar any new trespass on private property or changes to property rights, and preserve state agencies' existing authority to manage and regulate wildlife. CSI's companion report to this one-pager quantifies the economic footprint of the hunting and fishing activity that Amendment 83 seeks to protect, drawing on 2026 participation, industry, and state revenue data.

If passed, the measure would establish a constitutional right to hunt and fish that the legislature could not repeal without voter approval.

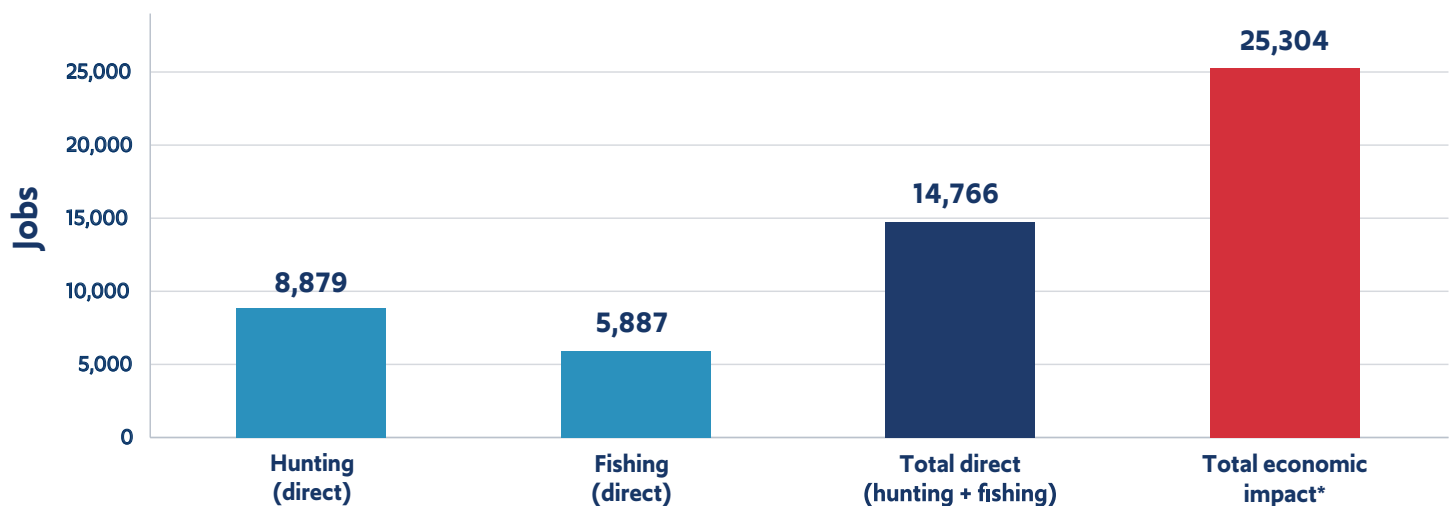
KEY FACTS

- Hunting supports \$1.2 billion in direct annual revenue, 8,879 jobs, and 963 Colorado firms.
- Fishing supports another \$1.2 billion in direct revenue, 5,887 jobs, and 718 firms. Combined, the industries directly support \$2.4 billion in revenue, 14,766 jobs, and 1,681 firms.
- Including spillover effects, hunting and fishing generate more than 25,000 statewide jobs (more than 23,000 private-sector), \$6.1 billion in business revenue, \$1.5 billion in personal income, and \$1.3 billion in disposable income.
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife's wildlife revenue reached \$220 million in FY2024-25; 68% came from hunting and fishing licenses, passes, fees, and permits.
- An estimated 305,000 hunters (89,000 nonresidents) and 975,000 anglers (358,000 nonresidents) will participate in 2026. Fishing license sales could exceed 1 million as soon as 2027.



Employment Supported by Hunting and Fishing in Colorado, 2026

Direct hunting and fishing activity supports nearly 15,000 Colorado jobs; counting spillover effects across the broader economy, that total rises to over 25,000 jobs statewide.



Source: Common Sense Institute, The Economic Impact of Hunting and Fishing and Its Connection to Ballot Initiative 302 (Sept. 2026)

*Total economic impact includes direct, indirect, and induced spillover effects.

BOTTOM LINE

Amendment 83 would make hunting and fishing a constitutional right in Colorado. Together they anchor an industry that supports thousands of jobs, generates billions of dollars in business revenue, and tens of millions in state and local government revenue.

AMENDMENT 87:

Graduated Income Tax

SUMMARY

Amendment 87 would eliminate Colorado's flat individual and corporate income tax rate, in place for nearly 40 years and currently 4.4%, and replace it with a graduated structure of six brackets ranging from 3.7% to 8.4%, beginning in tax year 2027. New revenue would be directed to K-12 education, healthcare, early childcare, and the Healthy School Meals for All program. That revenue, which CSI estimates to be \$2.3 billion in its first full fiscal year (FY 28), is an increase to the TABOR limit. CSI projects that this additional revenue would decline over time as out-migration shrinks the tax base.

Individual and Corporate Income-tax Rates under Amendment 87			
Bracket #	Adjusted Gross Income up to:	New marginal tax rate	Current rate
1	\$25,000	3.7%	4.4%
2	\$100,000	4.2%	4.4%
3	\$500,000	4.4%	4.4%
4	\$750,000	7.4%	4.4%
5	\$1,000,000	7.9%	4.4%
6	\$1,000,000+	8.4%	4.4%

WOULD GIVE COLORADO THE
HIGHEST MARGINAL TAX RATE
AMONG NEIGHBORING STATES

WOULD GENERATE
\$2.3 BILLION
ITS FIRST FULL YEAR

KEY FACTS

- Amendment 87 would raise Colorado's average individual tax rate from **4.4%** to **5%**, higher than every neighboring state but one. At **8.4%**, its top marginal rate would be the highest in the region and 9th highest among all states.
- Only filers reporting one-year income above **\$510,833** would pay more than they do today; most taxpayers would see a rate of 4.4% or lower.
- Colorado would lose a net total of **14 firms and \$200 million in corporate profits per year**, including 29 firms in the top bracket earning \$202 million annually and employing roughly 4,200 people.
 - Colorado ranked 48th nationally (third-worst) for net establishment growth per capita in 2024.
- CSI estimates a net gain of 386 individual filers, but income disparities between arrivals and departures mean Colorado would still lose an estimated **\$186 million in individual earnings per year** to interstate migration.
- The state's fiscal note projects the measure would raise **\$1 billion in FY27 and \$2 billion in FY28** (up to \$2.7 billion with forecasting error), growing with income and population in later years.
 - CSI projects a similar first-year gain of \$2.3 billion, but finds the revenue impact would shrink slowly over time as migration and corporate effects erode the base.
- The average Coloradan's tax and fee burden currently ranks **37th-highest** among states; under Amendment 87 it would climb to **33rd**.

BOTTOM LINE

Amendment 87 would write a progressive income tax system into the state constitution, raising the highest marginal tax rate from the flat rate of 4.4% to 8.4%, the highest marginal tax rate in the region, and increase the state's income tax revenue by \$2.3 billion in its first full year.



PROPOSITION 132: Increasing Opioid Penalties

SUMMARY

Proposition 132 would increase criminal penalties for offenses involving fentanyl and certain related synthetic opioids, classifying unlawful manufacture, dispensing, sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute any amount as a Level 1 drug felony punishable by eight to 32 years in prison. It would also raise possession penalties and create a treatment-mandated Level 4 drug felony for possession of one gram or less. As a statute rather than a constitutional amendment, it could be modified or repealed by the legislature in the future.

INCREASES MINIMUM
FENTANYL DISTRIBUTION
PENALTY TO

8 YEARS

IN PRISON

IN 2025,
COLORADO REPORTED

931

FENTANYL OVERDOSE
EMERGENCY DEPT. VISITS

WOULD INCREASE GENERAL
FUND SPENDING

\$68.2M

BY YEAR FIVE

KEY FACTS

- Proposition 132 would classify unlawful manufacture, dispensing, sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute any amount of fentanyl or related synthetic opioids as a **Level 1 drug felony, punishable by 8 to 32 years in prison.**
- Possession of one gram or less would become a treatment-mandated **Level 4 drug felony, punishable by 6 months to 2 years in prison.**
- Possession of more than one but not more than four grams would be a **Level 3 drug felony, punishable by 2 to 6 years in prison.**
- Colorado reported **931 fentanyl overdose-related emergency department visits in 2025**, a 15.4% increase from 2024.
 - The 17th District Attorney's Office reports fentanyl deaths rose more than 1,000% between 2015 and 2021, totaling 1,578 deaths over that period.
- Colorado's synthetic-opioid overdose deaths rose **17%** from December 2024 to August 2025, the third-fastest increase among states, even as the national rate declined.
- Legislative Council Staff estimates the measure would increase state General Fund spending by **\$0.9 million** in the first budget year, **\$8.9 million** in the second, and **\$68.2 million** by year five, with additional unquantified costs possible if the state must expand prison capacity. The measure contains no dedicated funding mechanism.
- The Colorado Department of Corrections reports an average annual cost of **\$56,972 per incarcerated person.**
- Colorado's proposed 8-year mandatory minimum falls in the middle of the region: it is less severe than Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma's maximum penalties, but more severe than Wyoming's, which has no fentanyl-specific trafficking threshold.

BOTTOM LINE

Proposition 132 would amend Colorado law to classify the unlawful manufacture, dispensing, sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute any amount of fentanyl or certain related synthetic opioids as a Level 1 drug felony, while also increasing possession penalties and mandating treatment for qualifying Level 4 offenses. The measure comes as Colorado aims to better manage and reduce fentanyl-related overdoses and deaths, but it does not directly fund prevention or drug interdiction, relying instead on higher criminal penalties and mandated treatment.

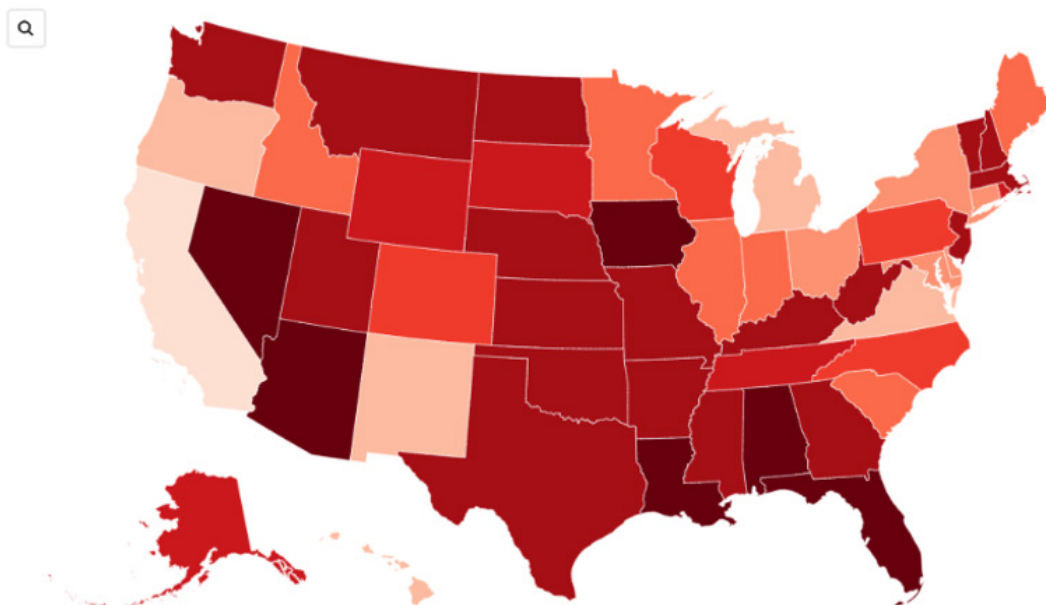
PROPOSITION 133: Penalties for Human Trafficking of Minors

SUMMARY

Proposition 133 would reclassify sexual trafficking of a minor as a class 1 felony, instituting a mandatory life sentence without the possibility of parole for offenses committed on or after January 1, 2027. It would also expand the offense of human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor. The measure comes in response to elevated trafficking levels in Colorado and follows a similar bill that failed in the 2026 legislative session.

Baseline Sentences for Sexual Trafficking of Minors

Life Life Possible Maximum ≥ 50 Years Maximum 31-49 Years Maximum 26-30 Years
Maximum 21-25 Years Maximum 16-20 Years Maximum 11-15 Years



60

HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS AGED 0-19 IN COLORADO IN 2025
THE THIRD-HIGHEST SINGLE YEAR ON RECORD

KEY FACTS

- Proposition 133 would reclassify sexual trafficking of a minor as a **Class 1 felony**, requiring life in prison with **no possibility of parole**.
- Colorado's current penalty ranges from **16 to 48 years**, with parole possible.
- Colorado reported **60 human trafficking victims aged 0-19 in 2025**, the third-highest single-year count on record, and a recent CSI report found the state had the 15th-highest trafficking rate in the country in 2024, with 64% of victims being children.
- The measure is projected to increase Department of Corrections costs by about **\$50,000** in its first year of impact, compounding by roughly another \$50,000 each year as more offenders remain incarcerated.
- Only **six U.S. states** currently punish sexual trafficking of minors with the same severity proposed by Proposition 133, one of which (Arizona) borders Colorado; passage would make Colorado the **7th state** to impose a mandatory life sentence for this offense.
 - Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Wyoming allow parole eligibility with maximum sentences of life, life, and 50 years, respectively; New Mexico's maximum is just 18 years, the least severe among bordering states.
- Similar legislation, HB26-1082, **failed to pass** during Colorado's 2026 legislative session before Proposition 133 qualified for the ballot via petition.

BOTTOM LINE

Proposition 133 would add to and amend the Colorado Revised Statutes, reclassifying the offense of sexual trafficking of a minor to a class 1 felony and establishing a mandatory life sentence with no chance of parole. The measure comes to voters after similar provisions failed to pass during the 2026 legislative session. If approved, Proposition 133 would give Colorado one of the harshest penalties in the country, joining states like Nevada and Arizona.



PROPOSITION 136: Income Tax Rate Cap

SUMMARY

Colorado has used a flat income tax since 1987 and currently taxes all income at a rate of 4.4%. The 2026 ballot will include two competing tax measures. Proposition 136 would keep the state's individual and corporate tax rate at its current level of 4.4%. Amendment 87, proposing a progressive tax structure, would increase taxes on those making more than \$510,800, and slightly reduce the tax rate for \$100,000 or less of income.

If both measures pass, the future of Colorado's income tax will be decided by which initiative garners more votes.



KEY FACTS

- Proposition 136 passing alone would keep Colorado's income tax rate at the current rate of 4.4%, preventing the state's top income tax rate from rising above that level.
 - The proposition is in opposition to a proposed progressive tax, Amendment 87, which would create a graduated income tax system in which individuals would be taxed at different rates based on their income levels.
- If both initiatives pass and Proposition 136 receives more votes, only the tax cuts from Amendment 87 are implemented, and the state's top tax rate remains at 4.4%.ⁱ
- Amendment 87 is projected to generate approximately \$2.7 billion in additional revenue, while Proposition 136 focuses on preventing changes to the current tax system.
 - Under Amendment 87, new revenue generated by the measure would be exempt from TABOR restrictions.

Colorado Income Tax Rates Under Proposition 136 & Amendment 87

Marginal rates by taxable income bracket and election outcome

POTENTIAL TAX RATES UNDER FOUR BALLOT OUTCOMES				
Taxable income bracket	Tax rates under 136 alone	Tax rates under 87 alone	Tax rates if both pass: 136 receives more yes votes	Tax rates if both pass: 87 receives more yes votes
\$25,000 or less	4.40%	3.70%	3.70%	3.70%
\$25,001 to \$100,000	4.40%	4.20%	4.20%	4.20%
\$100,001 to \$500,000	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%	4.40%
\$500,001 to \$750,000	4.40%	7.40%	4.40% cap	7.40%
\$750,001 to \$1,000,000	4.40%	7.90%	4.40% cap	7.90%
More than \$1,000,000	4.40%	8.40%	4.40% cap	8.40%

Note: This specific outcome has not been adjudicated and could face a legal challenge.

BOTTOM LINE

If passed, Proposition 136 would cap Colorado's state income tax rate at 4.4%. If Amendment 87 also passes, whichever measure receives more "yes" votes would prevail.



PROPOSITION 137:

Sporting Goods Sales Tax Revenue for Conservation

SUMMARY

Proposition 137 would exempt existing state sales tax revenue on a defined set of sporting goods and equipment from Colorado's constitutional TABOR spending limit and direct it to conservation, wildfire risk mitigation, and outdoor recreation programs. Covered purchases include bikes, hunting and fishing gear, golf equipment, recreational rentals, and more. The exempted amount, modeled using a Census-based formula rather than tracked directly, would flow to a new Conserve and Protect Colorado's Water, Land, and Forests Fund, split primarily between Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and a new Colorado Wildfire Prevention and Water Fund.



EXEMPTS
\$175.2M IN FY27-28
AND
\$180M IN FY28-29
FROM THE
TABOR LIMIT

REDUCES 2029 TABOR
REFUNDS
\$26-\$83 FOR
SINGLE FILERS AND
\$52-\$166 FOR
JOINT FILERS

INCREASES WILDFIRE
MITIGATION AND
FOREST MANAGEMENT
SPENDING BY NEARLY

5X

KEY FACTS

- If passed, it would exempt an estimated **\$175 million** in state sales tax revenue from the TABOR limit in FY2027-28, growing to **\$180.2 million** in FY2028-29.
- This is a roughly one-third (33.6%) reduction of the forecasted FY2027-28 TABOR refund obligation, from \$521.0 million to approximately \$346.0 million.
 - TABOR refunds would decrease by \$175 million in tax year 2029, **reducing refunds by \$26 to \$83 for single filers and \$52 to \$166 for joint filers**, depending on income.
- Proposition 137 would increase state wildfire mitigation and forest management spending by nearly five times the current level, from **\$16.4 million** annually to **\$80.6 million** by FY2028-29.
- Great Outdoors Colorado, already funded through Colorado Lottery proceeds, would receive an additional **\$83.1 million to \$85.6 million** annually, roughly doubling its current revenue.

BOTTOM LINE

Voters must weigh Proposition 137's promise of new conservation and wildfire funding against the TABOR refunds it would eliminate. In years the state is above the TABOR cap, it would be yet another reduction to taxpayer refunds, compounding dozens of others enacted in recent years. With the combined impact of other TABOR-related measures on this November's ballot, refunds could potentially be withheld from taxpayers for the foreseeable future.

PROPOSITION NN:

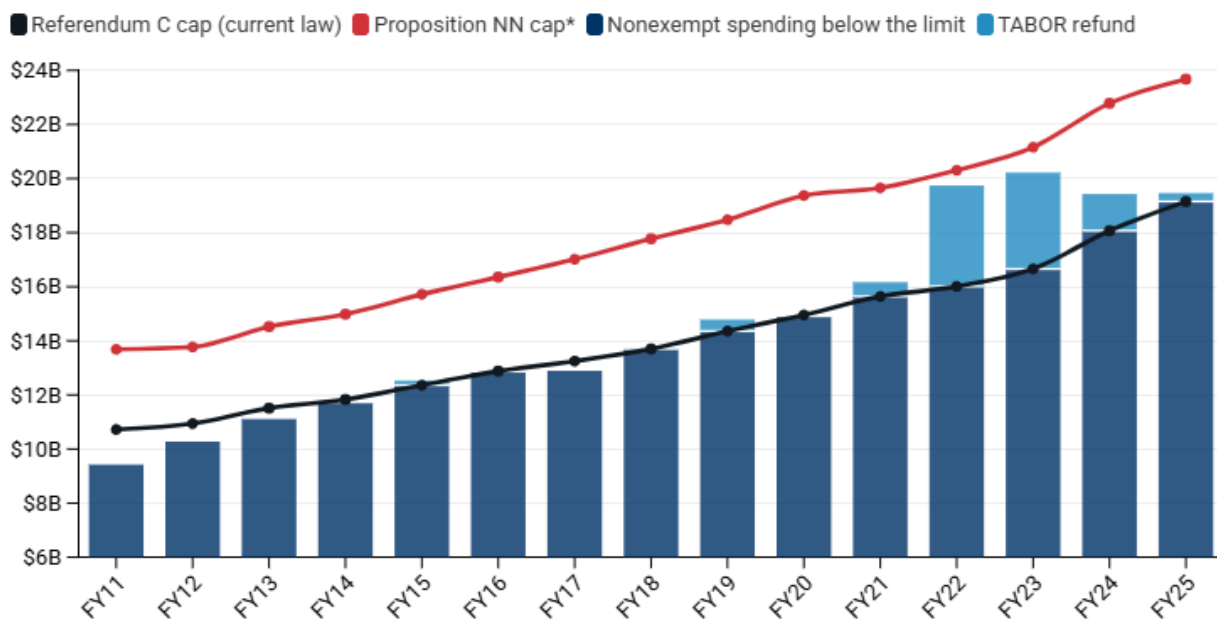
Keep and Spend Money for Education and Public Purposes

SUMMARY

Proposition NN, the name given to the 2026 ballot measure referred by SB26-135, would permanently raise the state's spending limit by billions of dollars in return for a permanent end to TABOR refunds at current tax rates. Over its first 10 years, when there would be excess revenue under current law, the new law would apportion some of the difference to K–12 education and the rest to other programs for children; afterwards, the state government could budget that remainder freely. CSI's latest study evaluates the economic impacts of Proposition NN.

Revenue Subject to TABOR and TABOR Caps under Current and Proposed Law

From FY11 through FY25, Colorado paid \$10.1 billion in cumulative TABOR refunds. Had Proposition NN's cap been in place during these years, there would never have been any refunds.



Sources: Colorado General Assembly, JBC staff, LCS, CSI estimates
* Approximations based on historical education spending in the general fund

KEY FACTS

- Excluding reclassified property-tax reimbursements, Proposition NN would raise state spending by \$329.9 million in FY27 and \$314.9 million in FY28. \$241.5 million and \$234 million of these amounts, respectively, would fund K–12 education.
- To achieve these spending increases, Proposition NN would eliminate TABOR refunds for the foreseeable future. Taxpayers and local governments would lose a total of \$850.9 million in refunds through FY28.
 - Individual filers who earn \$50,000 per year would lose \$60, those earning \$100,000 would lose \$96, and those earning \$500,000 would lose \$341.
- By allowing the government to retain \$850.9 million more over the next two budgets rather than refunding it, Proposition NN would cause the following total economic impacts:
 - A total-employment loss between 46 and 2,227 jobs
 - A private-employment loss between 460 and 2,056 jobs
 - Between \$12 million and \$120 million of lost GDP
 - A loss of economic output between \$34 million and \$244 million
 - An impact on personal income of between -\$376 million and \$473 million

BOTTOM LINE

Proposition NN would make a consequential, permanent change to Colorado's fiscal structure: it would allow the state of Colorado to keep \$851 million through fiscal year 2028, plus unknown amounts afterwards, that would otherwise have been returned to taxpayers and local governments. This shift would entail costs including fewer private-sector jobs alongside lost GDP and economic output.



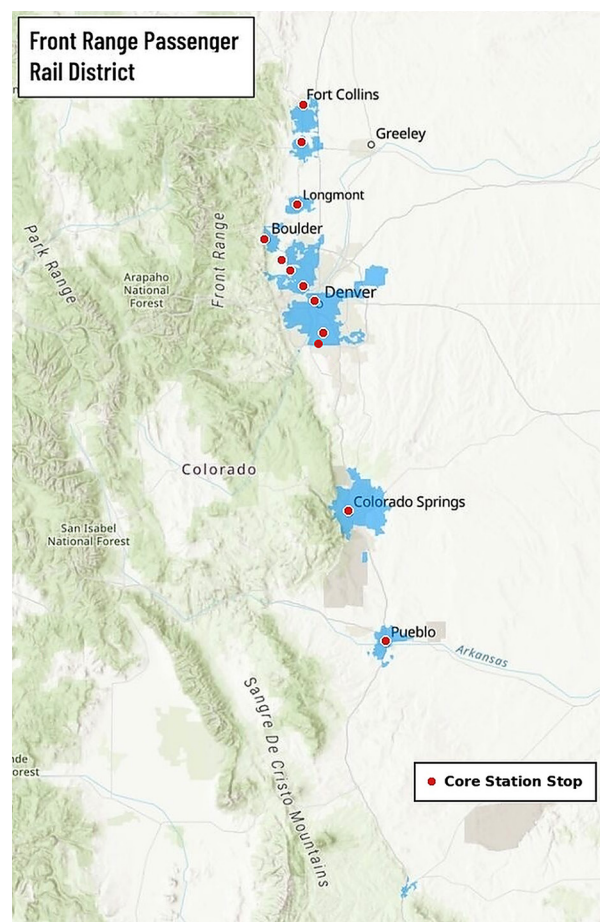
LOCAL BALLOT MEASURE

BALLOT ISSUE 7A:

Front Range Passenger Rail (CoCo) Sales Tax

SUMMARY

Ballot Issue 7A would authorize the Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPRD) to levy a new 0.333% sales and use tax (33 cents per \$100) and issue up to \$580 million in bonded debt to fund the Colorado Connector (“CoCo”), a 190-mile intercity passenger train from Fort Collins to Pueblo. Only the district’s 31 municipalities (plus Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts 1-7) vote on and pay the tax. Passage requires a simple majority of the combined district-wide vote.



\$295M

IN ANNUAL SALES AND
USE TAX REVENUE

\$4.73B

ESTIMATED CAPITAL COSTS OVER
THE FIRST 20 YEARS

KEY FACTS

- CoCo's sales tax increase is projected to raise about \$295 million per year, plus a separate \$580 million bond authorization.
- The district includes 31 municipalities plus Sterling Ranch Metropolitan Districts 1-7, within all or part of 13 counties (Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, El Paso, Huerfano, Jefferson, Larimer, Las Animas, Pueblo, Weld).
- RTD's FasTracks, approved in 2004 at an estimated \$40 million per rail mile, has cost about \$72 million per mile for the 78 of 119 planned miles built to date; as of January 2024, fares covered only 4.4% of RTD's operating costs.
- The rate increase moves the 31 municipalities up 14 spots on average in the statewide sales tax ranking and would move Denver from 26th to 14th and Boulder from 25th to 10th.
- Per FRPRD's own rider survey, 85% of prospective use is discretionary (concerts, visiting family, sports, recreation); 15% is work- or school-related (11% work, 4% classes).

BOTTOM LINE

Ballot Issue 7A asks voters to fund the long-term build-out of Colorado's first new intercity passenger rail line in decades. Supporters point to a funding plan leaning on already-secured capital and existing freight tracks to hold down costs, while critics point to RTD's FasTracks, which exceeded its original per-mile estimate and still recovers only a small share of operating costs from fares, as reason to expect a similar pattern with the Colorado Connector.



QUESTIONS?

Contact Common Sense Institute

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SCAN TO READ FULL REPORTS

