

2023



BOULDER COUNTY STATE LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET PRIORITIES

RACIAL EQUITY LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLE

Boulder County supports the creation and adoption of fully inclusive, anti-racist, and multicultural policies. As a government institution, it is the moral responsibility of the county and its employees to interrupt institutional racism which manifests through racist policy, practices, and behaviors. Boulder County will apply this principle to all components of its legislative advocacy efforts at the General Assembly.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Following are Boulder County's priorities for the 2023 legislative session, including references to legislation that will be introduced in the General Assembly. We ask for our delegation members' support for these bills that are important to Boulder County and our constituents.

Behavioral Health

Support efforts to increase access to mental health and substance use treatment, with a priority focus on providing cultural and linguistic access, services for children and youth, and high acuity treatment

Child Welfare

Support efforts to support the long-term mental, physical, and emotional health of children who have suffered abuse by increasing child welfare placement opportunities

Environment

Support state regulation and other policy means to protect air quality

Anticipated legislation: Air quality legislation to address ongoing ozone nonattainment in the Denver metro region and to further reduce air pollution across Colorado.

Reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions and protect communities that are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change

Anticipated legislation: Support expected climate legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to the climate crisis.

Forest and Grassland Health and Wildfire Resiliency

Support efforts to promote forest and grassland health, including the use of prescribed fire, in the Wildland Urban Interface

Support regulatory strategies to reduce the structural ignitability of homes in the wildland-urban interface

Anticipated legislation: Statewide building code approach to be applied to new construction in the wildland-urban interface area.

Housing

Support efforts to increase available housing and home ownership opportunities in Colorado

Community and Juvenile Justice

Support community and juvenile justice reforms that include funding to support assessments and access to appropriate programs and services, including the court liaison program and supports for juveniles 10-12 years-old who are involved in the juvenile justice system

(over)

Language Justice

Support funding and policy that guarantee full language access and language justice in all spheres of life

Oil and Gas

Increase protections for mineral and surface rights owners to level the playing field with oil and gas operators

Anticipated legislation: Enhance protections for publicly held mineral rights.

Disaster Prevention and Recovery

Support development of a disaster response and recovery management structure that is primarily state-administered and which includes collaboration between the state and local governments

Support legislative and administrative reforms to ensure that Coloradans have access to homeowner's insurance and appropriate fire coverage that accurately reflects the cost to rebuild

Anticipated legislation: Establish protections against underinsurance.

STATE BUDGET PRINCIPLES

Boulder County recognizes the importance of a state government that is fiscally responsible. We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the state on development of the state budget, especially regarding policies and programs that affect our organization or our constituents. To that end, Boulder County supports:

- Including adequate funding for staffing and administrative costs for programs, reforms, and services that will be implemented at the county level. For example, programs and reforms that support community members with lower incomes, address mental health treatment needs, and improve youth interaction with the juvenile justice system cannot be effectively implemented without adequate and sustainable funding.
- Increasing fees for fee-funded programs, where appropriate, to address state staffing and other program needs, and requiring industries and polluters to pay for the costs of regulating those sectors.

STATE BUDGET PRIORITIES

In the development of the FY 2023-2024 state budget, Boulder County asks for the support of the General Assembly in maintaining or increasing appropriation levels for the following important areas.

Housing and Human Services

County Administration and Child Welfare: Ensure access to public benefit programs and child protective services through adequate funding of recruitment and retention of county Medicaid/SNAP eligibility workers and county child welfare staff.

Homelessness Prevention: Support housing vouchers for youth transitioning out of the foster care system and funding to address the lack of housing options for voucher holders.

Public Health

Local Public Health Agencies: Support adequate and sustainable funding to support staffing and services at local public health agencies.

Disaster Resiliency

Wildfire Resiliency: Increase wildfire mitigation funding.

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