



Bill Ritter
FOR GOVERNOR
2006

THE COLORADO PROMISE

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Letter from Bill Ritter

This election is about fulfilling the Colorado Promise – the promise to our children and our grandchildren that we will leave them a better Colorado. It's the promise that Colorado reaches its fullest potential. It's the promise of a brighter Colorado in the 21st century.

I have a vision and a plan for leading Colorado into the future, a plan designed to solve problems, enact ambitious reforms and establish Colorado as a national leader on numerous fronts.

This is my promise to Colorado. As Governor, I will lead initiatives to:

- Improve our education system, increase student learning and keep college affordable.
- Create a Colorado Health Plan that ends Colorado's crisis of the uninsured and under-insured.
- Stimulate Colorado's economy and attract new jobs.
- Establish Colorado as a national renewable-energy leader.
- Modernize our out-dated transportation system.
- Ensure ample and clean water supplies for all.

This comprehensive policy book lays out my plans and positions on nearly 20 opportunities and challenges facing Colorado today and into the future. Coupled with this is my "Colorado Opportunity Pledge" – a vow to set clear goals and objectives and to let voters grade my administration on its performance.

As a lifelong Coloradan who grew up on a small farm in a big family, I'm optimistic about our prospects. I hope you are, too. I look forward to earning your vote. Please walk with me and work with me to fulfill the Colorado Promise. I'm eager to get started. There is much to do!

Sincerely,

Bill Ritter Jr.

...set clear goals and objectives and let voters grade my administration on its performance.



Executive Summary

Fulfilling the Colorado Promise means taking action and solving problems. It means handing over to our children and grandchildren a Colorado of which we all can be proud. It means having a vision, providing leadership and building partnerships that set aside partisan politics and put Colorado's common interests first.

"The Colorado Promise" is my roadmap to a better Colorado in the 21st century. These ideas are ambitious, and they will require cooperation, compromise and balanced appointments to Colorado's commissions and advisory panels. Together, we can fulfill the Colorado Promise. Here is a summary of the major goals and ideas in my plan:

EDUCATION. As a top priority, I will increase access to early childhood education, improve student learning in our K-12 system and reduce our high-school drop-out rates. We will provide our businesses with the nation's best-educated home-grown workforce by:

- Creating a statewide Child Care Report Card.
- Working with school districts to develop teacher cadet programs.
- Establishing a "Principal Institute."
- Supporting pay-for-performance and improving teacher recruitment.
- Creating a low-interest home loan program for teachers.
- Streamlining accountability programs.
- Doubling the production of technical certificates and college degrees over the next 10 years.

HEALTH CARE. With 788,000 Coloradans lacking health insurance, ending this crisis will dominate much of the first year of my administration by:

- Convening all stakeholders and establishing a "Colorado Health Plan," with legislation to be introduced in the 2008 session of the General Assembly. The goal: to improve health-care access, affordability and quality.
- Making Colorado one of the top 10 states for child immunizations.
- Establishing a Small Business Health Insurance Team.
- Reducing the frequency of low-birth-weight babies.
- Addressing the unique needs of senior citizens and veterans.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & JOB GROWTH. A strong, vibrant economy is essential for Colorado to grow and prosper. My administration will begin by:

- Establishing five regional economic development plans for the Eastern Plains, Western Slope, San Luis Valley, mountain resorts and Front Range, and integrating them with a statewide plan.
- Continuing to invest in tourism and other high-yield opportunities such as renewable energy, aerospace and biomedicine.
- Supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs through incubator coordination, access to capital and other support services.
- Creating a Colorado Jobs Cabinet.
- Creating a Governor's Council on Innovation.
- Establishing a Broadband Internet Access Infrastructure Council, and ensuring that broadband Internet access is available to all Coloradans.

NEW ENERGY ECONOMY. Colorado is blessed with abundant renewable and traditional energy sources. I will establish Colorado as a national leader in a New Energy Economy by:

- Promoting alternative energy.
- Encouraging cleaner ways of extracting and using fossil fuels.
- Rewarding efficiency and conservation.
- Attracting research, development, manufacturing and other economic opportunities and jobs around renewable energy.
- Making rural Colorado a driver in the expansion of sun, wind and biofuel markets.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION. As Governor, I will find responsible, achievable and practical solutions to the illegal-immigration crisis gripping our country and our state. Washington has failed to secure our borders, prosecute companies that knowingly hire undocumented workers, and punish human smugglers and traffickers. These are unacceptable failures. I will work with federal and state authorities to enact and enforce policies that fix this failure, and help businesses to verify citizenship status of job applicants and employees.

THE ENVIRONMENT. Protecting our natural environment should be one of the key functions of government. It will be for my administration, which will act by:

- Opposing the sale of federally owned open spaces and forest land.
- Seeking a balanced approach to roadless areas.
- Protecting watersheds from oil-and-gas drilling.
- Supporting outdoor recreational opportunities for hikers, bikers, campers, hunters, gun owners, anglers and other sportsmen and women.
- Working with local and federal agencies to prevent wildfires and address the pine beetle epidemic sweeping our mountain forests.

WATER. How we use water is one of the most important issues facing Colorado today. We must end Colorado's divisive water wars by:

- Adopting a responsible mix of conservation, reuse, efficiency, cooperation, farm-to-city water agreements and new water storage.
- Supporting the roundtable discussions now underway through the Colorado Interbasin Compact Committee process.

TRANSPORTATION. A sound infrastructure, including a multi-modal transportation network, is essential to serving Colorado's growing population and sustaining a vibrant economy. However, our network and funding mechanisms are outdated and must be modernized. I will begin by:

- Establishing a Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel within my first 90 days in office.
- Hosting a statewide Transportation Summit.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY & THE STATE BUDGET.

As Governor, I will ensure that we take advantage of improvements in technology, purchasing and business processes. I will find areas that can be streamlined, made more efficient or eliminated. I pledge to provide a smarter, more accountable government by:

- Instituting state government performance and financial reviews that have generated savings of as much as 6% in other states.
- Maximizing federal funding.
- Making investments today that will save more later.

Education: Creating New Opportunities

Education provided me with the door to opportunity, and it is my goal to open this door for all Colorado children. I have a lifelong, personal commitment to education. I worked as a child to help my family make ends meet – and I kept on working my way through college and law school. I know the value of hard work, and I know even more the value of education. My wife, Jeannie, is a substitute public school teacher and we have four bright children. Our family cares deeply about education and Colorado’s schools. That is why I was proud to serve on a high school reform commission. And it is why, as Governor, strengthening our state’s education system will be my highest priority.



Investing in Our Schools and Our Students

As Governor, I plan to invest more in – and demand more from – our education system. Education must be the state’s No. 1 priority. It will be my top priority. I will partner with school districts, communities, educators and parents to set clear goals and then to reach those goals. For too long, the conversation about education reform has involved accusation and punishment. My administration will stand for opportunity and encouragement for all learners. It is time we refocus our energy on:

- Fostering high-quality educators and inspiring a new generation of teachers.

- Making sure children arrive at school ready to learn.
- Improving student achievement.
- Getting parents more involved.
- Improving higher education while also keeping it affordable.

Education is the foundation of any strong economy and any competitive workforce. Yet funding for our schools lags behind the increasing costs our schools face each year. By some measures, we rank near the bottom of states in public school funding, and our investment in higher education has fallen sharply in recent years.

With the passage of Referendum C, we have new opportunities to strengthen our educational system. I have a vision for Colorado’s education system – a vision that unites high expectations with realistic goals to make our schools among the best in the nation – as well as a responsible and practical plan to help us get there.

Fostering High Quality Educators & Inspiring a New Generation of Teachers

We all remember the teacher in our lives who made a difference. Teachers are the heart and soul of a school. Every child deserves a good, highly qualified teacher in every classroom and an inspired principal in every school. Teachers and principals deserve the opportunity to gain the skills and resources they need to be highly-qualified. To accomplish this will require investing in teacher skill-training, compensating teachers adequately for their performance and expecting them to perform in return. In addition, it is time we improve what has been called the “educator marketplace” and provide incentives for our best and brightest to join the teaching profession. It creates a winning cycle: Great teachers inspire students to become great teachers. As Governor, I will:

Work with school districts to develop teacher cadet programs. These programs will encourage high school juniors and seniors who express an interest in teaching to pursue this as a career field. Students will earn college credits for a year-long course that introduces them to subject matter such as cognitive learning, lesson planning, tutoring, pedagogy and child development. As Governor, I will support such initiatives and promote adding more such programs.

Establish a “Principal Institute.” By combining public- and private-sector efforts, expertise and resources, Colorado can build a premier principal-training institute. Principals are the leaders and chief academic officers of their schools. They have a unique influence on the culture and performance of an entire school. Our children deserve a well-trained and inspired principal in every school. The Institute will offer new and returning principals exposure to the best ideas in education and academic improvement strategies that have been backed up by solid research and testing. School reform rests on the shoulders of principals. They deserve our support and the best tools possible for accomplishing their mission.

Support Pay for Performance. I will support efforts that provide performance incentives to teachers and principals based on growth gains and assignments in high-need schools and high-need academic subjects.

Improve Teacher Recruitment. School districts throughout the country are struggling to recruit good teachers, especially in math and science. Colorado must aggressively pursue teaching candidates from college campuses around the state and across the country, and we must accelerate the timing of such recruiting efforts and streamline the certification process.

Create a Low-Interest Home Loan Program for Teachers. Colorado must focus on teachers already in the system by offering guaranteed low-interest home loans to certified teachers who agree to serve in those of our communities with the greatest educational needs. By guaranteeing the loans, the state can, in effect, increase teachers’ compensation at virtually no cost to taxpayers.

Create a Governor’s Award for Education Excellence for New Teachers. As Governor, I will create an Award for Education Excellence to celebrate and honor exceptional service provided by a select group of our newest teachers. The award is meant to acknowledge and inspire teachers who have been teaching in the classroom for six years or less, and to underscore the value of teaching by encouraging, recognizing and showing support for the teaching profession generally. I will establish an on-line ballot box where school administrators, educators, parents and students can nominate their favorite teachers for this award. I will then personally present five awards to teachers – one in each of the five regions of the state – at the close of every school year.

We can inspire a generation of Colorado’s own youth to become teachers by providing respect and opportunity for current and future educators, and by acknowledging the accomplishments of our best and brightest teachers.

Education is the foundation of any strong economy and any competitive workforce.

Making Sure Children Arrive at School Ready to Learn

Colorado needs high-quality early childhood education programs to make sure that every child arrives at elementary school ready to learn. As Governor, I will:

Expand Early Childhood Education Programs.

Raising student achievement and closing the achievement gap begins before a child enters kindergarten. I will create a public/private partnership to provide and fund an early start to education.

Create a Statewide Child Care Report Card. I will boost training and standards for child care providers and create a statewide Child Care Report Card. I will work with the private sector to ensure that parents have easy access to this report card, which will contain information such as staff qualifications, number of children who attend, price, and skill mastery measures.

Encourage Collaboration. I will bring together early childhood education providers and program administrators to work with my administration to create a more efficient system that serves the educational needs of families and young children.

Improving Student Achievement

Many of our students struggle with basic math and reading skills. Last year, only 36% of high school freshmen were proficient in reading and only 17% were proficient in math. This is not acceptable. As Governor, I will place greater emphasis on student achievement for all children.

Provide More Opportunities for Low-Performing Students. I will convene key stakeholders in the public and private sectors to explore how we can best implement the recommendations of the Colorado Commission on High School Improvement and the Colorado Closing the Achievement Gap Commission.

Place a Greater Emphasis on Science and Technology. We live increasingly in a service-based economy driven mostly by service-oriented industries in science and technology. We, therefore, must ensure

that our students leave our schools with basic skills and knowledge to succeed in today's world – which must extend beyond basic reading and math skills and include an emphasis on science and technology. I will support an increase in science enrichment programs and make sure that all of our public schools have, at a minimum, at least one teacher on staff who is qualified to teach science.

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Incorporate Technology into the Classroom.

Technology offers students greater access to more advanced course work and allows them to explore specialized areas of interest. I will work with the Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education, the Boards of Cooperative Education Services and local districts to ensure that students have access to properly equipped facilities and courses that reflect the needs of the 21st century. Teachers must also make the most of technology by integrating it with their everyday curriculum plans.

Streamline Accountability Systems. Colorado currently has three school accountability systems – at great expense to taxpayers and local school districts. We can and should have one. We can streamline reporting and evaluation into a single system that meets federal requirements, supports Colorado's high standards for student achievement and makes the best use of our school districts' time and taxpayer resources.

Utilize Robust Data Technology Systems. With robust data systems, educators can access individual student achievement data in real time, identify students at risk of failing or dropping out, and intervene. Such a system would also support the day-to-day work of teachers by helping them to make informed decisions about the learning needs of their students.

Getting Our Parents Involved

Expecting more does not end with students, teachers and principals: We need to expect more from every parent in our state and involve them in their child's education – earlier and more often. As Governor, I will:

Launch a Family Literacy Crusade. A child's success in school has been positively linked to his or her ability to read at an early age. Family-centered literacy programs are far more effective than adult education or child-focused literacy efforts alone. I will launch a "Let's Read" program aimed at encouraging parents to read to their children. I will personally jump-start this initiative by establishing a statewide book club featuring 12 books, one per month, which I will read to elementary school students in two schools per month throughout the state.

Promote Homework Assignments that Involve Parental Participation. Parents should be encouraged to interact with their children. Things like asking their child to explain concepts learned in school that day, or reading a book together at night – all should be activities that parents or guardians do. I will encourage our parents to sign a compact that promises that they will engage in learning activities with their child at least once every week. Studies have found that, particularly in such areas as math and computer, parents learn valuable new lessons from such exercises as well.

Respect and Support the Critical Role Parents Play. Parents deserve to know how their children are doing in school and what their school district is doing to improve. Parents should have clear reports on schools so they can make informed choices about their children's educations. By working cooperatively, schools can help parents promote a learning environment at home so that home and school build on each other's strengths.

Improving Higher Education

I want more of our students to consider college and post-high school training as viable options after graduation – and I want them to be fully prepared for those opportunities. The vast majority of jobs in the future will require at least some level of post-secondary education – yet Colorado has been de-funding higher education. I was a strong supporter of Referendum C, because it allows us to reverse this trend and increase our investment in higher education.

Although I worked as hard as I could to put myself through college and law school, like many others I was only able to make it financially thanks to student aid. Now, with two of my four children in college, I know all too well that the rising costs of college are outstripping the resources of middle class families. As Governor, I will establish innovative financing approaches to make higher education an available reality for any young person with the ability and determination to pursue it. In addition, I will:

Develop a New Strategic Plan. Colorado needs a new plan for our public higher education system. With stakeholder guidance and input, we will create a plan that: addresses Colorado’s changing job trends; mandates admission standards that ensure high rates of student success; drives accountability by articulating institution-specific goals; and establishes specific role, scope and mission statements for each institution.

...the rising costs of college are outstripping the resources of middle class families.

Establish a “P-20 Council.” Rather than promoting a culture of blame and regulation, we will strive for partnerships between K-12 and higher education to ensure that our high school graduates enter college ready for college-level studies and equipped with the skills needed to enter a modern workforce. I will establish a P-20 Council to bring business leaders, policymakers and educators to the table to improve education from early childhood education through post-graduate studies.

As Governor, I will honor voters’ wishes and make it our priority to fund education. I am committed to making our public schools and our public institutions of higher education among the best in the nation. To do this, I will bring all entities that have a role in education together as partners, not adversaries, to work effectively and responsibly towards a common goal: *opening the doors of opportunity for Colorado’s children.*



Affordable Higher Education

A first-rate higher education system along with an array of other post-secondary education opportunities is one of the cornerstones for building a vibrant economy. For years, Colorado enjoyed the benefits of a strong higher education system. However, over the past decade, we have witnessed a de-funding of higher education that is taking a toll.

I maintain an unwavering commitment to improving opportunity and attracting more jobs to the state. Key to achieving this objective is revitalizing post-secondary education so it can be an engine for Colorado's economy. If we are to maximize the state's competitive potential in the 21st century and raise the standard of living for all Coloradans, our collective goal should be nothing short of doubling the current production of technical certificates and college degrees over the next 10 years.

For too long Colorado has benefited from the immigration of many thousands of educated employees from other states, while not reaching our potential in educating native Coloradans. Unfortunately, our reliance on a workforce trained outside of the state may lead to future economic uncertainty. It is clear that if we hope to maintain Colorado's economic superiority and resiliency, we must grow more of our own highly educated workforce.

To reach the goal of doubling the number of post-secondary certificates and degrees, we must renew our commitment to affordable, accessible, and high quality public higher education. Here is my plan for bold post-secondary reforms intended to help enhance Colorado's prosperity and economic security:

Good Jobs for Our Kids. I will push to make planning for post-secondary education a required component of all students' high school experience. Whether they intend to become engineers, ranchers, teachers, machinists, nurses, electricians, network administrators or any other profession, all high school students in Colorado deserve the opportunity to understand how to make post-secondary education part of their future. The vast majority of competitive jobs in the 21st century require some form of formal training beyond high school. By requiring a post-secondary education plan

from each of our high school students we will begin to change expectations and expand horizons.

Additionally, my administration will develop policies that tie together high school and college-level programs of study, thereby engaging students in their preferred post-secondary pursuits as well as reducing college costs to working families. This strategy will also reduce the risk that students will delay entry, or worse, not pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. To this end, I will seek legislation to align the school finance act and the College Opportunity Fund program, which would permit students greater opportunities to enroll in college-level courses in high school without unduly burdening school districts or colleges. I also will encourage high schools to offer a minimum number of college-level courses in students' senior year that apply to either vocational or traditional college programs.

...over the past decade, we have witnessed a defunding of higher education that is taking a toll.

Making Financial Aid "Work" Better. I worked my way through college, as do most students in Colorado today. It helped me appreciate the value of my education and made me personally responsible for financing it. I believe that this should be true for all students, regardless of age. The state should play a part in facilitating access to and funding higher education, but students should contribute to their education as well. Therefore, part of my post-secondary strategy is to make financial aid "work" for all. Younger students who will contribute financially to the state after college should benefit from additional state financial support by way of expanded self-help or work-study student aid programs. Research has shown that students who are employed in work-study positions are more engaged in their education, which results in higher persistence and graduation rates. Work-study programs not only help students earn their education, they offer the added benefit of increasing student retention and graduation rates.

I also propose creating student loan forgiveness programs similar to Americorps that would give

middle- and low-income resident students an opportunity to pay off their student loans by completing public-service or volunteer programs during their summer terms.

My administration also will revisit state financial aid policies to ensure that working adults attending college will receive full access to need-based grant aid.

...if we hope to maintain Colorado's economic superiority and resiliency, we must grow more of our own highly educated workforce.

Bring Back Average Funding, Demand Above Average Results. In recent years, the de-funding of state support for higher education has resulted in unsettling cutbacks in services to students, expansion of the use of part-time instructors, institutions' inability to retain high quality faculty, and soaring student debt. As Governor, I will work with the legislature to gradually restore the cuts that were made to public higher education in Colorado, but I will also demand improved performance.

Using Referendum C revenues, I will advance a fiscal agenda that increases Colorado's investment in higher education, which is currently among the lowest in the country. While increasing state support, I will ask institutions to limit tuition increases to resident students, expand financial assistance to low-income students, and improve performance in retention and graduation rates.

To ensure that institutions of higher education continually improve their performance, I will create an annual incentive program through which institutions can earn additional funding for exceeding goals regarding the production of college degrees. For example, institutions exceeding expected performance regarding graduation rates of low-income or underserved students, or students in high need fields such as engineering and nursing, would be eligible to receive

additional performance funding from the state.

Additionally, to ease the transition between two-year and four-year colleges and eliminate programmatic inefficiencies, I will work with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the institutional governing boards to create policies that increase inter-institutional cooperation and result in an expanded variety of programmatic offerings and reduced duplication of instructional resources.

Salvage the Community College System. Colorado's system of community and technical colleges is extensive, but vulnerable. In addition to providing access to technical certificates and transferable associates degrees to thousands of students – including the majority of the state's adult and minority students – community colleges are also critically important to their local economies. From Lamar to Rangely, Sterling to Cortez, Fort Collins to Trinidad, and all communities in between, public community colleges provide critical access to job training and are pillars of local economies.

In recent years, no other sector of the state's higher education system was hit harder by budget cutbacks than the community colleges. The risk of closing 10 community colleges voiced prior to the passage of Referendum C was not an exaggeration.

As a state, we cannot double the number of technical certificates and college degrees without a vibrant community college system that is accessible by and affordable to all Coloradans. Therefore, a cornerstone of my higher education agenda will be to restore community college system funding to a level comparable to that prior to the 2001 state economic recession.

The Colorado Health Plan

Health care costs are spiraling out of control, straining the budgets of Colorado businesses, families and individuals. More than 788,000 Coloradans lack health insurance – a number that grows every year and includes approximately 180,000 children.

Many Colorado businesses, particularly small businesses, are struggling to provide health insurance to their employees while still maintaining their competitive edge. Some businesses have delayed hiring or investment decisions because of escalating health care costs. Other businesses have reluctantly decided to stop offering health insurance to their employees. Employees are worried about their health care security, concerned that their employers will no longer provide coverage or will shift so much of the cost onto their shoulders that they will find it unaffordable.

Quite simply, our health care system is broken, and this crisis will not be fixed by tinkering around the edges and making only small incremental changes. Solving this crisis is central to fulfilling the Colorado Promise. It will be one of my top priorities. I will work to make some immediate changes that will help improve access and lower costs. More importantly, I will embark on a year-long process to develop a Colorado Health Plan. I will work with all stakeholders to increase access and availability, improve quality and contain costs. Every resident of Colorado is a stakeholder and everyone will play a part in the solution, including leading healthier lifestyles and making smarter decisions.

The Colorado Health Plan

As Governor, I will lead an effort to bring all parties together to develop the Colorado Health Plan. The Plan will improve health care access, quality and affordability and promote healthy lifestyle choices. The process will be guided by eight fundamental principles:

- Basic health care should be available and accessible to all Coloradans.
- Health care for the 180,000 uninsured children should be an immediate priority.
- Health care should be affordable and financed in a cost-effective manner.
- High quality health care should be available and accessible regardless of geography.

- Health care reform must be developed collaboratively.
- Medicaid must become more efficient and effective.
- We should foster competition as a means to drive quality up and costs down.
- We all must take personal responsibility for our own health.

As Governor, I will provide strong leadership and bring together all stakeholders, including consumers, physicians, insurance companies, hospitals, device and drug companies, medical schools, large businesses, small businesses, unions and self-employed individuals.

More than 788,000 Coloradans lack health insurance – a number that grows every year and includes approximately 180,000 children.

I have already begun this process by meeting with dozens of people across the state who represent all aspects of the health care debate. I have listened to them and invited them to join me in working to solve our health care crisis. We know the complexities and magnitude of the problem. There is no “magic bullet” to fix all that is broken, but there is a path to a Colorado Health Plan that will improve access, quality and affordability. It will take a year to lead this development effort, and during this planning period there is much that can be done to improve care and reduce costs. My administration will address these action items from the first day we take office.

Making Health Care More Affordable

While developing the Colorado Health Plan we will also move quickly to address rising costs. My plan addresses affordability in five areas:

Containing Costs. We can control costs for individuals, families and employers by:

- Leveraging the state’s purchasing power to save money in the state budget.
- Joining a multi-state purchasing pool for pharmaceuticals and requiring state agencies to collaborate when they purchase the same drugs and medical supplies.

- Improving the use of information technology.
- Combining the Massachusetts concept of a Health Insurance Connector with the idea of a “Small Group Enrollment Center” from a planning grant that Colorado received. This will create a single entry point to assist small businesses buying insurance. This would not be a purchasing pool, but would simplify the process of buying insurance for small businesses and individuals.

There is no “magic bullet” to fix all that is broken, but there is a path to a Colorado Health Plan that will improve access, quality and affordability.

Improving Medicaid. Medicaid consumes over 20% of Colorado’s general fund spending and offers a perfect opportunity for state government to lead by example. As Governor, I will:

- Quickly assess the loss of Medicaid managed care and work to establish new relationships with managed care organizations. Other states have demonstrated savings through Medicaid managed care while maintaining quality of care.
- Aggressively work to fix the state’s information technology infrastructure, including the troubled Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS).
- Maximize the potential of the new Colorado Regional Health Information Organization to link providers with payers of health care electronically, including private insurers and Medicaid.
- Expand Medicaid disease management programs that reduce costs and improve quality.
- Re-establish the blue-ribbon commission that recently examined Colorado’s long-term care system and issued 18 recommendations for making Colorado a national model for consumer choice and shifting care from institutions to home- and community-based programs. We must ensure that Medicaid-funded nursing home

patients have advanced directives in place, and that we are making full use of new federal dollars to help nursing home patients move back into the community if they desire and are able to do so.

- Purchase pharmaceuticals at a discounted rate through the federal 340B program when available.

Focusing on Prevention. The single best thing we can do to lower the long-term cost of health care is to focus far more on preventative care and wellness. As Governor, I will:

- Launch a “Strong Employees, Strong State” initiative to promote wellness at the worksite, particularly focusing on tobacco and obesity prevention.
- Create competition between local chambers of commerce to see who can engage the most local businesses in wellness activities. Arkansas has slowed the rate of obesity among children this way, and we can do even better in Colorado.
- Negotiate health insurance premium reductions for state employees who participate in a wellness program, expand hours of the State Employee Wellness Center and challenge state employees and area businesses to compete in wellness activities.
- Expand chronic disease management programs in the state’s Medicaid, S-CHIP and state employee health programs.

...a perfect opportunity for state government to lead by example.

Improving Accountability and Transparency. Too often, prices vary among health care facilities and providers, with no difference in outcome. Individuals and group purchasers of health care services should have the information they need to choose their sources of care wisely. We should expand transparency, and it should always be transparency with a purpose, focusing on data that can help improve quality and reduce costs. As Governor, I will:

- Support reporting efforts that make it easier for consumers to get information about patient safety,

costs of care and quality of outcomes.

- Develop a website for physicians, hospitals and insurance providers to list their prices for common procedures.
- Use price and quality data in making purchasing decisions for state-funded health care such as Medicaid.
- Create a health outcomes report card through the developing Colorado Regional Health Information Organization that is built on incentives for excellence. The report card would use data to report on population health indicators that can be tied to regional outcomes.

Investing in Technology to Reduce Medical Errors.

Medical errors in American hospitals, nursing homes and clinics represent a leading cause of death in the United States. We know from numerous studies that technology can dramatically reduce medical errors and in the process improve quality and reduce costs of care. As Governor, I will:

- Encourage work now underway to modernize the state’s health information infrastructure. Colorado currently is one of nine states pushing ahead in this regard and has received federal and foundation grants to support the effort.
- Push for public-private partnerships to promote the wise use of technology to reduce medical errors, and work with major purchasers of health care to promote investment in health information technology.
- Promote regional health care quality collaborations to reduce costly medical errors and complications through better processes of care.

Medical errors in American hospitals, nursing homes and clinics represent a leading cause of death in the United States.

Ensuring Access to Care & Coverage for All

We must begin moving toward a day when all Coloradans have health care coverage. The cost of the uninsured to society, businesses, families and

individuals is significant. Here are several ways we can increase access and save money:

The cost of the uninsured to society, businesses, families and individuals is significant.

Childhood Immunizations. As Governor, I will ensure that Colorado becomes one of the 10 best states in the nation for childhood immunizations within two years by:

- Restoring accountability and leadership at the top.
- Improving participation in the Statewide Immunization Registry.
- Improving utilization of the Statewide Recall and Reminder System.
- Integrating mapping with our Immunization Registry to identify pockets of un-immunized children and then targeting those communities.
- Coordinating research and surveys about immunizations.
- Developing and disseminating educational vaccination materials.

Child Health. All of Colorado’s children deserve a healthy start, including health insurance, a healthy lifestyle and a healthy family. It is unacceptable to have 180,000 uninsured children in Colorado. As Governor, I will:

- Ensure that all eligible children are enrolled in existing insurance programs such as S-CHIP and Medicaid.
- Work with our congressional delegation for full S-CHIP reauthorization and funding.
- Use tobacco tax revenue to insure as many children as possible.
- Fight childhood obesity by launching a Colorado Family Physical Activity Challenge, educating families on healthy lifestyles, promoting safe routes to schools that encourage more walking and creating a clearinghouse of all public and private grant opportunities to help communities start their own initiatives.

- Increase access to prenatal care to reduce Colorado’s nearly 9% rate of low birth weight babies, one of the worst rates in the nation.
- Enhance preventive efforts to foster children’s oral health. Oral health is critically important to the overall health and well-being of children. Left untreated, pain and infection caused by tooth decay can lead to problems in eating, speaking, and learning. Nationally, an estimated 51 million school hours are lost every year to dental-related illness.

All of Colorado’s children deserve a healthy start — including health insurance, a healthy lifestyle and a healthy family.

Maternity Care. Colorado also ranks near the bottom in the number of women who seek care in the first trimester of pregnancy. As Governor, I will:

- Increase access to prenatal care by expanding publicly sponsored health care coverage.
- Prevent costly pregnancy complications by providing care coordination incentives to providers through state-funded health care programs, using models with a proven return on investment.
- Focus tobacco prevention and cessation efforts on pregnant women, and train health care providers to better help their pregnant patients quit.

Establish a Small Business Health Insurance Team.

I will organize a Small Business Health Insurance Team of business owners and other stakeholders to devise strategies for small business owners and their employees to access affordable health care.

Rural Health. Rural communities struggle to attract and retain providers, and patients often have difficulty reaching the care they need. As Governor, I will:

- Promote greater access to broadband and greater use of telemedicine, which can improve the ability of rural patients to receive health care when and where they need it.

- Build an adequate rural health provider workforce by supporting state-funded scholarship and loan forgiveness programs for rural providers.
- Ensure that the unique needs of rural providers are assessed and addressed before policy changes are enacted at the state level.

Promoting Mental Health

Our minds are just as much a part of our health as our hearts. As Governor, I will:

- Invest in integrated community-based mental health services and focus on prevention measures such as proper medication and treatment. This will save money by reducing emergency room visits and correctional facility costs.
- Examine cost-effective programs that will save money in the long run, such as substance abuse prevention and early intervention for young people.
- Engage in a thorough review of our state’s child welfare system to ensure our most vulnerable charges are receiving the care they need.
- Re-emphasize suicide prevention efforts. Suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in Colorado and the second leading cause of death for Coloradans ages 10 to 34.
- Better integrate mental and physical health care.

Fixing our broken health care system is a wise investment, not for the next election, but for the next generation and for the future of the state.

Conclusion

We cannot rely on Congress to fix our health care crisis. It is time for practical leadership to bring all parties together to develop a bold and sustainable health plan for Colorado. Fixing our broken health care system is a wise investment, not for the next election, but for the next generation and for the future of the state – for children, families, seniors and businesses. By making health and health care a priority, and with strong leadership, we can make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation.

Childhood Immunizations

Improving the health and well-being of children in Colorado will be a top priority for my administration. Colorado has a history of being one of the healthiest states in the nation, but our percentage of childhood immunizations has been low. Recently we have made some progress, but we must remain focused and vigilant. As Governor, I will lead a campaign to meet or exceed a federally set goal of having 80% of children immunized by 2008, making Colorado one of the top 10 states in the nation for child immunizations.

As Governor, I will provide the leadership to ensure that state agencies work collaboratively with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, providers and other stakeholders to create a fully integrated statewide immunization plan. The plan will focus on implementing best practices and proven programs to increase childhood immunization in Colorado.

We will establish a vaccine purchasing plan for children who are not eligible for the federally funded Vaccine for Children program. We will also work with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to create a repository for unused doses of vaccines that can be made available where they are needed.

As Governor, I will provide resources to educate parents and guardians about the Colorado Information Immunization System (CIIS), a computerized system that collects vaccination histories. Through the CIIS, we will also provide outreach and education about the statewide recall (immunizations are due soon) and reminder system (immunizations are past due).

Many state agencies use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to plot data on populations around the state. My administration will use GIS to generate population-based information on childhood immunizations. From this information, health officials can devise ways to reach remote populations, including with the use of mobile vaccination vans/buses. Additionally, information gathered from surveying providers can help target public education efforts wisely. This approach would mirror the National Immunization Program's AFIX process. AFIX includes the Assessment of immunization coverage of

public and private providers; Feedback of diagnostic information to improve service delivery; Incentives (or recognition) for improved performance; and eXchange of information among providers.

I eagerly anticipate the exciting public health advances from recently approved vaccines and those still in the pipeline. Especially exciting are the recently approved vaccines to prevent cervical cancer. Widespread access to this cancer prevention vaccine would result over time in a significant reduction in cancer of the cervix. Other vaccines that are important for adults are already available but are under-utilized, such as the pneumonia vaccine and the annual influenza vaccine. There are new vaccines for adolescents and adults for whooping cough that will greatly reduce the impact of this disease, which occurs at high rates in Colorado. My administration will take the lead in promoting optimal access to these vaccines.

...investments in immunization programs pay significant dividends in the health of our children.

In many ways, Colorado knows what to do. What has been lacking is the kind of leadership that is needed to ensure that investments in immunization programs pay significant dividends in the health of our children.

Reducing Unintended Pregnancies

I was the sixth of 12 kids growing up on a farm in Aurora. Faith and family have been important parts of my life, and as a Democrat I'm proud of that because both have taught me that we need to be responsible for ourselves – but we also need to look out for each other. That's what I think it means to be a Democrat.

Based on my faith, I am personally opposed to abortion. But I recognize that people who disagree with me on this issue hold equally strong convictions. Most importantly, however, I know we also share common ground: We all would like to see fewer women facing an unintended pregnancy. To reach this common ground, we must:

- Make a stronger commitment to family planning. I will restore the funding to Planned Parenthood and other agencies that Gov. Owens cut by executive order.
- Ensure better access to health care for all women, including birth control and emergency contraception. I would have signed the bill that was passed by the legislature in 2006 but vetoed by Gov. Owens that would have given pharmacists the ability to provide EC without a doctor's prescription.
- Provide responsible sex education.
- Make a stronger effort to promote adoption as an alternative to abortion.

...we need to be responsible for ourselves – but we also need to look out for each other.

I strongly oppose any effort that would seek to criminalize women or their doctors over this issue. I would not sign legislation similar to the measure recently passed by the South Dakota legislature. As Governor, I would enforce existing laws, including *Roe v. Wade*. It's not part of my agenda to change these laws: Improving education, health care and our economy – which will be the top priorities for my administration – will do more to improve the lives of children and reduce the number of abortions in our country than a divisive focus on punishing the women who find themselves turning to it as a solution.

It is these same beliefs and concerns that have made me an advocate of family planning and a strong supporter of government funding for agencies involved in family planning education, teen pregnancy prevention programs as well as responsible and age-appropriate sex education in schools.

Economic Development: Growing Jobs and a Stronger Economy for Colorado

A strong, vibrant economy is essential for Colorado to grow and prosper. This is my vision – a burgeoning Colorado economy that supports good-paying jobs and offers an environment for businesses to expand and thrive.

Coloradans deserve nothing less than an economy that provides secure, quality jobs. Businesses large and small need a governor who sends a clear message that Colorado is open for business, and a governor who will provide leadership on critical issues like affordable health insurance, education reform and building a world-class transportation system.

While Colorado is one state, it is composed of five distinct economic regions: the Eastern Plains, San Luis Valley, Western Slope, mountain resort communities and the Front Range. That is why my plan includes an approach that allows each region to develop a unique economic development strategy, as well as a plan to improve the state's overall economy. My business development plan calls for:

- Increasing employment by expanding existing businesses and attracting new ones.
- Strengthening our regional economies.
- Streamlining state government to be more responsive to businesses.
- Investing in education to build our workforce.
- Investing in needed infrastructure.
- Working toward sensible healthcare solutions for Coloradans.

...my plan includes an approach that allows each region to develop a unique economic development strategy...

Increasing Employment by Expanding, Attracting Businesses

As Governor, I will bring every government agency with a role in economic development together with business and education leaders to create a coherent economic development strategy. The strategy will incorporate each region's needs, while promoting the overall goals of the state. Our energies will focus on growth that best fits Colorado, targeted to areas where we have the best opportunity to compete.

An exceptional opportunity already exists in the renewable energy industry, as detailed in my New Energy Economy plan. Another potential growth opportunity is in aviation and aerospace. Colorado ranks 1st in the nation for private aerospace employment and is now home to more than 300 companies in this industry. Many of our aerospace companies are entrepreneurially-driven businesses – the very kinds of companies that represent our future. Promoting this industry so that it can grow and expand even more will be one of my top priorities.

One of Colorado's strongest economic engines is the travel and tourism industry. It brought in almost 26 million visitors to Colorado in 2005, visitors who spent more \$8 billion throughout the state. Tourism provides thousands of jobs for Coloradans and continues to be one of the state's leading industries. The key to keeping this industry strong is to promote the Colorado tourism product. I applaud the legislature and the governor for increasing our investment in tourism, an investment that will produce a 10 to 1 return. I am committed to an aggressive marketing program, effective customer service, quality promotional materials and support for the state's Welcome Centers. Combined, these efforts will create an even stronger tourism industry, generate additional revenue at the state and local levels, and provide increased employment opportunities.

While Colorado's tourism industry relies in part on an effective air-transportation system, international trade is dependent upon it. As Governor, I will push for better non-stop air travel to Europe and Asia to support international economic development efforts. We have made good progress with non-stop flights to Europe. Now we need to open routes to the East. Non-stop travel leads to increased tourism, and tourism leads to increased business relationships. As Governor, I will cultivate these international relationships by acting as Colorado's chief salesman and promoting our tremendous trade opportunities.

Finally, demographic changes here at home and throughout the nation will present new market opportunities for which Colorado is well-positioned to be a top competitor. One area, in particular, is biotechnology and medical devices. As Baby Boomers age and senior citizens represent an even greater segment of the population, Colorado's existing base of biomedical companies, along with continued development of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center Fitzsimons campus, creates an exceptional opportunity for growth.

I applaud the legislature and the governor for increasing our investment in tourism, an investment that will produce a 10 to 1 return.

Support Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

Colorado is home to 500,000 entrepreneurs and small businesses, and that number is growing. Our ability to expand the economy will depend on how successfully we support and promote our small-business community. Colorado needs a leader who recognizes the importance of creating an entrepreneurial culture – a culture that is creative, innovative, knowledgeable and responsive. My plan to cultivate and grow small businesses starts by:

- ***Promoting the Success of Our Small Business Community.*** Small businesses and women-owned businesses are on the rise. To assist our entrepreneurs and encourage more successful small businesses, Colorado must promote opportunities and programs for small businesses and ensure they have access to the information they need.
- ***Providing Access to Small Business Capital.*** Access to capital is the life-blood for starting and growing small businesses. Not surprisingly, the demand for capital in Colorado outstrips the supply of investment capital available. To expand upon private sources of capital, as Governor, my administration will identify federal funding opportunities and help businesses access these funds.
- ***Coordinating Existing Incubator Programs.*** As Governor, I will work with existing business incubators to promote greater coordination and cooperation leading to a rational statewide incubation strategy.
- ***Establishing a Small Business Health Insurance Team.*** I will organize a Small Business Health Insurance Team of business owners and other stakeholders to devise strategies for small business owners and their employees to access affordable health care.

Strengthening Our Regional Economies

Colorado is composed of five distinct economic regions: the Eastern Plains, San Luis Valley, Western Slope, mountain resort communities and the Front Range. Each region has its own needs and interests, strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities. What works for Denver may not work for Craig or Alamosa or Burlington. My plan for growing Colorado's economy looks at our state's economic opportunities based on each region's unique strengths and assets.

As Governor, I will establish regional partnerships between state government and each economic region. State and regional economic development offices will conduct county research and analysis on economic and labor force trends, courting businesses that show an interest in locating or expanding in the region, developing business recruitment and retention packages that include information on existing incentives, business tax policies, available land, workforce training programs and other important information to assist business owners in the decision-making process.

For businesses to grow and prosper, they must be efficient, well-organized and innovative. So should state government.

Streamlining Government to be More Responsive

For businesses to grow and prosper, they must be efficient, well-organized and innovative. So should state government. As Governor, I will direct all state agencies that play a role in economic development to focus on the common goal of job creation. I will create an environment within state government that promotes a shared economic vision and fosters collaboration across all levels. Customer service will be a critical component. If we are not effective at serving our customers – Colorado's businesses – we run the risk of losing them. My administration will improve permitting and licensing processes, how the state responds to inquiries about available land or office space and how it

provides answers to questions about state policies or services. My objective is to change the culture of state government, an issue I elaborate on in my State Budget & Fiscal Responsibility policy paper.

Review State, Federal Business Programs. State government currently provides an array of programs and services to support business and industry, but little is known about how effective these programs and services are. As Governor, I will review all state programs that serve businesses and ensure that each has systems to measure their successes or failures. Our programs will be results-oriented with measurable outcomes, and we will hold ourselves accountable. My administration also will do more to help businesses access under-used federal programs. By directing our economic development professionals to gain more knowledge about how federal support to businesses can promote job growth, we will be better positioned to assist business owners' expansion efforts. For example, loan guarantees from the Small Business Administration allow lenders to make loans they could not make without that support. By making business owners more aware of SBA loan programs, our economic development team can drive significant economic enhancement without significant cost to Colorado.

Investing in Education to Build Our Workforce

Our ability to grow the economy, support businesses and create quality jobs hinges on the knowledge and productivity of our people. Forward-looking leaders and Colorado voters demonstrated this wisdom with last year's passage of Referendum C. Colorado is now able to renew its commitment to K-12 education and higher education. Although Referendum C was a good first step, we must be prudent and make strategic improvements, with accountability, in our higher education system and workforce training programs.

Create a Colorado Jobs Cabinet. As Governor, I will create a Colorado Jobs Cabinet as part of the Executive Branch. The Colorado Jobs Cabinet will be composed of senior business leaders and representatives from public and higher education, economic development

and workforce development officials. The Jobs Cabinet will align the state's economic development and education goals with funding and strategies for preparing a modern labor force.

The Jobs Cabinet will set the state's strategic priorities; it will work directly with local and regional partners to ensure that training programs are developed, delivered and readily available, and that regional development strategies support statewide economic development goals. Moreover, the Jobs Cabinet will provide a mechanism for employers to have a voice in the design and implementation of educational improvement strategies, assist in introduction and recognition of best practices, and facilitate increased corporate financial and knowledge contributions.

The Jobs Cabinet will oversee the implementation of web-based tools to offer information more effectively about workforce training and certificate programs available through the state. We will use the Internet to provide information to employees and employers to enhance their efforts in career and business growth.

Investing in Needed Infrastructure

Investing in a strong infrastructure is fundamental to stimulating a healthy and growing economy. I am proud to be the only gubernatorial candidate who supported Referendum C. Referendum C enjoyed support from all sectors of our economy and allows the state much needed resources to invest in education and transportation. If we are to build a 21st century economy, we must also put in place a 21st century, multi-modal transportation system and have broadband connectivity throughout the state.



Working Toward Sensible Health Care Solutions for Coloradans

For more than a year I have traveled the state. I have spoken to hundreds of business owners from small one-person shops to the leaders of the largest businesses in the state. The one common thread through these conversations is the pressing need to address Colorado's health-care crisis.

In conclusion, I want Colorado to be the first state that businesses think of when considering relocation and the last state they would ever want to leave. I will make it my duty as Governor to market Colorado as the best state in which to do business.

If we are to build a 21st century economy, we must also put in place a 21st century, multi-modal transportation system and have broadband connectivity throughout the state.

Broadband Internet Access: Bridging Our Digital Divide

For Colorado's communities to thrive and compete for jobs in the information economy, it is critical that its government commit to spurring broadband deployment in all parts of the state.

As broadband Internet access becomes even more important as an enabler of distance education, delivery of health care services over remote distances, and for critical applications not yet invented, it is imperative that ubiquitous, affordable access is available to all Coloradans.

Indeed, some view broadband as the electricity of the 21st century. Yet, Colorado's adoption of broadband technology trails not only technology leaders like California and Massachusetts, but also Nebraska and Kansas.

As Governor, I will vault Colorado into the nation's technology elite. I will call on our leaders from industry, government, and academia to create a Governor's Council on Innovation and a Broadband Access Infrastructure Council to evaluate strategies for spurring broadband access. We will determine which areas of the state lack affordable broadband access, and we will reform our current universal service fund to support broadband access for those areas.

Why Broadband Access is Important to Economic and Social Development

The Internet is transforming our society and economy. Commerce, culture, and civic affairs increasingly depend on Internet access, whether through downloading pictures of grandchildren, buying products and services, or gathering information on public issues. For those living in more remote areas, the Internet's promise as a connecting force is particularly important. Broadband Internet access enables distance education, delivery of health care services over remote distances, and allows first responders to be more effective. It also can be an important driver of economic development – bringing new jobs by enabling remote working and enabling individuals to start high technology companies anywhere in Colorado. Unfortunately, it is the citizens of rural Colorado who are least likely to have access to broadband Internet service.

Colorado's adoption of broadband technology trails not only technology leaders like California and Massachusetts, but also Nebraska and Kansas.

The principal forms of delivering broadband access today are DSL and cable modem technology. DSL constitutes a means of using the telephone infrastructure to deliver high speed Internet access. Cable modems do the same via the cable infrastructure.

But there are obstacles to delivering wired broadband access to rural areas, and there are a number of wireless technologies now being deployed: the already well-developed Wi-Fi technology; the next generation WiMAX technology; and satellite systems. Additionally, wireless technologies may be combined with existing infrastructure to help bridge Colorado's digital divide. In late 2003, the state and Qwest completed a high-speed fiber-optic network linking rural and urban Colorado called the Multi-Use Network (MNT). The MNT connects every county seat in Colorado. Today, the MNT remains largely unused because of a lack of effective "last mile" broadband technologies.

The Role of Government in Spurring Broadband

The role for government support of broadband adoption is three-fold. First, government must develop a clear vision for the importance of broadband, becoming a model user and looking for efficient "e-government" applications. Second, government must remove any obstacles for entrepreneurial firms that are developing broadband services. Finally, government must provide economic incentives for those providers to serve those areas where broadband access is not currently available.

In terms of being a model user of broadband, the MNT is a good first step. Encouraging new uses of broadband for governmental purposes and developing the so-called "last mile" connections to end users

are items Colorado's next governor must address. Moreover, it is important that the state help local government agencies increase their use of MNT. As Governor, I will encourage innovative ways to combine the numerous archaic, disparate state networks in use today by county clerks, law enforcement and other offices. By doing so, we can vastly boost the overall efficiency of our state's public offices.

On the wireless front, Colorado should be a leader in ensuring that wireless broadband networks are deployed in an effective and robust manner. First, my administration will investigate how Colorado can better free up and coordinate the availability of the wireless spectrum to aid broadband deployment by private firms. Second, we will investigate whether a recently-enacted Colorado law restricting municipality-supported broadband wireless networks is hampering their development. Moreover, we will seek to develop materials that can be shared throughout the state highlighting best practices, lessons learned and expert resources, in order to assist communities interested in promoting broadband deployment through contracting for or otherwise supporting the development of wireless networks.

Finally, to bring Colorado into the broadband era, I would modify the universal service fund to support access to critical telecommunications services. Today, this fund is used only for narrowband, voice services. In the emerging information economy, those connections – which only afford the speed of dial-up connections – are insufficient. To facilitate greater adoption of broadband in these areas, the Broadband Infrastructure Council would investigate ways that the universal service fund could be increased and used more effectively.

Conclusion

Ensuring that all parts of the state have access to broadband is no longer a luxury. Broadband is quickly becoming the electricity of the 21st century. As Governor, I will make the deployment of broadband Internet access to all parts of the state a top part of my economic development strategy. For Colorado to compete in the new information-based economy, affordable broadband Internet service must be made available to each and every one of our citizens.

New Energy Economy

This is a time of great promise for Colorado. Our unique home-grown blend of wind, solar and agricultural energy supplies offers Colorado an unprecedented opportunity to create jobs, protect the environment and decrease our dependence on foreign oil. As Governor, I will establish Colorado's 21st century **New Energy Economy** through strong leadership, responsible investment and a clear vision for the future.

This opportunity comes at a crucial crossroads for Colorado and the nation. The demand for energy is pushing against diminishing supplies. The cost of all types of energy – fuel for our vehicles, natural gas for heating our homes, electricity for keeping the lights on – is skyrocketing higher and higher. The realities of global warming are becoming more apparent as our forests burn and our snow pack and tree lines retreat ever higher.

As Governor, I will lead Colorado toward self-sufficiency by promoting alternative energy, encouraging cleaner ways of extracting and using fossil fuels, and rewarding efficiency and conservation. Here is my seven-point plan that will transition Colorado to a cleaner, more secure energy future – the plan that fuels my vision for a **New Energy Economy**:

Create Jobs & Develop Businesses

An economic sector based on renewable and alternative energy technologies offers the possibility of thousands of highly skilled, high-paying jobs across Colorado. By promoting venture capitalism and providing leadership around other investment opportunities, we will attract and retain businesses to turn this possibility into reality.

My administration will explore financial incentives for investments in renewable energy. We can create a more favorable investment climate by streamlining the regulatory process and, where fiscally prudent, offering tax credits, rebates and other incentives to new and developing businesses, manufacturers and consumers of hybrid vehicles, solar panels, wind turbine components and other clean-energy equipment.

We will do a better job of investing money from the Office of Energy Management and Conservation in new energy businesses. I will continue to support the creation of the Colorado Clean Energy Fund to provide seed money to develop new energy technologies throughout our state. On a broader level, I will encourage Colorado's citizens, businesses, local governments, and even public retirement funds to invest in Colorado-based alternative energy and energy efficiency businesses and programs.

I will lead Colorado toward self-sufficiency by promoting alternative energy, encouraging cleaner ways of extracting and using fossil fuels, and rewarding efficiency and conservation.

My administration also will pursue federal workforce development funds and make sure that we are drawing down every available dollar from the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, which established billions of dollars in grants and incentives for new alternative-energy projects and industries.

I will look to other states for best practices and opportunities for regional cooperation to generate clean energy and reduce carbon emissions and other greenhouse gases. New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson and Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer will be strong partners in Colorado's New Energy Economy.

My administration also will develop public-private partnerships and establish statewide standards to create and expand markets for renewable energy products. This starts with strong implementation of Colorado's landmark renewable energy standard, Amendment 37, which was overwhelmingly approved by voters in 2004 and established a 10% renewable energy requirement for Colorado's largest utilities by 2015. In March, I endorsed the "25 X '25" Campaign, which advocates that 25% of U.S. energy supplies come from "America's working lands" by 2025. We

also must create a statewide renewable fuel standard. As Governor, I will enforce these standards through appointments to my administration and the Public Utilities Commission of those who share my vision for a cleaner and more secure energy future.

Boost Colorado's Rural Economies

As Governor, I will make sure our rural communities are not just beneficiaries but important drivers of the New Energy Economy through production of wind, solar and biofuel energy.

Colorado boasts extensive agricultural crops to produce high-grade ethanol and biodiesel. As the 6th sunniest state in the nation, Colorado can make great gains in meeting our energy needs through solar power. Xcel Energy already plans to build a new solar plant in one of the sunniest regions of Colorado, the San Luis Valley. Our New Energy Economy will bring an even larger slice of the \$4 billion-a-year solar industry to Colorado.

The vast open spaces of the rural Eastern Plains provide ideal locations for turbines to convert our inexhaustible wind supply (we are the 11th windiest state in the country) to clean energy. Wind energy – one of the fastest-growing sources of electric power in the country – offers farmers along the Eastern Plains an opportunity to lease land for wind turbines or to buy the turbines themselves and sell the energy. The Colorado Green Wind Farm near Lamar demonstrates how local economies can benefit. This 108-turbine wind farm, built in 2003, created about 400 construction and installation jobs and increased Prowers County's tax base by 25-30%. In Wray, the community has come together to purchase a wind turbine that will provide power to the local public school district, with any excess energy being sold back to the grid. This is a perfect example of how private investments can be used to generate new and dedicated revenue for education, serving as a model for what I will promote as a "Colorado Energy for Education" program.

Wind energy – one of the fastest-growing sources of electric power in the country – offers farmers along the Eastern Plains an opportunity to lease land for wind turbines or to buy the turbines themselves and sell the energy.

While there are tremendous opportunities involved in wind energy, there is a global production backlog for new turbines, and transmitting the energy to consumers and utility companies remains a challenge. As Governor, I will address these issues and do more, including promoting incentives for farmers wishing to switch to energy crop production, and creating a public education and awareness campaign that will:

- Use the Internet and a 1-800 call-in number to provide consumers with information about where and how they can purchase ethanol, biofuels and energy generated from Colorado renewable sources.
- Help farmers identify potential energy- and biofuel-related customers and vendors.
- Expand training programs for Colorado farmers and small-business owners, explaining financing options for ethanol plants and wind turbine purchases.
- Increase broadband Internet access to rural Colorado so that farmers and ranchers have the same digital access to energy-related information and opportunities that those in urban areas have.

Leverage Colorado's Unique Energy Assets

In addition to Colorado's abundant natural resources, we are blessed with tremendous intellectual and entrepreneurial assets that make us a hub of research and development.

My administration will further the networking and cross-pollination of the powerful combination we have with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Colorado's outstanding universities, and Colorado's entrepreneurs, businesses, skilled workers, ranchers and farmers.

As Governor, I will bring these stakeholders together to form the "Colorado Clean Energy Coalition," an ongoing advisory group to my administration. The Coalition's mission will be to advance our energy technologies, share best practices, promote opportunities across the state and guide investments in our energy future.

Some of our universities already offer renewable-energy-related coursework and are on the cutting edge of renewable-energy research. The Colorado Fuel Cell Center at the Colorado School of Mines is studying and testing futuristic hydrogen-powered fuel cells for automobiles. In addition, the School of Mines, University of Colorado, Colorado State University and NREL have proposed a "Colorado Renewable Energy Collaboratory," a formal collaboration that will work towards "a shared vision to make Colorado a recognized leader in the world in reliable, secure, clean and economically viable energy resources and technologies."

I applaud and will support this type of innovative work by encouraging our institutions of higher learning and labor unions to create renewable-energy degree, certificate and apprentice programs. These programs will provide the skills necessary to create a trained workforce that will support the new businesses created by our transition to a Colorado-based energy future. Colorado's college graduates and skilled laborers will form the backbone of this crucial and prosperous workforce. With these programs and workforce assets, Colorado can become a leader in the design, production, maintenance and repair of alternative-fuel and renewable-energy production facilities.

Increase Energy Efficiency & Conservation

The single largest source of new energy already exists – and we can tap it simply by doing a better job of conserving and being more efficient. Colorado ranks 3rd in the nation in untapped energy efficiency.

As Governor, I will adopt more aggressive energy efficiency standards for appliances like clothes washers, traffic lights and other energy-using equipment. By constructing new buildings to higher and "greener" standards, and retrofitting old buildings where feasible, Colorado will become a leader in efficient buildings.

Under my administration, we will use best practices for energy efficiency by providing rebates, design assistance and education to energy producers and consumers. Through these best practices, we can reduce overall energy use. A more robust, energy-efficient economy will create significant job growth, reduce air pollution and return hundreds of millions of dollars to the businesses and residents of Colorado.

Lead by Example: Make Colorado Government a Model Energy Consumer

I will make our state government a model consumer of renewable and non-renewable energy and energy efficient products.

As Governor, I will require state buildings to meet stringent energy efficiency standards. Other states have saved millions of dollars by moving toward 20% energy-reduction targets. We should do the same, and small steps matter. For instance, we should replace traditional light bulbs in all state facilities with long-lasting, energy-efficient compact florescent bulbs. We will encourage local agencies to follow our lead. We will employ other common-sense strategies as well, such as encouraging homeowners' associations to end their bans on solar panels because they are deemed unsightly.

A more robust, energy-efficient economy will create significant job growth, reduce air pollution and return hundreds of millions of dollars to the businesses and residents of Colorado.

State and local agencies should award contracts to bidders offering environmentally preferable products when economically appropriate. Our state government should, when feasible, buy hybrid vehicles and flexible-fuel fleets that run on ethanol and biodiesel fuel blends, adopt a renewable fuel standard, purchase more of our electric power from renewable power sources such as wind energy, and lease and build offices and other facilities that utilize energy efficient space.

I also will model actions upon Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper's GreenPrint Denver initiative, through which the city has cut its energy costs by installing LED stoplights, purchasing flex-fuel and hybrid vehicles, increasing water conservation and enacting numerous other projects.

Promote Responsible Development of Colorado's Fossil-Fuel Resources

Colorado is home to some of the richest fossil-fuel deposits in the world. Our Piceance Basin holds enough natural gas to fuel the entire nation for two full years. The Green River oil-shale deposit holds triple the known oil reserves in Saudi Arabia. And our stores of coal-bed methane are abundant.

Our fossil-fuel resources are important parts of our overall energy production, and technological advancements will increase the ability to benefit from them while minimizing the impact on our environment. Innovative technologies for coal, such as integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) with carbon sequestration and liquid fuel conversion offer the potential for cleaner ways to use this traditional resource. IGCC converts coal to gas and sends it through turbines to create electricity. Liquid fuel conversion converts coal to liquid. Carbon sequestration returns carbon dioxide, produced from the burning of coal, back into the ground rather than releasing it into the atmosphere. As Governor, I will promote opportunities for research and development of these and other new, cleaner fossil-fuel technologies.

While I favor the measured and responsible development of oil and gas, it is imperative that we protect Colorado's environment, including its wildlife, air and water, as the energy sector expands. I also will work hard to strike a balance between the rights of surface owners and mineral estate owners, providing important leadership that will allow this sector of the energy economy to thrive while ensuring respect and compensation for surface owners.

We are not talking about just global warming; we are talking about “local” warming.

Do Our Part to Reverse Global-Warming Trends

We can no longer talk about energy without acknowledging the effects of our energy production and use on our environment. We are realizing the dangers of global warming and climate change – brought on largely by old-style power production and consumption habits – as we witness startling environmental changes around the globe: warmer ocean temperatures, more violent hurricanes, and glaciers retreating at alarming rates. An April 2006 report on climate change issued by Colorado College estimated that Colorado’s ski industry is facing likely death by the year 2050 if trends in global warming are not reversed. Statewide snow packs are expected to be reduced by as much as 50% or more by the year 2085. We are not talking about just global warming; we are talking about “local” warming.



As Colorado’s Governor, through energy efficiency and other clean energy efforts discussed above, I will put in place programs to reduce substantially the type of carbon emissions that cause global warming.

Where we cannot sufficiently reduce our emissions, I will work with business, environmental groups and neighboring states to create a Western regional “Carbon-Offset Credit Market,” where we can offset our emissions by supporting projects and businesses that remove carbon dioxide from our atmosphere. This market-based approach will provide economic incentives to businesses to cut their carbon emissions, thereby helping to reverse the trends in global warming.

We also can encourage more Colorado local governments to join Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins and Aspen in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign to do their part in reducing greenhouse gases.

Conclusion

Clearly, the opportunities are plentiful. Colorado’s ***New Energy Economy*** will create jobs and spur fiscal growth. Not only will we produce cleaner energy, but we also will create incentives for each home and business to load energy back onto the grid through net-metering – and Colorado as a state can become a net-energy exporter.

We also owe it to future generations of Coloradans – generations of Coloradans we will never meet – to protect our natural resources, our water supplies and our crisp mountain air. We have no greater responsibility, and Colorado’s ***New Energy Economy*** will allow us to fulfill it.

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Illegal Immigration

As Governor, I will find responsible, achievable and practical solutions to the illegal-immigration crisis gripping our country and our state. Washington has failed to secure our borders, prosecute companies that knowingly hire undocumented workers and punish human smugglers and traffickers. These are unacceptable failures.

We need long-term solutions that hold illegal immigrants accountable by requiring them to pay back taxes and fines and to begin the formal citizenship process. Everyone must play by the same set of rules. I support existing federal laws that prohibit welfare benefits for undocumented immigrants. Nor should illegal immigrants be able to obtain government-issued driver's licenses.

I support tougher enforcement along the border and swift prosecution of employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers. As Denver's former District Attorney, I know full well the frustration of repeatedly asking INS/ICE agents to retrieve convicted illegal-immigrant felons for deportation, only to be ignored and forced to release these criminals back onto our streets.

As a state, we must demand accountability from Washington, and we must force Congress and the President to live up to their responsibilities and reimburse the states for the enforcement and social service tabs we are paying because of their failures. We also must work with Washington to reform the foreign-worker visa program and end the employment-based immigration backlog.

We need to do what's practical, not political.

We must provide businesses the tools they need to quickly determine the citizenship status of job applicants. I also applaud the Colorado legislature and governor for enacting the nation's toughest immigration laws in July.

As Governor, I will lead the way to fair, tough and sensible solutions, not meaningless rhetoric. We need solutions that are achievable, not ideological. We need to do what's practical, not political. We need to do what's right, not just what's convenient.

The Environment

Colorado's magnificent outdoors is clearly one of the major reasons why we live here. I remember special days as a child visiting the mountains under clear blue skies, hiking in isolated canyons, fishing in clear streams and hunting in Colorado's backcountry.

Today, we still enjoy many of these benefits – and we want the same for our children and grandchildren. That means we must be good stewards of Colorado's land, water and air. Colorado's natural environment is what makes our state so unique; it's the centerpiece of our quality of life. A healthy environment is also central to a vibrant economy – from tourism to giving businesses a reason to come and stay here.

As Governor, my highest priorities will include protecting Colorado's wilderness areas, waterways, wildlife and natural resources. You can count on my strong leadership to ensure that we have clean, reliable supplies of drinking water for our residents and that we continue improving our air quality even as our population grows.

We must protect the air we breathe by placing a greater emphasis on alternative modes of transportation, renewable energy, new clean-coal technologies and more thoughtful growth strategies. As Governor, I will work with communities, industries and other stakeholders to implement these initiatives.

Water Quality

Protection of water quality is essential to the health of our citizens, the strength of our economy and the preservation of our quality of life. As a headwaters state, Colorado is blessed with extremely high-quality water resources. Water quality is critical from the mountains to the Plains, particularly as we face the challenges and opportunities of continued population growth. In the mountains, we must protect our most pristine waters and encourage the clean-up of impacts from historic mining operations. Our rivers must continue to support high quality fisheries, wildlife habitat and water-based recreation.

For our cities, we must ensure the continued availability of high quality drinking water through strong source water protection initiatives and by facilitating the use of advanced treatment technologies. In rural areas, we must ensure the continued availability of water quality that meets the needs of our agricultural sector, while finding creative ways to assist small communities with the challenge of complying with new drinking water standards and more protective stream standards adopted in recent years. We must also ensure that rapidly escalating energy development is undertaken in a responsible manner that protects the quality of our water resources. As Governor, I will ensure that our state agencies partner with local governments, citizens and the private sector to accomplish these goals.



Air Quality

We value clean air, not only for the health of our citizens, but for the clear vistas of our mountains and rural landscapes that are synonymous with Colorado. Over the past 20 years, we have made significant progress in reducing air pollutants, such as carbon dioxide and particulate matter, and have moved off the Environmental Protection Agency's non-attainment list in many of our communities. Nevertheless, population growth in our state will present new challenges. We must protect the quality of our air with a greater emphasis on mass transit, renewable energy, new clean coal technologies and more thoughtful growth strategies. As Governor, I will work with communities, industries and interested participants to implement these initiatives.

We must protect the quality of our air with a greater emphasis on mass transit, renewable energy, new clean coal technologies and more thoughtful growth strategies.

New Energy Economy

Along with our breathtaking natural environment, Colorado is blessed with plentiful supplies of homegrown energy sources: oil and gas, coal, coal-bed methane, solar, wind and a variety of agricultural energy sources as well. By blending our fossil-fuel supplies with renewable energy, we can make Colorado a leader in what I call a "New Energy Economy."

I am excited about establishing Colorado as a leader in attracting new, clean-technology industries and businesses. I want to establish new research and development opportunities, provide cutting-edge workforce development training programs for these evolving technologies and bring manufacturing businesses that implement these new technologies into our state.

Public Land Management

Since much of Western Colorado falls under the jurisdiction of federal land management agencies, we must work closely with these agencies to ensure that public lands are used wisely in the face of expanded interest in energy development, recreation, timber, grazing and wilderness preservation.

In addition, I intend to follow the roadless review process carefully in search of a balance that protects Colorado's environment and the economies of our local communities.

Wildlife

As Coloradans, we have the opportunity to see elk, deer, mountain goats and other wildlife in their native habitats. In addition, wildlife provides recreational opportunities to hunters, fishermen and other outdoor enthusiasts. This, in turn, brings considerable revenues to many Colorado communities. The sale of hunting and fishing licenses has also been an important way for Colorado to fund wildlife habitat and other conservation programs. As our population grows and development continues to expand, we must work even harder to protect wildlife habitat.

As our population grows and development continues to expand, we must work even harder to protect wildlife habitat.

Livable Places and Open Spaces

I look forward to working with Colorado cities, towns, counties and regional agencies to identify better ways for us to grow in the future. I will encourage greater cooperation among jurisdictions and urge a careful balancing of our commercial, residential and transportation needs against protecting our natural resources.

Through local and statewide land trusts, organizations such as Great Outdoors Colorado and local governments, we can keep our communities distinct, preserve important open spaces, provide lands for recreation and save key vistas for future generations to come.

Colorado's Water Future

How we use water is one of the most important issues facing Colorado today. Increased demand is straining our limited supplies, and for too long we have not addressed water resource needs as a unified state. As Governor, I will provide the leadership that is necessary to balance competing interests and find responsible solutions. My vision for the 21st century calls for maximizing supplies through a responsible mix of conservation, reuse, efficiency, cooperation and voluntary crop-to-city water agreements. This balanced approach will enable us to preserve Colorado's agricultural communities, commercial enterprises, municipal drinking supplies, recreational waterways and fragile eco-systems.

Conservation, Efficiency & Reuse

It will not be possible to meet our growing demand for water without innovative conservation and efficiency strategies. In our urban areas, approximately half of all water is used for lawn irrigation. We must improve water-saving measures through increasing block rate structures, water-saving landscaping ordinances and xeriscape incentives.

We must incorporate land-use and development decisions into our water policies; new construction must show it has a sustainable water supply before proceeding. We also must explore ways to conserve water in agricultural areas without jeopardizing farming communities and their water rights. I grew up on a dry-land wheat farm. I know the frustration that comes when there is no water for crops.

As Governor, I also will promote water reuse programs. Indoor water use is only 5% consumptive, meaning that 95% of the remaining water is potentially available for reuse. We must be aggressive in developing new ways to recapture and reuse this water supply when legally permissible.

Protecting Colorado's Water

As a headwater state, Colorado is a signatory to numerous interstate water compacts. These compacts require Colorado to deliver specified quantities of water to downstream states. We must ensure the compacts are applied fairly and that our interests are well-protected.

As Governor, I will vigilantly monitor these agreements and allocation systems, and will provide assistance to water entities when they need it as they seek to resolve their own concerns. The Colorado River and its tributaries provide much of Colorado's water supply. Protecting our interest in the Colorado River is crucial for our economy and way of life. Colorado's rivers and streams not only provide water to our cities, industries and farms, but they are vital to our environment, wildlife and recreational opportunities. Fishing, rafting, kayaking and other water-based recreation add millions of dollars to Colorado's economy each year.

My vision for the 21st century calls for maximizing supplies through a responsible mix of conservation, re-use, efficiency, cooperation and voluntary crop-to-city water agreements.

Beyond conservation, a primary mechanism to keep water in the streams is the Colorado Water Conservation Board's minimum in-stream flow program. The board, through appropriation, donations, loans or purchase, acquires water rights. These rights are then retained in the stream for the benefit of local communities.

In addition, we must protect water quality. Point source discharges of water pollutants must be properly treated, and I will advocate an approach that balances resource extraction with environmental protection. We need to provide appropriate incentives to ensure that positive changes – such as the clean-up of old mines that are polluting rivers and streams – will occur.

As Governor, I will lead the way toward more creative and innovative management of Colorado's water resources, strategies that will result in win-win-win outcomes for basins of origin, water districts and our population centers. One method, conjunctive use, involves the combined and optimal use of surface water and groundwater – using surface water to the

fullest extent possible when flows are available, while retaining ground water for use when surface flows are low. This means carefully coordinating the storage, timing and delivery of both sources.

In wet years, basins of origin and water districts could share resources with communities that rely on finite groundwater resources. These communities could inject that water into aquifers for later use, and basins of origin would receive appropriate compensation. Cooperation among all stakeholders will mark the difference between success and failure.

Voluntary crop-fallowing agreements between farmers and municipalities are another tool we must utilize. These agreements will provide agricultural water for municipal use and revenue for economically distressed agricultural communities.

As we look to the future, we also must acknowledge that many of our best water-project sites have been developed, our rivers are over-appropriated, and our environmental issues are more pressing than ever. We must be more strategic and selective as we consider future storage projects. We cannot sacrifice one part of the state without sacrificing the entire state. Our interests are all tied together, and the only way we will prosper as a state is to recognize, respect and protect the diversity and uniqueness each region represents.

Expanding and improving existing facilities must be considered before building new ones, and smaller projects that serve multiple purposes – for fisheries, recreation, agriculture and power generation – will be important pieces of our water puzzle. I also will consider other approaches such as conservation, reuse, and conjunctive use before resorting to water storage projects.

As Governor, I will provide strong leadership around whether and how we move water from one part of the state to another. Water diversions come with enormous economic, environmental and social costs to the basin of origin. As with water storage, I will promote all alternatives prior to diversions. If diversions must occur, ensuring just and fair compensation for those basins will be my highest priority. We will not look to fatally flawed proposals like 2003's Referendum A.

I support and will provide leadership to keep Colorado's Interbasin Compact Committee process moving forward. The committee, established in 2005 via the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act, is composed of nine smaller roundtables representing the state's major river basins. These round tables have been tasked with building consensus, reaching compromises and striking agreements on a number of pressing issues. It is crucial that these roundtables work together toward a common mission – conserving Colorado's water for generations to come.

Protecting Colorado's Wildlife

Protecting Colorado's wilderness areas, waterways and wildlife habitats will be among my highest priorities. Protecting wildlife must involve a series of responsible, practical efforts. Good planning that avoids or minimizes impacts to wildlife, comprehensive mitigation, and enhancement of existing habitat must always be our objectives. Once wildlife habitat — particularly habitat that fits into the migration-pattern mosaic — is destroyed or seriously harmed, it is gone forever. We must do everything possible to preserve Colorado's special places.

I will be a strong participant in the process that follows the work of the Roadless Area Review Task Force. The task force has recommended protecting most areas from road expansion. This approach makes sense. We should ensure interim protection for these lands while the governor's petition is processed at the federal level.

The federal government owns about 35% of all of Colorado's land - nearly 25 million acres of mountains, forests, plains, rivers and wildlife habitat. In recent years, various proposals from Washington have called for selling off portions of these lands, exposing them to mining, drilling and private development. Public lands should remain "public." These lands should not be sold. As Governor, I will advocate for the protection of our public lands and for access by sportsmen of all kinds.

I also will work with our Congressional delegation to replenish the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund has historically been an important source for acquiring wildlife habitat and recreation areas. Washington has reduced allocations in recent years, hurting conservation efforts in Colorado and other Western states.

Good planning that avoids or minimizes impacts to wildlife...

My administration also will do a better job of partnering with our Congressional delegation to ensure proper funding of fire-mitigation initiatives. I will direct state agencies to work with cities and counties to encourage wise patterns of development that minimize cumulative impacts to wildlife while allowing Colorado's economy to prosper.

We must also ensure that the rapidly escalating energy development in Colorado is undertaken in a responsible manner that protects the quality of our resources. State agencies under my administration will work with local governments, citizens and the private sector to accomplish these goals. My plan for a New Energy Economy will aid in this effort. The plan calls for cleaner fossil fuel technologies, a greater emphasis on energy conservation, and a whole-hearted commitment to alternative energy. Changing the way we think about energy will help protect our land, air, water and wildlife, while at the same time offering Colorado an unprecedented opportunity to create jobs and decrease our dependence on foreign oil.

Finally, I will bring a balance to the state boards and commissions that oversee Colorado's wildlife programs. Appointees will be knowledgeable, broad-minded and independent. They will put Colorado's long-term interests first, and they will appreciate the importance of wildlife activities to Colorado's economy and environment.

Preventing Wildfires

So far this year, wildfires have charred tens of thousands of acres in Colorado. With the devastating consequences of the 2002 Hayman Fire still fresh in our minds, we must always be prepared for the worst. As Governor, I will ensure that proper planning, training and resources are in place to protect Colorado's people, land and wildlife habitat.

Working Together to Prevent Fires

The risk of forest fires has increased for many Colorado communities. Prolonged drought and increased insect activity have added to unhealthy forest conditions. The spread of homes and businesses into forested areas also has increased fire risks. To address these threats, we need greater cooperation at all levels of government as well as with private land owners. As Governor, I will develop and foster partnerships with all stakeholders and responders to mitigate and prevent wildfires.

I will work with Colorado's congressional delegation to seek more funding to prevent fires. I will encourage federal agencies to focus money and resources where they can make the most difference – in the wildland/urban interface (or red zones) where homes abut or intermingle with forest lands. By thinning trees and using prescribed fire, we can reduce excess fuel loads. The Colorado State Forest Service also can help with tree thinning and controlled burns. It can provide assistance to private owners to reduce excess vegetative fuels, and help communities and private owners employ "firewise" techniques that make homes more defensible. In addition, the state can help cities and counties develop "community wildfire protection plans." These plans assess risks, establish priority treatment areas, identify resources available to respond to a fire and map out escape routes.

...ensure that small fires never grow to uncontrollable fires.

Putting Fires Out

This year, the state appropriated more than \$3 million for fire suppression activities, and the governor allocated additional resources from the Colorado Disaster Emergency Fund. The most effective use of

these resources will be to ensure that small fires never grow to uncontrollable fires. This is best accomplished through effective planning, adequate resources and wise positioning of firefighting resources.

Forest Insect Control

The combination of aging pine forests and severe drought has allowed the mountain pine beetle epidemic to grow to an unprecedented scale in Colorado. More than 425,000 acres of north-central forestland were infested in 2005. The infestation significantly increases the risk of forest fires as trees killed by beetles become added fuel for wildfires. Removing dead or diseased trees near homes will reduce fire dangers, while thinning areas with healthy trees can improve their resistance to infestation.

More than 425,000 acres of north-central forestland were infested in 2005.

Balancing Colorado and National Emergency Response Needs

Emergency responders from the federal wildland fire community are an important resource in responding to national disasters. These highly trained crews are also extensively used to respond to hurricanes. Depending on circumstances beyond Colorado's borders, we may not be able to rely on interagency wildland fire teams. Other national priorities are also putting Colorado at risk. For instance, this year 11 of the 12 Colorado National Guard helicopters equipped to fight fires were moved out of the state to support the war in Iraq. Many other firefighting resources also have left the state.

While we must do a better job of working cooperatively at all levels of government, as Governor my first priority will be to protect Colorado, and therefore we must achieve a greater degree of self-sufficiency.

...this year, 11 of the 12 Colorado National Guard helicopters equipped to fight fires were moved out of the state to support the war in Iraq.

Transportation in the 21st Century: Keep Colorado Moving

A sound infrastructure, including a multi-modal transportation network, is essential to serving Colorado's growing population and sustaining a vibrant economy. Whether used for commerce, recreation, agriculture or for getting our children to and from school, a strong and integrated transportation system is vital.

...poor road conditions cost each motorist \$264 a year in operating and repair expenses.

Unfortunately, Colorado's highway system is deteriorating and failing to meet our needs. Many roads and bridges are in a desperate state of disrepair and traffic congestion is growing worse. Congestion in urban areas costs each of us \$1,500 annually in lost productivity and time. Additionally, poor road conditions cost motorists \$264 a year in operating and repair expenses.

The Colorado Department of Transportation and others have spent considerable time and money studying our transportation needs, including more than \$100 million on environmental reviews and plans to improve traffic flow on US 36, I-70, I-25 and US 287. It is now time to make wise use of these investments. As we move forward, I will be guided by the following principles:

- Ensure that currently available funds are spent efficiently.
- Seek adequate funding to maintain existing infrastructure, alleviate congestion and improve mobility.
- Investigate additional funding mechanisms.
- Plan collaboratively and seek input from all stakeholders.
- Improve relationships among CDOT, regional planning organizations, local governments, transit providers and other transportation agencies.
- Structure transportation investments to protect Colorado's environment and Coloradans' quality of life, including pursuing multi-modal transportation solutions.

As Governor, I will bring a fresh, balanced approach to how we invest in our infrastructure, plan for future growth and protect the environment. Simply stated, the process for funding our transportation system is antiquated and needs a 21st century overhaul.

Create a Colorado Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel

During my first 90 days in office, I will convene a Colorado Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel to examine and recommend solutions that will allow us to better prioritize and implement our infrastructure needs. The panel will identify cost-effective transportation strategies and explore the revenue streams that can support them. All stakeholders will have a seat at the table and all voices will be heard. The panel will:

- Evaluate current spending practices, the CDOT 2030 Plan and air quality issues.
- Assess Colorado's transportation fiscal structure and funding and priority-setting processes.
- Propose new funding mechanisms and priorities for existing and future projects.

The committee's work will begin with a statewide Transportation Summit. The summit will bring stakeholders together from around the state to address the transportation challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Coordinated Planning and Public Participation

Colorado is fortunate to have a well-informed and active base of transportation stakeholders who participate in regional and statewide planning processes. As Governor, I will bring better coordination to these efforts and ensure that regional and state plans become a reality. I will ensure that CDOT builds strong cooperative relationships with local elected officials, the business community and the public. CDOT must be a partner as well as a leader.

...the process for funding our transportation system is antiquated and needs a 21st century overhaul.

Referendum C Funding Allocations

The passage of Referendum C in 2005 was in large part due to a wide coalition of bi-partisan supporters, including those in the business and transportation sectors. Although Ref C does not provide direct funds for transportation, it does allow transportation revenue to flow through Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 1310. I was the only gubernatorial candidate to support Ref C. As Governor, I will continue to support it by ensuring that revenue is directed where voters wanted it and by fighting efforts to undermine the initiative.

Transportation and the Environment

We must always consider the impact that transportation projects have on the environment. With proper planning, transportation projects and growth can enhance our quality of life without harming the outdoors. A perfect example: the way I-70 gracefully snakes through Glenwood Canyon. This project and its concern for our natural settings should serve as a model as we look for 21st century solutions to congestion problems throughout the I-70 mountain corridor. We must design projects that improve mobility, honor the environment and protect the livability of adjacent communities. For this reason, I believe we need to preserve a transit envelope as part of a long-term I-70 transportation solution.

Transportation Congestion Measures

There is much debate over how best to address congestion problems. Proposed solutions include highway expansion, transit investments, tolling, commuter rail, carpooling and roadway management.

Air transportation and our regional airports must also play a central role in our transportation system. All modes of transportation must be represented to address fully the needs of Colorado.

We face many obstacles, and none is more significant than the fact that highway improvement costs have soared while revenues have declined. While tolling is an option, it is not always feasible. Nor should it take precedence over multi-modal solutions that can reduce reliance on automobiles.

I will support other regions willing to pursue responsible local solutions without losing sight of our statewide needs.

As we look for additional strategies to reduce congestion and repair aging facilities, we must learn lessons from the passage of FasTracks in metro Denver and Go 1A in greater Colorado Springs. In both cases, broad coalitions were built to win voter support and address regional needs. The state must be a strong partner to make both ventures successful. As Governor, I will support other regions willing to pursue responsible local solutions without losing sight of our statewide needs. It will take a full range of local, regional and statewide strategies to produce the 21st century transportation infrastructure needed for Colorado to thrive.



A Smarter State Budget

One of the governor's chief responsibilities is to deliver state services efficiently, effectively and economically. Taxpayers deserve nothing less than the best value for their dollar. As Governor, I will manage our funds better, deliver services more effectively and operate government programs more efficiently.



As Denver's District Attorney for 12 years, I oversaw a budget of \$16 million and supervised hundreds of people. We maximized the use of federal grants and gained national recognition for our innovative programs and funding mechanisms. That's the type of leadership and experience I will bring to the Governor's Office. I also was the only gubernatorial candidate who supported the fiscally responsible Referendum C, which is now allowing the state to make critical investments in education, health care and transportation.

Taxpayers deserve nothing less than the best value for their dollar.

But with the passage of Ref C comes an obligation to taxpayers that we craft a smarter state budget. As Governor, I will ensure that we take advantage of improvements in technology, purchasing and business processes. I will find areas that can be streamlined, made more efficient or eliminated. I pledge to provide a smarter, more accountable government. Here is my five-point plan for how my administration will accomplish this:

Establish a New Budgeting Culture

States across the nation are changing the way they prepare and debate their budgets. Colorado is behind the curve. As Governor, I will look to the most effective ways of assessing government performance so that our spending is aligned with our priorities. Iowa offers several innovative models, including its "Purchasing Results Budget." The process starts with results in mind and then creates a competitive marketplace for purchasing the programs to achieve those results. In addition, as a means for injecting entrepreneurship into the marketplace of state programs, I propose creating Marketplace Agencies, ones that are freed up from a host of regulations and constraints in exchange for operating more creatively and with less money. Iowa has embraced a similar approach, which has yielded highly positive results.

Get the Best Value for Our Dollars

As Governor, I will focus on improving the effectiveness of government by balancing efficiency against results. We will find new efficiencies by looking beneath and between individual line items at programs, processes and the structure of government. For instance, we will improve the way the state buys services and goods, such as cell phones for state employees. There is no line item for "cell phones," but the state buys them and it can pay less. There is no line item for "permit processing," but governments generally spend far more time and personnel on this than is really required. We will redesign the process and save money.

Dynamic budgeting is yet another way we will ensure the best use of state resources and hold government accountable. Some states are using dynamic budgeting models to analyze, measure and predict results more successfully. These models project the impact of several variables over time. As Governor, I will push Colorado to utilize dynamic budgeting.

...a 2% savings, a modest goal compared with other states, translates into \$130 million a year.

Institute a Total State Government Performance Review

California, New Mexico, Texas and West Virginia have recently completed performance reviews. The reviews identified billions of dollars in savings through improved customer service, elimination of unnecessary or redundant services, and adoption of new ways to deliver essential services. As Governor, I will undertake a full-scale performance review of state government operations. New Mexico's review identified savings worth more than \$300 million over five years. California's found an annual average of \$6.3 billion over five years, and Texas uncovered an average of \$2.3 billion for fiscal years 2004 and 2005. While Colorado state government has undergone severe cuts the last several years, opportunities for improvement still exist. Instead of looking only for line items to cut, we will focus more on managing government differently, more efficiently and more effectively. Even just a 2% savings, a modest goal compared with other states, translates into \$130 million a year. Some ways to save:

- Benchmark state operations against other states to determine which operations might be out of line cost-wise. For example, Colorado's cost-efficiency of child support collections is ranked 41st nationally, at a relatively low \$3.22 collected for every \$1 of administrative expense.
- Utilize contract management and implement performance-based contracting. Texas estimates it will save \$70 million annually in procurement costs for all types of goods and services by professionalizing contract management. In 2005-06, Colorado planned to invest \$303.4 million in capital projects, so any improvements in managing these projects will result in real savings in time and money.
- Reduce the state's cost for pharmaceuticals. Many programs across state government purchase drugs, including prisons, Medicaid programs, mental health facilities and student health centers. Pooling purchasing power across all programs will allow us to negotiate rebates and discounts. Legislation creating such a program, vetoed by Gov. Owens, would have saved the state \$1.3 million.
- Reduce the state's cost for durable medical equipment. Durable medical equipment purchased through Medicaid should be subject to a competitive bid process, which includes negotiated discounts for volume. This has saved millions in other states.
- Improve purchasing and coordination of state information technology. Colorado has generally relied on a decentralized system of purchasing information technology. Other states have realized significant savings through a more sophisticated systematic approach. Virginia recently achieved a \$69 million savings. Additionally, Colorado has seen IT systems that were improperly implemented, such as the \$100 million Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS). According to the state auditor, CBMS' error rate could cost Colorado an additional \$16.4 million in overpayments and emergency benefit interruptions. The error rate for the Food Stamps program alone was 72%. As governor I will establish Colorado as a 21st century leader in applications of information technology.
- Increase efforts to prevent Medicaid fraud. As a former prosecutor, I know fraud exists and that we can reduce it. Nationwide, 10% of all Medicaid spending is wasted on fraudulent claims. A recent Colorado audit found that the state potentially overpaid \$90 million in welfare payments last year, and as much as \$48 million was spent on improper Medicaid payments. In 2004, the Colorado Department of Human Services' audit unit was cut in half from 10 staff to five. This reduction, coupled with county-level cutbacks, resulted in a loss in collections: \$1.5 million in 2005 compared with \$3.6 million in 2000. Two additional auditors were recently added, a step in the right direction.

Nationwide, 10% of all Medicaid spending is wasted on fraudulent claims.

- Where savings are possible, convert state government telecommunications to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). This technology allows users to make telephone calls via a broadband Internet connection instead of a regular analog phone line. The National Association of State CIOs has determined the cost savings for equipment and maintenance of VoIP compared with traditional land lines could be 35% to 40%. West Virginia and Arizona expect to save millions.
- Strengthen implementation of articulation agreements between the state's two-year institutions and four-year institutions of higher education. Colorado has made good progress through its "gtPathways" policy, and we can do even better. Students should receive good counseling, and institutions should be supportive of student transfers so as to minimize retaking of classes or earning duplicative credit hours. The state subsidizes the cost of each credit hour at the state's public universities. By becoming more efficient in student transfers we will avoid paying an estimated \$86 per credit hour not transferred.
- Save money through energy efficiency. Colorado's Office of Energy Management's May 2006 report, "State of Colorado Greening of Government Status Report," noted that a single pilot project involving four agencies reduced energy costs by 25%. I will direct all state agencies to aggressively pursue the energy-saving recommendations in the report.
- Work with other states to increase buying power and drive down costs. While we have made progress through Colorado's participation in the Western States Contracting Alliance, we can save more.
- Reform the overall procurement process to combine purchases of everything from copy paper to eating utensils in state cafeterias to office machines. I will require vendors to bargain for the best price possible. Delaware reduced its procurement costs by 13.5%, a \$20 million savings.
- Create a 1-800 hotline to the Governor's Office for easy reporting of waste and fraud and to take suggestions on how the state can operate more effectively.
- Allow residents to renew their driver's licenses online, as 10 other states now do.
- Implement a comprehensive sunset review system, where every state agency undergoes full sunset review on a 10-year cycle. Sunset reviews determine whether an agency is still doing what it was created to do and provide an effective accountability tool to taxpayers and policymakers. The Texas Sunset Review Commission realizes a \$37 return for every dollar spent on the sunset review process. While Colorado already conducts some sunset reviews, we will expand this effort to major departments as well.

Maximize Federal Funding

In areas where the federal government can or should pay for services, I will see that it does. That means my administration will:

- Not cut state funds to worthwhile programs that generate federal matching funds, since that will result in a further loss of federal funds.
- Maximize our receipt of the federal funds to which we are entitled. Colorado currently ranks 33rd in the country in federal funds spent in our state, per capita (\$6,532, compared with the national average of \$7,223). For instance, we left \$4 million on the table last year from the federal Workforce Investment Act, a program that requires no state match.
- Bring Colorado's fair share of federal dollars to the state. Currently, Colorado gets back 80 cents for every dollar it sends to the federal government. Forty other states are seeing a better return.
- Demand that the Bush Administration and Congress carry out the federal government's responsibilities in such areas as homeland security and immigration – instead of dumping the responsibilities, and the costs, on Colorado.

...we will make government smarter and more efficient.

Make Investments That Will Save Us Even More

Cutting for the sake of cutting can cost more in the long run. Rather, we must make sound investments in programs and services that will save us even more over time by:

- Reducing prison recidivism. As a former prosecutor, I know that spending on policing, enforcement and prevention programs will save us far more money in the long term. By reducing Colorado's 42% prison recidivism rate, there will be less demand for prison beds at \$26,247 per year.

- Reducing college remediation. Nationwide, up to half of all college-bound students arrive at school needing remediation in subjects they should have learned before college. It costs more to provide that education on a college campus than in the K-12 system.
- Reducing high school dropout rates and increasing college graduation rates. Colorado's high school dropout rate is 27.5%. A high school diploma increases a graduate's earning potential by \$9,000 per year, and a college degree nearly doubles a person's earning potential. My administration will take a leadership role in reducing the high school dropout rate and smoothing the path to a college degree.
- Promoting healthy activities. Better health promotion and disease prevention can lower the state's Medicaid costs. Colorado already offers disease management for people with diabetes, asthma and mental health problems, and has experienced positive results. As Governor, I also will:
 - o Provide more children with access to health insurance, which will save on public costs for emergency room care and hospital expenditures.
 - o Increase the number of children who receive childhood immunizations. The Children's Defense Fund states that every dollar spent on childhood immunizations for measles, mumps and rubella saves \$16 in medical costs to treat those diseases.

By taking these steps, we will not make government do less of what we want, rather we will make government smarter and more efficient. We will spend less on what we don't need and make wiser decisions about our future. This is true leadership.

As Governor, I will ensure that the state budget reflects our shared vision for Colorado. It will be a tool to deliver on promises made to voters. It will be accountable, prudent and wise. It will articulate and enable the practices of an effective government that sets high goals, and it will reflect the best policy and business practices of any state in the nation.

Colorado's Promise to Senior Citizens

By 2020, senior citizens will comprise 20 percent of Colorado's population. Ensuring a good quality of life for our older citizens is our responsibility and our moral obligation.

...we can and will improve the quality of life for older Coloradans.

My mother, Ethel, is 81 years old. She worked hard her entire life. She has 11 living children, 32 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Like many seniors, she has dedicated her life to ensuring the well-being of her family. It is time to return the favor.

As Governor, I will work with senior citizens to ensure they have a seat at the table and their voices are heard when it comes to making decisions about their lives and well-being. Together we can and will improve the quality of life for older Coloradans.

Preventing Elder Fraud and Abuse

As Denver's District Attorney for nearly 12 years, I witnessed a rising tide of abuse and fraud against the elderly. To combat these crimes, I enacted a "SWAT Team" approach so that allegations of elder abuse and fraud received immediate attention. I also started the Communities Against Senior Exploitation (CASE) Partnership. This unique program distributes information through religious, civic and other organizations to help keep seniors safe from fraud and other crimes. As Governor, I will expand distribution of information to help seniors remain safe. In addition, I will continue to support legislative efforts to combat identity theft.

Staying Healthy

Colorado health-care costs are spiraling out of control, straining the budgets of Colorado families and individuals of all ages and income levels. In fact, more than 788,000 Coloradans are un- or under-insured. As Governor, I will:

- Develop a Colorado Plan that increases access and affordability of health care for all Coloradans.
- Reform our drug purchasing process to ensure that Colorado spends its taxpayer dollars effectively and responsibly. While Medicare benefits relieve some of the burden on our seniors, prescription drug costs are unmanageable for many.
- Work with state agencies that provide health-related services to encourage good, healthy behaviors through education, awareness and outreach campaigns. Reducing the number of preventable injuries and disease is both good health and good economic policy. With leadership, vision and commitment we can make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation.



Maintaining Independence

Most seniors plan to stay in their homes and communities for as long as possible. They keep important relationships with family, and continue to participate in local activities, politics, and economic life. It's a win-win situation: By living close to those who can help out when help is needed, seniors maintain independence longer; and by maintaining independence, they are able to stay active in their communities. Yet high costs — energy, health care, property taxes — are narrowing the options for many Colorado seniors.

The federal government has failed to provide a bright financial future for our seniors. States must play a larger role. As Governor, I will:

- Work actively to ensure that the state's Public Employees' Retirement Association is a fiscally sound defined benefit plan. A strong retirement system is the most meaningful support we can give to hard-working employees.
- Ensure we receive and put to good use the full amount of federal money to which we are entitled. This includes funds from the Older Americans Act, which pays for nutrition programs, multi-purpose senior centers and supportive or in-home services.
- Guarantee that Colorado's most economically vulnerable seniors continue to receive help with energy bills. The passage of Referendum C, which I supported, led to financial support for heating bills and greater energy efficiency for 110,000 low-income households. Colorado seniors should never face a choice among heat, food and medicine.
- Support responsible solutions that address affordable housing needs for older Coloradans. The passage of Referendum C also means that 140,000 additional Colorado seniors will qualify for the Homestead Property Tax Exemption. As Governor, I will ensure that state housing agencies consider seniors in the development of new programs, and that the housing needs of low-income seniors receive greater consideration.

- Encourage community-based transportation options, and ensure that public transportation, including FasTracks, is elder-friendly. Safe and reliable transportation to jobs, friends, physicians, pharmacies and retail shops is one of the most crucial components of maintaining independence.

Reaching Out to Colorado Seniors

For our programs to be most effective, we need an outstanding communication program to build greater awareness. As Governor, I will make sure seniors have access to the information they need — whether it is a Fall Proof Safety Guide that includes steps for reducing the chance for falls, a Retirement Strategy Tip Sheet so that pre-retirees can plan for their future, or a clear and easily accessible website that serves as a one-stop shop for resources.

Colorado's older adults are an integral part of our communities and our economy. We need their ongoing participation and skills, and they deserve our ongoing respect and consideration.

Colorado's older adults are an integral part of our communities and our economy.

Sportsmen and Our Great Outdoors

As an avid fisherman, I place a very high value on Colorado's great outdoors. As Governor, I will enlist our hunters, anglers and other conservationists to become my strongest partners as we strive to protect Colorado's pristine forest lands, wilderness areas and wildlife habitat.

Hunters, anglers and wildlife watchers are central to our Colorado lifestyle. They also play an integral role in our economy. Hunters, anglers, archers and others spend more than \$1 billion a year on travel, equipment, food, lodging and other wildlife-recreation activities in Colorado. The industry supports at least 20,000 full-time jobs. In counties such as Archuleta, Chaffee, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Jackson, Mineral, Moffat, Rio Blanco and San Juan, sportsmen's activities are a major component of the local economy.

Colorado issues more than 1 million hunting and fishing licenses each year. One of those fishing licenses is mine. I will always remember the day my father gave my brothers and me our first rifle. As a father, I made sure that my two older sons were safety-certified so that they could obtain their hunting licenses. One of my sons is now an accomplished hunter. I fully support a hunter's right to bear arms.

Preserving this way of life for future generations and serving as stubborn stewards of the land will be among my top priorities. We will protect the water quality of our streams and ensure our fishery resources are well-cared for. We will preserve roadless and other wilderness areas while striking a responsible balance with energy exploration and extraction interests. We will protect wildlife habitat and wildlife-related recreational opportunities on federally-managed public lands, as well as oppose the sale of federally-owned public lands and development of roadless areas.

***Public lands should remain "public."
These lands should not be sold.***

The federal government owns about 35% of all of Colorado's land – nearly 25 million acres of mountains, forests, plains, rivers and wildlife habitat. In recent years, various proposals

from Washington have called for selling off portions of these lands, exposing them to mining, drilling and private development. This would be disastrous. Public lands should remain "public." These lands should not be sold.

As part of my vision for Colorado in the 21st century, I will be a strong participant in the process that follows the work of the Roadless Area Review Task Force. The task force will recommend which of the more than 4 million acres of federal roadless forest land in Colorado should remain protected, and I will advocate for a balanced, common-sense approach to land management.

As Governor, I will work with our Congressional delegation to replenish the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund has historically been an important source for acquiring wildlife habitat and recreation areas. Washington has reduced allocations in recent years, hurting conservation efforts in Colorado and other Western states.

I also will work with a broad coalition of national, state, local and private land trusts to identify prime habitat worthy of conservation. I will bring sportsmen and private-property interests together to find a balance between private-property rights and public access.

As Governor, I will pressure Washington to fund fire-mitigation initiatives. I also will direct state agencies to work with cities and counties to encourage wise patterns of development that minimize cumulative impacts to wildlife while allowing Colorado's economy to prosper.

Finally, I will bring a better balance to the state boards and commissions that oversee Colorado's sportsmen's and conservation programs. Appointees will be ethical, broad-minded and independent. They will put Colorado's long-term interests first, and they will appreciate the importance of sportsmen's and wildlife activities to Colorado's economy and environment. I will involve and actively seek out input from a wide array of sportsmen and other conservationists.

Colorado's wildlife resources, and the habitat needed for survival, should never be taken for granted, and they never will be by my administration.

Honoring Colorado's Veterans

Colorado has a proud tradition of honoring its military veterans and serving as host to some of the nation's most important military installations. With five Medal of Honor recipients hailing from Pueblo alone, all of Colorado is in many ways the "Home of the Heroes."

More than 420,000 veterans reside in Colorado, and 2,800 Coloradans are deployed overseas. Veterans and active-duty military are key components in Colorado's economy and social fabric. As a society, we have a moral obligation to provide fully for our veterans and active-duty personnel. My father served in the Army during World War II and is buried at Fort Logan National Cemetery. He took great pride in his military service, and my respect for the military and our veterans is derived from my father's experience.

As Governor, I will make it a priority to improve state-delivered services to our veterans and their families. I will fully support veterans by advocating on their behalf and providing leadership on issues of importance. While the federal government's responsibilities and resources are greater, Colorado can play an important role. The state can and should take a strong position on issues affecting our veterans, such as the relocation of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Denver to Fitzsimons, even where we have little statutory or financial role.

Last November, I worked for the successful passage of Referendum C, which created important opportunities for the state to address the needs of troops returning home to Colorado from Iraq and Afghanistan and to meet the needs of our existing veterans.



Sadly, 1,800 aging veterans die each day around the country. Most are World War II veterans. Veterans' needs for nursing, long-term, and other health-care services are escalating. Colorado operates nursing homes for veterans in Aurora, Florence, Monte Vista, Rifle, Trinidad and Walsenburg. But we know from the recent troubles at the nursing home in Aurora at Fitzsimons that the state must do a better job of caring for our veterans. State veterans' nursing homes are an integral part of VA health support; as Governor I will work hard to honor the commitments the state has made to enhance our nursing homes.

Veterans and active-duty military are key components in Colorado's economy and social fabric.

We also must provide greater support and services for our rural veterans and their families, including access to health care, compensation, pension benefits and additional information. According to the VA, \$20 billion in pension benefits goes unclaimed nationally because those who are eligible are unaware that these funds are available. As Governor, I will ensure our veterans and their families receive every available dollar.

I also will ask the legislature to improve the County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) Program and the training given to these key providers of veteran services. With little state support, the services are typically limited, vary widely in quality, and are sometimes nonexistent.

I will ensure our veterans and their families receive every available dollar.

With the pending return of the entire 4th Infantry Division to Fort Carson, we must make sure they and all returning troops are prepared for the eventual transition to civilian life. As Governor, I will make sure the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of Personnel and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are fully equipped to provide a high level of job training, rehabilitation and business opportunities.

Colorado's military service members have sacrificed a great deal for their fellow citizens. They have given their lives, their future well-being, their very best in every respect. Political leaders owe our veterans and their family members far more than rhetoric. As Governor, I will work to ensure our state government's services are commensurate with these sacrifices. To accomplish this, I will ensure that veterans' voices are heard in Colorado and that veterans are part of every discussion regarding their future.

Public Safety & Criminal Justice

Every Colorado citizen should feel and be safe and secure in their homes, their communities and their work environment. I spent my career in law enforcement protecting the citizens of Denver. We achieved a 95% conviction rate and sent more than 12,000 criminals to prison. As Governor, I will work to improve the safety of all Coloradans through a coordinated and effective criminal justice system that draws upon the best strategies and practices in Colorado and the nation. I will be tough on crime, but also smart about how we prevent crime and punish those who do us harm.

Sentencing and Prevention. Sentencing has had the greatest impact on criminal justice policy and resources in the past decade. We need to take a rigorous look at sentencing policies, examine best practices from other states, and develop 21st century policies that keep our citizens safe in the most cost-effective manner. To this end, I will create a statewide, non-partisan sentencing task force including both experts and citizens, law enforcement officials and crime victims, local and national experts. The task force will review sentencing structures and proven prevention programs. Within 12 months the sentencing task force will propose concrete strategies that will allow Colorado to become a national leader in sentencing policies and approaches.

Victim Services. An important part of any criminal justice policy is victim services. Victims of crime – especially the most vulnerable (children, the elderly and the disabled) – need and deserve aid and assistance. As Denver District Attorney we built crime victim advocacy and service programs, including Victim Services 2000, the Child Advocacy Center and Communities Against Senior Exploitation, all of which were nationally recognized and still serve as models across the state and country. As Governor, I will promote similarly effective programs.

Crimes against Women and Families. As District Attorney, we built nationally recognized programs to address sexual assault and domestic violence. We vigorously prosecuted criminals while providing victims with a range of support services. As Governor, I will advocate that similar programs be delivered across the state.

Juvenile Justice. In the past five years, Colorado's juvenile justice programs have suffered and become less effective. I will work to restore and expand early intervention programs, such as the Blueprint Program developed by the Center for Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado.

We achieved a 95% conviction rate and sent more than 12,000 criminals to prison.

Illegal Immigration. Illegal immigrants who break our laws must be prosecuted, convicted and deported. On this issue, the federal government has let us down. As District Attorney, my office convicted illegal immigrants, only to see them released back into our communities when federal officials failed to pick them up and deport them at the end of their sentences. It is time for Congress to take meaningful action to address the problem. As Governor, I will work with our Congressional delegation to ensure that illegal immigrants who are here to harm us are vigorously prosecuted, serve their time and are deported. I also will work with our Congressional delegation and the federal government to ensure that offenders who flee to other countries to avoid prosecution are held fully accountable.

I will appoint judges based on merit, qualifications, demonstrated legal skill and temperament suitable for the bench.

Substance Abuse. Substance abuse is a major contributing factor to crime. In 1994, Colorado's first drug court opened in Denver under my leadership. The purpose was to address the root cause of some defendants' crime – substance abuse – while holding those defendants strictly accountable during treatment. As Governor, I will continue to support affordable, tough and proven substance abuse treatment options for deserving substance abusers, but not for manufacturers or dealers. Additionally, I will continue to fight the manufacture of methamphetamine, which directly threatens the health and safety of us all.

Identity Theft and Consumer Fraud. As District Attorney, my office aggressively prosecuted identity theft and consumer fraud criminals and did it with state-of-the-art strategies. We fought these criminals with specialized investigative resources and prosecution techniques such as use of the Colorado's Organized Crime Control Act. I was also one of the earliest proponents of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's special identity theft investigative unit. As Governor, I will work to see that all jurisdictions in Colorado, urban and rural, have access to the specialized assistance they need to fight these crimes.

Judicial Appointments. Colorado has long benefited from an independent and expert judiciary. We should always seek out the best and brightest to become judges and never allow our judiciary to become politicized. I believe appointing judges is one of the most important responsibilities of the governor. I will appoint judges based on merit, qualifications, demonstrated legal skill and temperament suitable for the bench. There will never be political considerations in these decisions, and never single-issue litmus tests.

As District Attorney, my office aggressively prosecuted identity theft and consumer fraud criminals and did it with state-of-the-art strategies.

Homeland Security: Keeping Coloradans Secure in the 21st Century

I've spent my entire career fighting to protect people. As District Attorney, my priority was to protect the people of Denver. As Governor, my priority will be to ensure the safety of the people of Colorado.

Homeland security is a national endeavor, but when it comes to protecting the people of Colorado and responding to catastrophes, the immediate responsibility falls on state government. Last year's hurricanes underscored that we cannot rely on the federal government for emergency response. Colorado needs to be ready to respond on its own.

Colorado's security strategy must be responsible, realistic and effective. We must aim to prevent attacks and forestall disasters, and simultaneously be prepared to respond to emergencies. Our focus needs to be on protecting life and minimizing property damage. We must incorporate such 21st century tools as rural broadband access and inter-operable radio systems to give our first responders the resources these challenging times demand.

I will ensure that local communities and first responders have the resources they need.

Strengthening Local and State Capabilities. To more effectively manage our homeland security, we must get the most value from our limited homeland security dollars. The current administration has failed this test. The recent audit of Colorado's Homeland Security Grant Program was clear: "The State's Homeland Security Strategy and fund allocation methodology need to address the state's risks, needs, and priorities more effectively."

Whether in response to a forest fire or other natural disaster, to a terrorist attack, or to a wide-spread medical emergency, it is the front-line responders who must shoulder the responsibility. As Governor, I will ensure that local communities and first responders have the resources they need. The state must maintain oversight of federal grant money, but can do a much

better job of seeking guidance from local responders who are the best judges of their needs.

Working together. As Governor, I will lead an effective response by making the best use of available tools and resources, and by understanding when a local response is appropriate and when it is necessary to use state resources, including Colorado National Guard units. We will expand integrated local and state training and response planning. First responders from different communities should not meet for the first time mid-crisis. Emergency responders from across the state should come together to learn each other's procedures and techniques, to practice together, and to establish strong relationships and the most effective standardized procedures that will be invaluable when Colorado faces a crisis.

Here is my plan:

- ***Exercise Program.*** We will expand disaster response exercises so that first responders from communities across the state have the opportunity to work together and integrate their efforts with state officials. We will use more computer simulation events, using low-resource, but high value, table top exercises where decision-makers gather to "game out" actions, and most importantly realistic simulated events where responders on the ground have a hands-on opportunity to work together under demanding scenarios.
- ***Statewide and Regional Conferences.*** Free exchange of ideas and techniques is crucial. My administration will sponsor regular conferences across the state to foster discussion and exchange among homeland security authorities at all levels of local, tribal, state and federal government and in business and industry. This will enhance capabilities and skills and establish relationships critical to working together in a crisis.
- ***Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).*** The EMAC provides the governor with the capability to request assistance from outside Colorado's borders. I am committed to enhancing

the communication and planning to utilize the EMAC to protect the lives and property of Colorado citizens. There are already several commendable examples of regional homeland security initiatives that can serve as an example for Colorado and our neighboring states.

- **Integrate Federal Response.** Just as the state needs to be prepared to step in when local responders are overwhelmed, Colorado needs to be ready to accept federal help when state resources reach their reasonable limits. We need to understand and work with federal officials before a disaster happens. As Governor, I will ensure that we have a clearly delineated strategy for local, state and federal inter-operability.

Prevention and Deterrence. With targets such as major national defense installations, critical defense industries, oil and gas refineries, and popular tourist attractions, Colorado needs to be an active participant in combating terrorism. Good response plans and practice in implementing them are essential. But preventing terrorism before an attack is still our best defense. As Governor, I will work proactively to protect the people of Colorado and stop those that want to harm us. This means:

- Seamless information sharing with the federal government.
- Diligent law enforcement actions.
- Public-private cooperation to protect critical and vulnerable industry.
- Incorporating the general public to make security a true statewide effort.

Colorado needs to be an active participant in combating terrorism.

...if responders cannot talk with one another, they cannot work together.

Communications. Simply stated, if responders cannot talk with one another, they cannot work together. September 11, Hurricane Katrina, and closer to home the Columbine tragedy repeatedly demonstrated to all of us the danger of a communications failure.

- **Statewide system.** For the past several years, Colorado has prudently been building a statewide communications system. We need to complete this system and ensure that communities that do not operate on this statewide system can tie into it during an emergency. I support adopting a tactical and long-term inter-operable communications plan that will improve the ability of local and state public safety agencies to communicate with each other, the federal government, and other states. As Governor, I will direct a comprehensive evaluation of statewide communications capabilities to include technical inspections, financial audits and regional tests and simulations. This is the level of assurance the people of Colorado deserve.
- **Federal integration.** Federal officials and those from neighboring states must be able to plug into our state communication system. I will work with area governors to establish protocols and systems so that no state will be isolated when help is needed. We must also work with our congressional delegation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regional office in Denver, and with the United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in Colorado Springs to ensure that if we do need federal aid, we will be able to communicate with them and build a response program that is coordinated, timely and effective.
- **Emergency back-up system.** Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the vulnerability of cell phone towers and radio antennas. Colorado needs to have a system that will be operable when towers are down and power grids have failed.

First Responder Center of Excellence

Colorado is fortunate to have a unique combination of military, academic resources, and vital private industries in our state. The U.S. military's homeland defense headquarters, U.S. Northern Command, is based in Colorado Springs. The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs is leading the nation in the study of homeland security – it already has graduate courses and is starting the nation's first Ph.D program. Similarly the University of Denver has a homeland security studies program. There is a large contingent of defense based industry lining the Front Range. For the past 11-years the Colorado National Guard has operated a state-of-the-art regional training center near Colorado Springs. This capability will only improve with the completion of new, federally funded facilities. This combination of government, academia, and business gives Colorado an unmatched wealth of experience and expertise to draw upon to strengthen the state, and our entire nation.

It is time to take the next step. As Governor, I will take advantage of the unique resources and pool of knowledge already based here to create a First Responder Training Center in Colorado Springs. Some steps have been taken in this direction. I will accelerate the development so that emergency personnel from around the state will come together for classes, hands-on training, discussions, and an opportunity to interact and trade ideas with homeland defense experts from the Department of Defense, academia's best homeland security minds, and business people on the cutting edge of developing new homeland security technologies. We will also invite responders from other states to attend in order to deepen the homeland security conversation and pursue regional homeland security initiatives.

By combining the best that the federal and state government, local communities, and private industry have to offer, we can make this a true center of excellence that can serve as a model for the entire nation. This will be a true public/private partnership, and a sound investment in Colorado's future. Colorado can and will lead this country in the science and art of security.



Colorado National Guard

The Colorado Governor serves as the Commander in Chief of the Colorado National Guard. That is a high honor and profound responsibility. While the governor provides leadership for the guard, he also has the opportunity to recognize the dedication and sacrifice of Colorado National Guard members, their families and their friends. We owe all Coloradans in the military services gratitude and recognition. The 21st century presents particular challenges to the National Guard, challenges beyond anything imagined when the Guard was founded in 1862.

Today, the call to serve may send Colorado's citizen-soldiers overseas to combat terror, across state borders to provide relief in crisis or disaster, or home to Colorado to respond to an emergency. Today the men and women of the Guard are called to duty in stressful, dangerous, extraordinarily complicated arenas, often repeatedly. I know that the men and women of the Colorado Army and Air National Guard stand ready to take on all these tasks, and I have the highest confidence in their dedication and professionalism. In turn, we owe them adequate resources, full and sufficient training and enough of the right equipment. I will work to ensure that Colorado does all it can to support the Guard. Much of the funding, however, is in the hands of the federal government. I will advocate aggressively with Congress for the resources, training and equipment that the Guard needs. I will call on Washington to fulfill its responsibility to the National Guard. My goal will be to provide the leadership and support that Colorado's citizen-soldiers deserve.

I am proud of my support of Referendum C in 2005 in part because it was necessary to bolster higher education in Colorado. In the same spirit, I believe it is important for the governor to work with the legislature to ensure ample funding for the National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program.

Colorado is responsible for the construction and maintenance of facilities for the National Guard in eighteen communities throughout the state. The citizen-soldiers of Colorado should be meeting and training in facilities worthy of their commitment. I look forward to advocating for the facilities construction and maintenance needs of the National Guard from both state and federal sources.

I have the highest confidence in their dedication and professionalism.

An issue of broader scope is increasing the support that the men and women of the Colorado Guard and their family members receive, both while at home and while on federal duty. Among other things, we must ensure that members of the Guard and members of their families have access to high quality, affordable health care while in Colorado and when they return home from federal service. Moreover, a number of Colorado philanthropies advocate for and support veterans and the military. The governor can and should make the case to them that the nearly 5,000 members of the Colorado National Guard also deserve their philanthropic attention and support. The National Guard Association of Colorado Education Foundation, the National Guard Family Support Program, and the National Guard Association of Colorado are all worthy recipients of donations of time, resources and funding.

The National Guard is a fundamental institution that the people of the United States have relied upon for hundreds of years and the people of Colorado for 144 years. I am committed to sustaining that legacy into the future in pursuit of the best service experience for those in uniform and their families.

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