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## **2008 Colorado General Assembly Legislative Session Review**

June 6, 2008

The Second Regular Session of the 66<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of Colorado convened on Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at 10 am. The Legislature adjourned *sine die* on Tuesday, May 6, 2008 – one day earlier than the constitutionally limited 120 days.

Prior to the session, much of the discussion centered on three policy areas: reducing the number of uninsured Coloradoans; increasing (and stabilizing) transportation funding, and providing additional funding for higher education. We have included information on legislative proposals designed to address these issues below.

This brief review is intended to give the reader a general sense of actions taken by the General Assembly during the 2008 legislative session. We have included links to many backup and resource documents that will allow the reader to access much more information on various subjects.

During the session, a total of 662 bills as well as a number of resolutions and memorials were introduced. This was about average in terms of total numbers of legislative proposals introduced in any given year. As might be expected, Democrats were understandably upbeat about the progress made on many of their legislative priorities, while Republicans were critical of legislative decisions made by the majority party they felt were poor public policy. The Republican party leadership has made a decision to run 2008 legislative general election campaigns based on what they feel is bad public policy put forward by the

Governor and the Democrats. (Note: the Governor's public approval rating is currently in excess of 60%). The Governor had until last Thursday, June 5 to either sign or veto any bills passed during the final few days of the legislative session. You can see a [complete listing of the Governor's action](#) on all bills through this link.

### **Elections & Term Limits**

This was the second year for Governor Bill Ritter and his Democratic colleagues to control both houses of the legislature (40-25 in the House and 20-15 in the Senate) and the Governor's office. The November, 2008 election will see all 65 House seats up for election or re-election and 19 of the 35 Senate seats up. Term limits once again will take its toll on leadership as eight members of the House, including Speaker Andrew Romanoff and Majority Leader Alice Madden are forced out of office. House Business Affairs Committee Chair Rosemary Marshall and House Local Government Committee Chair Mary Hodge are also term-limited. In the Senate, seven Senators are term-limited, including Majority Leader Ken Gordon, Minority Leader Andy McElhany, HHS Committee Chair Bob Hagedorn, Transportation Committee Chair Stephanie Takis, and Education Committee Chair Sue Windels. In all, there will be 14 open House seats, either because of term limits or individual decisions not to run for re-election and nine open Senate seats.

### **Budget**

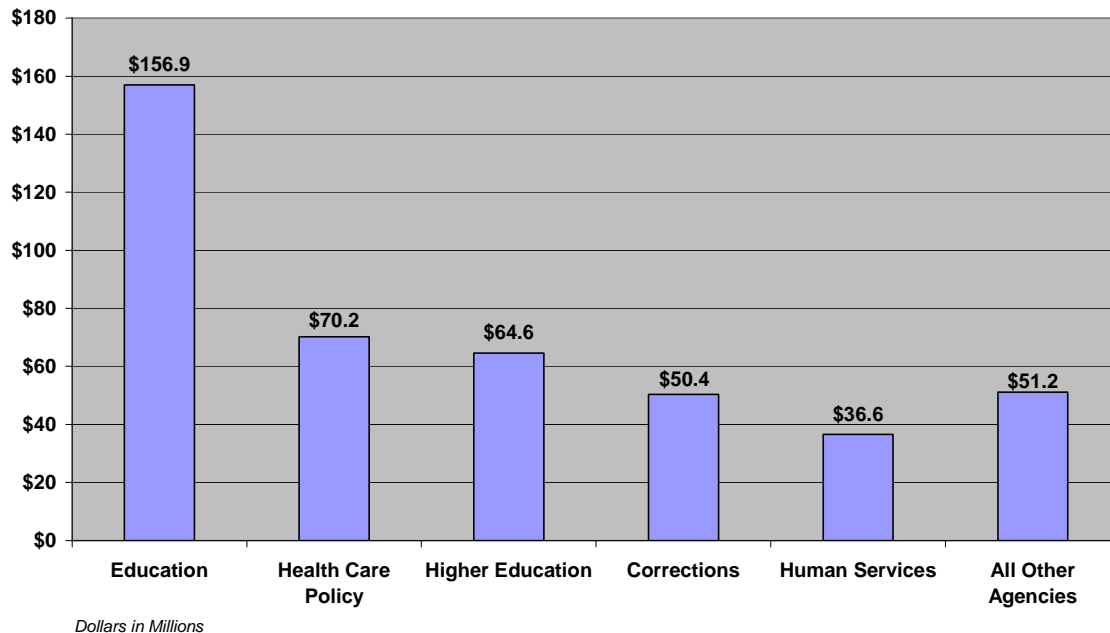
The [Joint Budget Committee](#) introduced [HB 08-1375](#), the "Long Bill", or state budget bill on March 20. Rather than looking through the 600 pages of line items in the long bill, you may want to focus on the [Long Bill Narrative](#), which is a summary of the extremely detailed line items in the Long Bill (as introduced). On July 1, 2008 check the JBC website for the posting of the Appropriations Report – the annual multi-year comparison of all state appropriations.

The JBC based the FY 2008-09 budget on the [March 20, 2008 Office of Legislative Council quarterly revenue forecast](#). The [Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting](#) also presented their quarterly revenue forecasts on March 20. ***The Legislative Council forecast projected a decrease in General Fund revenues of \$487 million over the five year forecast period.*** Sufficient General Fund revenue is projected to be available to meet the 6.0 percent Arveschoug-Bird appropriations limit, but there is very little revenue to fund transportation (SB 97-001 and HB 02-1310 transfers) and capital construction (HB 02-1310 transfers). Future quarterly revenue estimates will be followed closely – any additional forecasted reductions in General Fund revenues could result in reductions to the state operating budget. The next quarterly revenue forecasts will be presented on June 23, 2008 to the Joint Budget Committee.

The chart below summarizes the allocation of the FY 2008-09 General Fund appropriations. The chart emphasizes that the five largest departments of state government receive over 90 percent of all General Fund appropriations.

### Allocation of GF Increase

FY 2008-09 Long Bill



Specific items funded in the FY 2008-09 budget include:

- Higher Education. A 9 percent increase in General Fund, representing the largest General Fund increase to higher education ever.
- Developmental Disabilities. An increase of \$16.4 million to provide additional services and care. This represents 650 new resource allocations.
- Children's Basic Health Plan. An increase of \$27 million to serve an additional 11,000 children.
- Crime Reduction and Recidivism Package. An increase of \$5.7 million for 12 initiatives in Corrections, Public Safety, and Human Services.
- Child Welfare. An increase of \$445,000 for additional staff to monitor county foster care programs.
- Older Coloradans Fund. An increase of \$8 million for services for senior citizens.

Perhaps the largest budget issue occurred after the session had ended. On May 30, District Court Judge Christina Habas issued a ruling that the [2007 mill levy stabilization was an unconstitutional violation of TABOR](#). This mill levy freeze was an amendment to SB 07-199, the school finance act passed in 2007.

Governor Ritter has indicated he will appeal this decision to the Colorado Supreme Court and request an expedited ruling. The current District Court opinion, if upheld, could force the state to repay \$117 million – the amount of money collected when school district mill levy rates were not reduced. This could force the state into making significant budget reductions. The timing of such an appeal, and subsequent ruling by the Supreme Court, is unknown. Judge Habas’ decision and ultimately the ruling by the Supreme Court will likely be a definitive campaign issue for the Republicans this year who are calling for the Governor to reduce the state budget by the \$117 million in question.

### **Referendum C**

As required by Referendum C, the Office of Legislative Council prepared the [“Excess State Revenues”](#) report detailing the amount of excess state revenue the state retained under the provisions of the referendum and how the revenues were appropriated. The premise of Referendum C was to allow for restoration of funding for education, health care, and transportation. While it modified TABOR by allowing the state to retain all state revenues over the five year period, it did not change other budgetary constraint (such as the Arveschoug-Bird 6 percent appropriations limitation.)

### **Transportation**

As mentioned above in the Budget section, it must be noted that the revenue forecasts for the next several years indicate that there will not be a full SB 97-1 transfer of highway funding. The report of the [Colorado Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel](#) (the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel) dated January, 2008 presented several different funding scenarios for the future. The minimal level of increased transportation funding was at \$500 million per year. Other funding scenarios at the \$1 billion, \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion per year levels were also put forward. Ultimately, the Governor and the legislature chose not to move forward with a “partial” fix to the highway funding woes of the state. In the waning days of the session, [SB 08-244](#) was introduced as the “Transportation Infrastructure Preservation Act”. The bill as introduced would have raised nearly \$200 million in transportation funding each year through a variety of fee increases, including a \$6/day car rental fee, an increase in specific ownership fees of \$75/vehicle, and a \$25/vehicle fee for the “Bridge Safety Trust Fund”. In the end, the bill had virtually no Republican support and many Democrats chose not to tread on this thin ice in an election year, so the bill was killed at the request of the sponsors, who vowed to bring the issue back in the 2009 legislative session.

The state now has more than 120 bridges that are deemed to be “structurally deficient”, meaning they should be repaired and or replaced immediately. Transportation funding will have to be a major policy issue of the 2009 legislative session.

Some of the more important transportation bills passed this year included:

- [HB 08-1036](#) – the “Charles Mather Highway Safety Act”. This bill is named for a CDOT worker that was killed by a reckless driver in a highway construction zone. The bill significantly increases fines and penalties for motor vehicle infractions in a cone zone.
- [HB 08-1010](#) – this bill came from the Transportation Legislation Review Committee and increases fines and penalties for speeding and other violations.
- [HB 08-1257](#) – this bill will set new fees and permitting for the highway transportation of divisible loads, such as manufactured buildings.

One of the most emotional bills of the 2008 session was [HB 08-1278](#), which would have not allowed RTD to exercise condemnation powers through the use of eminent domain. This bill was ultimately defeated, but would have made successful completion of several components of the FasTracks system much more difficult and expensive.

## **Education**

### **K-12 Education**

K-12 Education was a major area of focus for the legislature and governor in 2008. The major initiatives are summarized below.

**School Finance.** The annual school finance act ([HB 08-1388](#)) enacted many recommendations of the [Governor’s P-20 Council](#). Specifically, the School Finance Act:

- Eliminated the waiting list for the Colorado Preschool Program.
- Expanded full-day kindergarten classes to 7,000 more students.
- Provided \$35 million to school districts so they can build new and expand existing classrooms to accommodate increased full-day kindergarten students.
- Created a \$1.0 million alternative teacher compensation grant fund.

A number of major educational efforts were passed by the General Assembly in the 2008 session:

**SB 08-212:** This major educational reform bill attempts to create an aligned preschool to college educational system. The State Board of Education is directed to adopt school readiness standards, and adopt content standards and skills that students should acquire for postsecondary education or workforce readiness. Local school boards are required to revise their standards to meet or exceed the new statewide standards. The Board shall align student assessments to ensure they measure the new standard. The State Board and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education are directed to jointly adopt a description of postsecondary and workforce readiness. The successful passage

of this legislation reflects the hard work by many legislators and the total commitment by the Governor. Many commented, however, that the “real work” begins with the implementation of this act.

[SB 08-130](#): The “Innovation Schools Act” allows schools to be exempt from certain state and district regulations. This measure will allow designated schools to make their own decisions on spending, the school schedule, course content, hiring, and teacher compensation.

[HB 08-1335](#): Known as BEST, or Building Excellent Schools Today, this legislation allows the state to issue certificates of participation (COPs) against certain existing revenues from state school lands. The State will conduct a statewide assessment of school health and safety needs, and then issue grants or provide matching funds as construction grants. It is estimated that up to \$500 million could be provided in state grants for this program.

The [Governor’s P-20 Council](#) will continue to meet in 2008. The mission of the P-20 Council is “*ensuring that a seamless education system from pre-school to grad-school is preparing our young people for the demands of the 21st Century.*”

### **Higher Education**

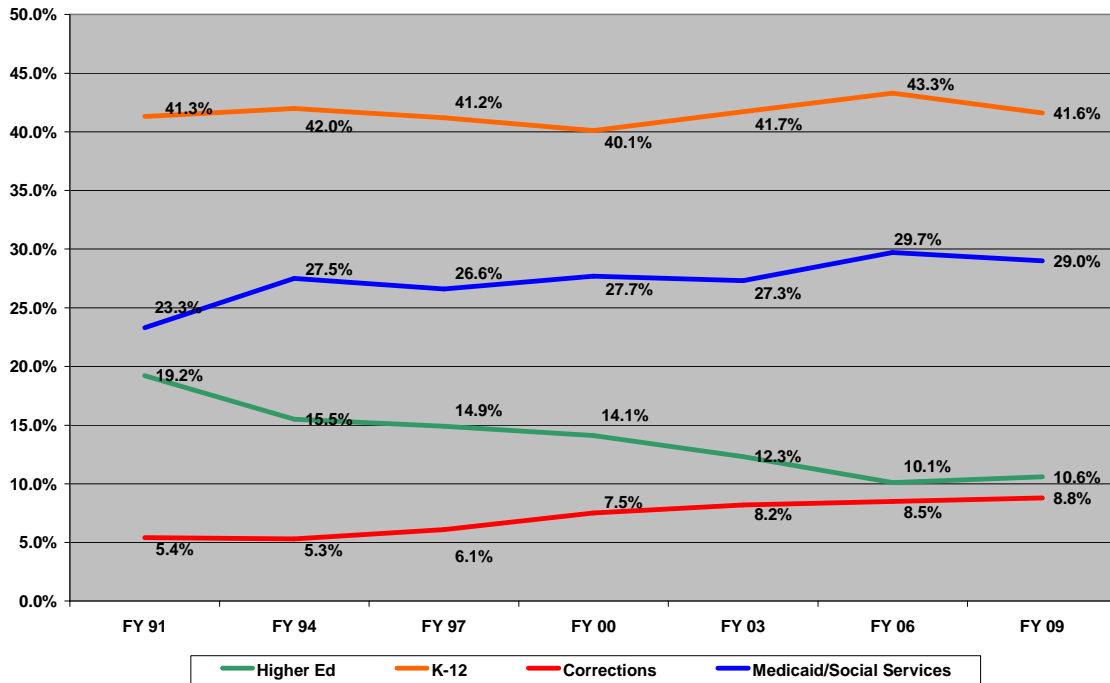
The General Assembly appropriated a \$64.6 million GF increase for higher education for FY 2008-09. This is the largest GF increase for higher education ever. This additional level of state support brings all Governing Boards of higher education “above” their state support levels prior to the economic downturn of 2001-2004.

The most significant legislation impacting higher education is [SB 08-218](#), which modifies the method through which Federal Mineral Lease revenues and bonus payments are allocated. A companion measure, [SB 08-233](#) will allow the state to issue certificates of participation and to use the revenues from SB 08-218 for the debt service. The bill also creates a maintenance fund.

Finally, [SB 08-245](#) allows state institutions of higher education to utilize the state’s strong credit rating when issuing bonds through an “intercept” program with the State Treasurer.

In considering the relative position of higher education as a state funding priority, the chart below shows the consistent decline in the share of the State General Fund received by higher education. It appears that the passage of Referendum C in 2005 – as well as slower caseload increases in Medicaid, Human Services, and Education – has temporarily stabilized the state funding share for higher education.

Share of State General Fund: Change from FY 91 to FY 09 in 3-year Increments



Despite the additional state support in recent years, funding for higher education will continue to be dependent on the caseload of the entitlement programs reflected in the table above.

- NCHEMS Funding Comparison**

In the fall of 2006, the Department of Higher Education coordinated a [study](#) comparing funding for Colorado institutions of higher education to those in other states. The conclusion of the funding study, coordinated by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems ([NCHEMS](#)), was that Colorado colleges and universities were under funded by approximately \$848 million. The State Department of Higher Education has not finalized an allocation methodology to address the shortfall identified by the NCHEMS study.

- Tuition Rates**

From 1993-2005, the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) capped the rate of increase in tuition. The passage of Referendum C – and the enterprise status gained from the passage of legislation creating the College Opportunity Fund – removed this linkage between TABOR and tuition increases.

The allowable tuition increases for FY 2008-09 are 5.0 for the community colleges, 7.5 percent for the four-year schools, and 9.5 percent for the research institutions.

## Economic Development and the Economy

Legislation introduced as part of the Governor's economic development agenda include:

- [HB 08-1001](#) – concerning bio-science research grant program.
- [HB 08-1183](#) – concerning new jobs performance-based incentives.
- [HB 08-1225](#) – concerning an increase in the business personal property tax exemption.
- [HB 08-1261](#) – concerning the “fly away” sales tax exemption for aircraft.
- [HB 08-1380](#) - this is the single factor income tax bill that we have been working on for several years.

We are happy to report that each of those important bills passed and have been signed into law. This is a very significant package of economic development related legislation.

The [Economic Development Council of Colorado \(EDCC\)](#) released its [Second Annual Citizens' Survey on Economic Development in October, 2007](#). This survey showed that Coloradans remain upbeat about the state's economy and especially their local area. The top issue remains immigration, followed by health care, education and transportation. ***Economic development is a high or very high priority for 70% of Colorado voters!***

## Insurance

### Health Care/Insurance

Before leaving office, former Governor Bill Owens appointed the [208 Commission on Health Care Reform](#). After more than 18 months of meetings, the Commission made its final report to the Governor and General Assembly on January 31, 2008. The report included four proposals for health care reform that had been selected from more than 30 proposals submitted to the Commission, as well as a fifth proposal generated by the Commission. Governor Ritter later announced his [“Building Blocks for Health Care Reform”](#) to begin implementation of the recommendations. The plan called for a \$25 million investment in Gov. Ritter's FY08-09 budget request for building-block strategies in several high-priority areas, including expanded children's health coverage, creation of a new Center for Improving Value in Health Care, greater efficiencies in public and private health care, and better transparency to assist consumers.

Several bills were passed dealing more specifically with health care:

- [SB 08-217](#) – Centennial Care Choices. This bill will direct insurers to provide a menu of health benefit plans to consumers that will assist consumers in choosing the most cost-effective plan that fits their needs.
- [HB 08-1389](#) - FAIR (Fair & Accountable Insurance Rates). This is essentially a prior approval bill for health insurance companies. Virtually all rates would have to be approved by the Commissioner of Insurance prior to being in effect.

- [HB 08-1410](#) – will mandate that colorectal screenings for adults be included in health benefit plans.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Prior to the start of the legislative session and during the first couple of months of the session, the Workers' Comp Education Association (WCEA) brought forward ideas for a number of fairly significant changes to the workers' compensation act. As expected, these suggested changes were sometimes very controversial and opposed strongly by the insurance and business/employer communities. In the end, both sides were able to negotiate nearly all of their differences out and we saw [SB 08-241](#) introduced and passed into law.

### **General Insurance Legislation**

There is a widely held opinion at the State Capitol that insurance companies are the biggest culprits in the number of uninsured Coloradoans and the cost of insurance premiums. Towards the goal of correcting these perceived abuses by insurers, legislators passed several bills aimed at reducing costs to consumers of insurance. Unfortunately, it will likely turn out that the proposals will possibly add to the costs of insurance while doing little to bring costs down.

- [HB 08-1385](#) – will require the Commissioner of Insurance to establish and maintain a website with information on health insurers that is available to the public.
- [HB 08-1407](#) – Bad faith acts of insurers. This bill increases fines and penalties for insurers that act in bad faith in the settlement of claims.

### **Older Coloradans**

Services for older Coloradans is an annual issue of importance to the legislature. In fact, the state sales tax was implemented many years ago in order to provide an old-age pension fund. This year the legislature again focused on senior issues with the following bills:

- [HB 08-1108](#) – this bill raises the funding level for the Older Coloradans Fund from the current \$5 million to \$8 million per year.
- [HB 08-1114](#) – this measure will increase Colorado Medicaid reimbursements to nursing facilities and implements an inspection fee for "quality assurance" of these facilities.
- [SB 08-153](#) – will require that home health care agencies providing care to clients in a home setting be licensed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) in order to ensure consumer protection.

### **Energy and the Environment**

A number of bills dealing with energy, renewable energy, and the environment have been passed, as part of Governor Ritter and the Democrats' legislative agenda. Among these bills are:

[HB 08-1141](#), which requires a local government to determine that each development in excess of 50 units has adequate water supplies.

[HB 08-1160](#), which requires all cooperative electric associations and municipally owned utilities (serving over 5,000 customers) to allow individuals to offset their electricity consumption with generated electricity.

[SB 08-184](#), creates the Clean Energy Finance Program, to allow the state to provide low interest loans to individuals for home improvement projects to improve energy efficiency.

One other bill in this area was killed. [HB 08-1107](#) would have required municipal utilities and rural electric associations to spend a portion of revenues on energy efficiency measures.

### **General Government**

- [HB 08-1189](#), prohibits any state classified employee from participating in a strike or stoppage of work. This bill was a legislative response to [Governor Ritter's Executive Order](#) in November, 2007 authorizing partnership agreements with state employees (union agreements).
- [HB 08-1249](#), authorizes local governments to charge users of voice over internet protocol telephone services a 911 surcharge fee.
- [HB 08-1397](#), requires the collection and preservation of all "reasonable and relevant" DNA evidence for the life of the defendant.
- [SB 08-193](#), modifies the employee certification requirement for public entities in Colorado. This law requires only the employees working on the specific contract be certified, establishes an alternative certification plan, and exempts certain entities for certification.

### **Amendment 41**

This constitutional amendment, dubbed "Ethics in Government" passed by a 62% - 38% margin in the November, 2006 election. The amendment was very poorly drafted and has created a significant amount of confusion over its interpretation. State employees, their families and others have been impacted by this poorly written initiative.

The [First Amendment Council](#), chaired by Bill Becker of Adams County Economic Development, challenged Amendment 41 and on May 31, 2007 Denver District Court Judge Christine Habas granted an injunction against Amendment 41. The case was then appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court. The Supreme Court vacated the preliminary injunction in a [decision](#) on February 25, 2008. [The Independent Ethics Commission](#) required in the amendment has now been appointed, although no formal actions have been taken by the Commission with regards to complaints filed. Currently, legislators and others are cautiously moving forward as when the injunction against Amendment 41 was in place.

## **Ballot Initiatives – “Mutually Assured Destruction”**

Nearly 130 citizen initiatives have been filed for possible inclusion on the 2008 general election ballot. Some of these are duplicative of earlier-filed initiatives and some are directly competing against other filed initiatives. [Monday, August 4 is the deadline for proponents to submit petitions with the requisite number of signatures to the Colorado Secretary of State.](#) Proponents of many of the initiatives have either withdrawn them or chosen not to proceed with the expense of signature gathering. We do expect, however, a fairly large number of initiatives on the November ballot – certainly enough to cause confusion in the minds of voters.

The battle between business interests and organized labor has manifested at the Secretary of State's office with competing ballot initiatives that have been described as "mutually assured destruction". At the center of the controversy is a "[right to work](#)" initiative, advocated by Jonathan Coors, Andrew Zappa, General Manager of American Furniture Warehouse (Jake Jabs) and Aurora City Councilman Ryan Frazier. Other contributing factors include an initiative that would [allow anyone in the state to sue corporate/business executives](#) involved in corporate fraud and another initiative aimed at making it [nearly impossible to fire employees.](#)

In their April Board meeting, the Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry (CACI) endorsed the right to work initiative. This action was followed in a couple of days with the United Food and Commercial Workers filing **five** initiatives. The UFCW initiatives are:

- [Employer responsibility for health insurance for employees and their dependents](#)
- "[Safe workplace](#)" - gives employees the right to sue for alleged unsafe working conditions
- [Prohibition on tax incentives or subsidies to companies that "off-shore" jobs](#)
- [Increase in assessment ratio](#) for business from 29% to 34% for property tax
- [Mandatory "cost of living" pay increases](#)

Governor Ritter, Senator Ken Salazar, Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, Denver Chamber of Commerce CEO Joe Blake and MDEDC Executive Vice President Tom Clark have been heavily engaged in unsuccessful efforts to have both sides “stand down”. The net result of these initiatives will be that huge amounts of money would be spent on campaigns for both sides of the issue(s), voters would likely not take the time and effort to truly understand the initiatives before voting on them, and passage of any or all of these initiatives could dramatically change the business climate in Colorado.

Just when you think that it couldn't get any worse....a little good news! On May 6, 2008 attorneys for the proponents of [Initiative #89](#) (attorney fee limitations) and their counterpart attorneys for the opponents of Initiative #89 and proponents of the initiatives listed below jointly filed a letter with the Secretary of State formally withdrawing all of the initiatives. The following initiatives were filed by the Colorado Trial Lawyers' Association:

- [Initiative #104](#) (jury trials);
- [#105](#) (farm subsidies tax);
- [#106](#) (construction defects damages);
- [#107](#) (professional contracts);
- [#108](#) (executive compensation);
- [#109](#) (real estate commissions);
- [#110](#) (evidence of admissions);
- [#111](#) (peer review records) and;
- [#112](#) (medical license denial and revocation)

This is great news in that these nine anti-business initiatives will not be on the ballot.

Governor Ritter has thrown his weight behind [Initiative #113](#), which would increase the severance tax and use the increased revenues for higher education financial aid. As expected, the oil and gas industry is opposed to the initiative. However, passage of this initiative, coupled with the increased funding for higher education capital construction made possible with the passage of SB 08-218 and SB 08-233 and the 9% increase in operations funding included in the long bill would mean a significant turnaround in the funding of colleges and universities in the state.

Speaker Andrew Romanoff also has committed to support a couple of initiatives aimed at constitutional reform. [Initiative #125](#) and [Initiative #126](#) make several changes to K-12 funding, and the ability of the General Assembly to deal with budgetary downturns. The citizens' right to vote on tax increases would not be eliminated. Amendment 23 (funding of K-12 education at inflation plus 1%) would be repealed and the State Education Fund would be increased and could be tapped, by a two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature, to help with operational funding of state government and to fully fund SB 97-001 (transportation funding) during economic downturns.

As of this writing, there are three [initiatives definitely on the November ballot](#) – [Amendment 46](#), dealing with affirmative action; [Amendment 47](#), the aforementioned right to work initiative; and Amendment 48, the [definition of a "person"](#). Petition formats have been approved by the Secretary of State on nearly 20 of the remaining initiatives. Proponents are in the process of gathering signatures on most of these, with the final deadline date of August 4 for petitions to be submitted to the Secretary of State. In order to be placed on the ballot,

each of the petitions will require the signatures of 76,047 registered Colorado voters (5% of the total votes cast for the office of Secretary of State in the 2006 election). [Much more information on proposed initiatives](#) is available through the Colorado Secretary of State's office and we will keep you posted over the coming months on the progress of the various initiatives.

The importance of the many initiatives that will or are likely to appear on the November ballot cannot be over-emphasized. The right to petition their government is a basic right of the citizens that should not be taken away. However, as we have painfully learned with the passage of Amendment 41 and others, most of these initiatives are not thoughtfully and carefully drafted with input from proponents as well as opponents. Additionally, most of the initiatives are placed in the state constitution, rather than the statutes, and become virtually impossible to repeal or even to correct simple drafting errors. Finally, all of the initiatives have a tremendous amount of populist appeal and unfortunately, many voters fail to educate themselves fully on each of the initiatives before voting.

The frustration of dealing with constitutional mandates has led the legislative leadership and several other groups to propose changes to the initiative process. The [Colorado Economic Futures Panel](#) issued its [final report](#) in January, 2006 with a number of suggested changes. Several of those proposals are included in Referendum O described below.

## Referenda

### Referendum O

The legislature tackled the tough issue of constitutional reform this year. They appointed a [Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Reform](#). The Committee met numerous times and received input from a number of groups and individuals. You can see the membership of the committee, the agenda of each of the meetings, as well as testimony during each of the meetings, the multiple memoranda and reports of the committee. [SCR08-003](#) is a work product of the Joint Select Committee and it will appear on the 2008 ballot as Referendum O. The key points of Referendum O are as follows:

| <b>Constitutional Amendments</b>   | <b>Statutory Amendments</b>   | <b>Current Requirements</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Increase number of signatures needed for constitutional amendments to make the ballot. Will increase to 6% of votes cast in Governor's race. | Decrease number of signatures needed – 4% of votes cast in Governor's race. | 5% of votes cast in Secretary of State race. Same requirements for both statutory and constitutional amendments. |
| Geographical Distribution of Signatures. 8% of   | No geographical distribution requirement                                    | No geographical distribution   |

| <b>Constitutional Amendments</b>   | <b>Statutory Amendments</b>  | <b>Current Requirements</b>   |
|--|--|---|
| signatures must be gathered in each congressional district   |  | requirement   |
|  | Statutory Initiative - 2/3 vote of legislature required to amend or repeal provisions for 5 years. | Legislature can overturn/alter/change statutory amendments – no time restrictions |
| The legislature may hold additional public hearing on constitutional amendments-allowing public testimony prior to the fixing of the ballot title. | No legislative hearings  | No legislative hearings   |
| 6 months to collect signatures   | 9 months to collect signatures   | 6 months to collect signatures for both statutory and constitutional amendments   |

Additionally, there will be two other referred measures on the ballot. One will ask voters to remove obsolete constitutional provisions ([HCR 08-1008](#)) and the other will ask voters to repeal an obsolete section of the constitution dealing with land values ([HCR 08-1009](#)).

### **Miscellaneous**

[Governor Ritter](#) and [State Treasurer Cary Kennedy](#) have just released the second annual [State Taxpayer Accountability Report \(STAR\)](#). The STAR Report provides information on the state's fiscal condition for Fiscal Year 2006-2007, the most recently available audited data.

### **Interim Legislative Committees**

During the coming summer and fall, there will be several legislative committees meeting. These include:

- [Health Care Task Force](#)
- [Legislative Oversight Committee for the Continuing Examination of the Treatment of Persons with Mental Illness who are Involved in the Justice System](#)
- [Police Officers' and Firefighters Pension Reform Commission](#)
- [Sunrise and Sunset Reviews by Standing Committees of Reference](#)
  - [Including Sunset Reviews and Advisory Committee Reviews](#) for recommendations to the 2009 General Assembly
  - And [Sunrise Reviews](#)

- [Transportation Legislation Review Committee](#)
- [Water Resources Review Committee](#)
- [Interim Committee on Wildfire Issues](#)

We urge you to check the above websites frequently for updates on committee schedules, testimony and recommended legislation for the 2009 session.

We hope that this summary review of the 2008 Colorado legislative session is of value to you, your colleagues and friends. We urge you to share it with them as you deem appropriate, with attribution. Please feel free to visit our website at [www.lobbycolorado.com](http://www.lobbycolorado.com) for more information.

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