



Colorado General Assembly Convenes for 2026 Regular Session

Colorado's General Assembly convened this morning. Legislative leadership in the Senate and House of Representatives delivered opening day remarks, and each Chamber introduced a first batch of bills representing majority party caucus priorities, with additional bills coming across the desk later in the afternoon. A commonality among the four leaders was a call for more civil discourse and respectful debate.

In the House, newly appointed members Lori Goldstein (Democrat, HD 29) and Kenny Nguyen (Democrat, HD 33) were sworn in, and join Rep. Scott Slaugh (Republican, HD 64) and Rep. Ava Flanell (Republican, HD 14) as members appointed to the House by vacancy committee since the last regular session. In the Senate, William Lindstedt (Democrat, SD 25) was welcomed to the chamber and joins Sen. Lynda Zamora Wilson (Republican, SD 9) as members appointed since the last regular session.

When the House took up official business following opening day speeches, Republican Rep. Ken DeGraaf contested language in the House resolution that sets the time and date for the Governor's State of the State address. Following his lengthy presentation on the language of concern, Democrat Rep. Lorena Garcia went to the well in support of his amendment to change the language and the amendment and resolution were approved by an overwhelming majority. Governor Jared Polis is set to deliver the final address of his term to a joint session of the House and Senate at 11am on Thursday, January 14.

The House and Senate both announced committee membership, and committees began meeting this afternoon. The Joint Technology Committee and Capital Development Committee are scheduled to meet tomorrow morning before the Governor's address.

[Senate Democrats Introduce First Five Bills of the 2026 Session](#)
[House Democrats Introduce First Ten Bills of the 2026 Session](#)

Complete list of bills introduced today: <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills>.

Colorado State Senate

Senate President James Coleman highlighted school finance, reproductive rights and more as successes from last year. He shared that he traveled this summer to visit Republican members in their districts, noting that legislators are not as divided as one might think. He urged his caucus to be courageous leaders in the face of challenges this year, calling out shortfalls in the state budget, federal government policy uncertainty, and the increasing cost of living in Colorado. Specifically, Coleman noted rising costs of healthcare, groceries, rent and housing, and utilities are putting immense pressure on all constituents. He encouraged the Senate to support healthcare premium solutions, drive down utility cost, support people accessing attainable housing, and ensure pathways to high skilled and well-paying jobs. Senate President Coleman concludes with a few lines of scripture reminding the members that we are serving the state and our collective future together.

[Senate President James Coleman Full Remarks](#)

Senate Minority Leader Cleave Simpson gratefully acknowledged Senate President Coleman's visit to Alamosa and their work together. He noted that the first Colorado General Assembly convened 150 years ago, and 2026 is the 120th anniversary of the National Western Stock Show. He noted that the people of Colorado want a state that is safe and full of opportunity, we need to listen to Coloradoans, communities — both urban and rural — and small businesses in our state. He spoke to lowering housing costs, energy prices, insurance premiums, and the price of everyday goods. We need to eliminate unnecessary regulation and look to be partners in ensuring Colorado businesses can grow and thrive for their employees. He concluded by urging the Senate to honor Colorado's rich history with our actions and votes this legislative session.

[Senate Minority Leader Cleave Simpson Full Remarks](#)

Colorado State House of Representatives

Speaker Julie McCluskie delivered her final address as Speaker of the House, as she is term-limited and cannot run for re-election to her seat. McCluskie pointed to a handful of past successes: a 41% reduction in child poverty due to Colorado's Family Affordability Tax Credit and investments in K-12 per pupil spending, free full-day kindergarten and universal preschool as well as protection of waterways. She said a next task is to unify education and opportunity by bringing higher education, apprenticeships, and workforce pathways under one roof. She warned that the state budget gap, H.R.1, and President Trump's targeting of Colorado are bringing unprecedented threats to Medicaid, SNAP

and other services. The Speaker pointed to Medicaid costs growing at twice the rate of what the state is allowed to spend under TABOR and called for all members of the House to work on updating the state's fiscal framework rather than rely on a 30-year-old formula. McCluskie pledged to do three things this session: lower everyday costs, especially health care and housing; protect our successes; and sustain targeted investments in our future.

[Speaker Julie McCluskie Full Remarks](#)

Minority Leader Jarvis Caldwell delivered his first address as Minority leader. He recognized the 150th anniversary of the state of Colorado and was supportive of “lowering the temperature” of political discourse while retaining the ability of each elected representative to be true to their beliefs. He highlighted affordability as a top priority and said while H.R. 1 is taking much of the blame, that the state legislature is also responsible for accelerating the cost of goods and services through their own policy decisions. He encouraged slowing the growth of the government to spur the growth of the people. Caldwell highlighted as priorities parental rights, the environment, public safety and reduction of crime, and roads. He finished with a plea to let this be a turning point where legislators can come together and change the course.

(Minority Leader Jarvis Caldwell Full Remarks not currently available)

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