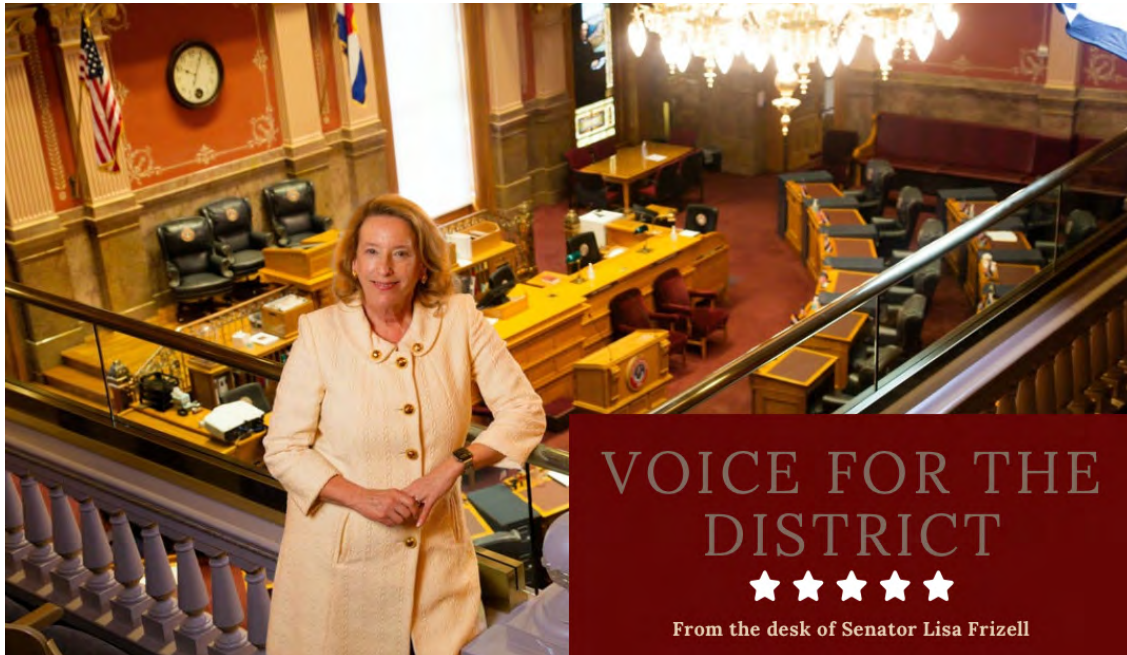




2026 Legislative Session

Week Eleven - Only 47 Days Left

Greetings Senator Lisa Frizell,

Welcome back! As this month comes to an end, there is still much to do in the State Legislature. With a total of 484 introduced bills, only 134 have been acted on, leaving 350 bills still in need of action. As the Majority Party continues to lay over the calendar, it is sure to be an overloaded end of session -especially since the Long Bill introduction has been

postponed. Please read on for updates on my week in the Senate.

Douglas County Assembly

I would like to clear the air on something that happened last weekend at the Douglas County GOP Assembly. I am extremely disappointed that Rocky Mountain Gun Owners has misrepresented what occurred and I want to be clear that I simply don't operate in the manner that has been described so widely on social media. I would like to emphasize that I have always - and will always - defend our Constitutional Second Amendment rights. I in no way condone any gun control measures and disagree with the continuous attacks on hard working Republican legislators.

My Bill Updates

[HB26-1098](#) 'Public Trustee Act Foreclosure Procedures' passed Third Reading in the Senate this week and will be headed back to the House for consideration of amendments. This bill helps alleviate administrative redundancies in the foreclosure procedure.

[HB26-1191](#) 'Examination of School District Records' also passed Third Reading in the Senate and will soon be headed to the Governor's desk. This bill simply repeals the requirement for annual audits, and instead allows the state auditor to decide when it is necessary to conduct these reviews for school districts. Once again, we are looking for ways to eliminate busy-work and inefficiency.

[HB26-1050](#) 'Optional Individualized Readiness Plan for Schools' passed through the Senate Education committee on Wednesday and will soon be heard on the floor for Second Reading. Once a student has completed their Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), current law requires that all students be placed on an Individualized Readiness Plan, regardless of their abilities as established through the assessment. This bill gives school districts the discretion to create plans for those students who don't meet or exceed expectations per their assessment. Parents can still request that their kiddo be put on a plan, and this bill provides greater flexibility for teachers and school districts.

[HB26-1024](#) 'Raising Age of Voluntary Relinquishment of a Child' was heard in the Health and Human Services Committee on Thursday and

passed unanimously - it will now go to the Senate Chamber on the Consent Calendar! This policy will allow 30 days for parents of newborns to surrender a child to a safe haven. Currently, the time limit is 72 hours – this is a very short amount of time for a parent to make a life-changing decision, especially when experiencing all of the emotion after giving birth. Colorado is one of six states that still adheres to the 72 hours time frame.



Thank you to everyone who helped get HB26-1024 through Committee

Colorado Gerontological Society

On Friday I was interviewed by the Executive Director of [CGS](#), Eileen Doherty on the Radio Show 'Senior Answers' partnered with Legends Radio. CGS is a non-profit organization that provides services and benefits to senior citizens. Eileen and I discussed the Senior Property Tax Homestead Exemption which provides a discount on property taxes for owners who are 65 or older and have lived in their home for at least ten years. I explained how this program is crucial in helping a senior in

Colorado, but that this exemption may be on the chopping block in the Joint Budget Committee as we continue to debate budget cuts. Tune in on Saturday and Sunday at 6AM on KLVZ 95.3 FM or view Legends Radio [website](#).



Colorado State Board of Equalization

On Tuesday I was honored to be appointed to the Colorado State Board of Equalization. I serve as the Senate President's appointee on this five-member board, which oversees property assessment quality and consistency and ensures a fair property tax system. I'm excited to bring my 25 years of assessment and appraisal experience to this board as I fight to make Colorado affordable again.

Budget Update

Figure setting has concluded, and the Joint Budget Committee is now working on balancing the budget through comeback requests. It has been decided to balance the budget according to the Office of State Planning and Budgeting's (OSPB) March forecast which is more forgiving than the Legislative Council Staff (LCS) forecast. Under the OSPB forecast, there is a \$1.1 billion/ \$740 million shortfall in FY 2026/27 depending on a 15% vs. 13% reserve. This has been used to balance the past three budgets, and each time the forecast has differed from the actual shortfalls.

Last week, the Judicial Department requested \$831.7 million total funds including \$555.6 million General Fund. The biggest requests are for continued investment in a case management system, funding new judges per last year's bill, probation and trial court staffing, court room interpreters, and IT infrastructure. The major comeback and balancing items include building in \$550.831 GF vacancy savings for the annualization of SB25-024, temporarily using excess reserves in the Offender Services Fund and Judicial Stabilization Cash Fund in place of GF.

The most significant comeback relates to prison caseloads. Under current projections, the state will see roughly 400 more people sentenced to prison than released on parole or into community connections each year, meaning overcrowding will worsen even with other mitigation tools/ strategies. OSPB claims this as an immediate health and safety issue for incarcerated people, correctional staff, and the broader public. The Governor's Office has identified the Huerfano County Correctional Center in Walsenburg as the most practical solution to this crisis. This privately owned facility is currently closed, but could provide at least 700 medium-security beds. The purchase and renovation costs are estimated at \$150 to \$200 million with proposals to finance with \$100 million from the

Marijuana Tax Cash Fund emergency reserve. The alternative would be contracting for more private prison beds at a cost higher than the new rate assumed in the budget. How much more money will the Legislature spend on prisons?

Common Sense Institute

The Common Sense Institute ([CSI](#)) hosted their Day at the Capitol on Wednesday. This non-partisan research organization provides the facts to Colorado citizens on policies that impact their lives. For example, this concerning report outlining impacts of inflation in Colorado – unfortunately now ranked the 9th least affordable state in the nation.

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MARCH 2026

THE INFLATION HANGOVER

HOW THE POST-PANDEMIC PRICE SURGE
RESHAPED AFFORDABILITY IN **COLORADO**

Just how much more are Colorado families having to spend on basic necessities today compared to 2019? The newest CSI report "The Inflation Hangover: How the Post-Pandemic Price Surge Reshaped Affordability in America" answers this question.

CSI estimates that households in Colorado needed to spend **\$20,800 more in 2025** to cover shelter and utilities, groceries, health and car insurance, gas, and child care – more than the \$15,400 increase seen on average across the country. **Colorado is now the 9th least affordable state in the nation.**

Household Annual Cost Increases by Category

 +\$7,560 Shelter and Utilities	 +\$1,388 Car Insurance
 +\$2,874 Groceries	 -\$135 Gas
 +\$1,195 Health Insurance	 +\$7,931 Child Care

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

↑ 35.8%

- Estimated household income rose 35.8% in CO between 2019 and 2025
 - > Estimated expense increase – 37%.
 - > Rising prices ate away 2% of household income in the state
 - > Shelter and utilities costs increased 40% between 2019 and 2025, the 13th largest increase in this category across the country

CAR INSURANCE

↑ 51.8% 9TH FASTEST IN THE U.S.

CHILD CARE

↑ 56.4% 9TH FASTEST IN THE U.S.

- Colorado also saw some of the fastest rising car insurance (+51.8%, 9th fastest) and child care prices (+56.4%, 9th fastest) in the nation.

To read the full report, visit www.common senseinstitute.us.org.

COMMON SENSE INSTITUTE

Bad Bills:

[SB26-135](#) 'State Public K-12 Education Funding' is once again a direct attack on TABOR. If passed, this policy would allow the State to keep tax revenue that would normally be paid back to tax-payers and reallocate it to public schools AND an unregulated slush fund that is projected to be

around \$6 billion. Regulation on how this additional money would be spent by the state is limited, and schools would receive a very small portion of the funds retained by the State. This bill passed the Finance Committee but has yet to be scheduled on the floor.

[HB26-1005](#) 'Worker Protection Collective Bargaining' would severely limit workers' freedom in our state and destabilize Colorado's business climate. This is essentially a reintroduction of SB25-005 from last year, even after that bill was vetoed by Governor Polis. This bill upends the [Labor Peace Act](#), which has been in place since 1943 and has provided balance among workers' rights, the freedom to choose to participate in unions, and the balance of power between business and labor. If the second election requirement is repealed, as this bill proposes, a proliferation of labor organizing efforts could threaten to derail the state's current economic trajectory, weakening Colorado businesses and deterring future commercial investments. This bill was heard in the Senate Business, Labor, and Technology Committee on Tuesday and will be scheduled in the Senate Appropriations Committee next.

[HB26-1011](#) 'Transfers of Certain Pet Animals' is an over-reaction to issues with breeder and broker regulation. This policy would prohibit a retail seller (broker) from selling dogs or cats and collecting fees for those sales. While this seems like an effort to mitigate animal abuse, it actually just places restrictions on law-abiding businesses that are finding homes for our furry friends. This is yet another attack on our free market by the Majority party which restricts consumer choice. This bill was heard on Friday in the Senate Chamber for Second Reading and passed.[HB26-1005](#) 'Worker Protection Collective Bargaining' would severely limit workers' freedom in our state and destabilize Colorado's business climate. This is essentially a reintroduction of SB25-005 from last year, even after that bill was vetoed by Governor Polis. This bill upends the [Labor Peace Act](#), which has been in place since 1943 and has provided balance among workers' rights, the freedom to choose to participate in unions, and the balance of power between business and labor. If the second election requirement is repealed, as this bill proposes, a proliferation of labor organizing efforts could threaten to derail the state's current economic trajectory, weakening Colorado businesses and deterring future commercial investments. This bill was heard in the Senate Business, Labor, and Technology Committee on Tuesday and will be scheduled in the Senate Appropriations Committee next.

Good Bills:

[SB26-112](#) ‘Court Actions Related to Failure to Appear in Court’ aims to strengthen the conditions of defendants who consistently miss their municipal court dates by allowing the court to impose monetary bonds. This bill balances the accountability of defendants who repeatedly miss court dates while also protecting those who can not appear due to technical reasons rather than willful absence. Current research shows that 39% of arraignments failed to appear in Colorado during 2022/2023. I was in strong support of this bill, and the Colorado Senate Republicans battled on the floor to pass SB26-112 through Second Reading. Unfortunately, it was killed on Monday in the Senate on a narrow vote of 17-16. I sponsored a similar bill last session, [HB25-1276](#), which never even made it to the Senate chamber, but was postponed indefinitely in the House Judiciary Committee. Even though it does little to no harm to require a defendant to attend their own court hearing, a basic requirement that already has leniency, the Majority yet again shot down legislation that would protect citizens.

[HB26-1002](#) ‘Provider Participation in Health Insurance’ aims to improve access to behavioral health care in Colorado by streamlining provider onboarding, tackling ghost networks, and increasing access to behavioral health providers. Directory information can frequently be outdated and reflect inaccurate information which can lead to unexpected out-of-pocket costs for potential patients. This bill addresses these obstacles by requiring insurers to verify their network participation and whether they are accepting new clients. These practical measures increase the number of available providers and ensure up-to-date information is available. I heard HB26-1002 in the Senate Health and Human Services committee this week where it passed unanimously and is now headed to the Consent Calendar.

[SB26-141](#) ‘Wildlife Collision Prevention’ creates a new optional ‘collision prevention fee’ that would be assessed during the registration of motor vehicles beginning January 1st, 2027. I have often heard constituent concerns about issues with wildlife collisions on the stretch of Highway 85 north of Castle Rock, and believe this bill will help reduce those incidents. I am in support of this opt-in solution that provides additional resources that the State currently lacks to protect wildlife and motorists. The Department of Revenue will structure the opt-out process so that drivers are clearly informed the fee is optional and will not affect

registration if declined. There will also be a public outreach campaign to educate Coloradans about the intended benefits – 75% of revenue would be credited to a newly created Collision Prevention Fund which is appropriated to the Statewide Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise for wildlife safe passage projects, while the remaining 25% is credited to the Wildlife Cash Fund for conservation efforts. This bill will be heard in the Senate Finance Committee on Tuesday, March 31st - if you're interested in testifying, sign up [here](#)!

COLORADO FARM BUREAU
2025 est. 1919

We lead the way
IN PROMOTING, STRENGTHENING
AND ADVOCATING FOR
Agriculture

Achievements	Members	Policy
 - MEMBERSHIP GOAL MET: 18,591 #1 BEST PLACE TO WORK - LAUNCHED NEW <i>website</i> - SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH ↑ 10%	 18.5 K MEMBERS <i>4040 Ag</i> MEMBERS \$35K GIVEN IN COUNTY GRANTS 37 COUNTY <i>events</i>	 54 ACTIVE POSITIONS 8 BILLS <i>killed</i> 211 CALLS TO ACTION 18 BILLS PASSED

COLORADO AGRICULTURE SUPPORTS
895,025 TOTAL JOBS

HIGH-LIGHT • Harvest Season
• 4 PRODUCER'S STORIES SHARED

80 PEOPLE ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
OVER 8% OF FARMERS & RANCHERS IN COLORADO ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 35

280 HOURS OF FREE CONSULTATIONS
OVER 20 SCREENINGS OF *Legacy* REACHING **600+** PEOPLE


COLORADO CONTRIBUTES **\$2.7 billion** IN EXPORTS

COLORADO HAS **39,000** FARMS & RANCHES

CO
FARM BUREAU

Agriculture Day

This week, the [Colorado Farm Bureau](#) hosted the annual Agriculture Day at the Capitol! Thank you for advocating for agriculture in our state, it was great to have so many organizations here in support! The Colorado Senate Republicans will continue working to protect the 39,000 farms and ranches that operate here.

Stay Informed

As the session continues, I would like to provide you with some resources to stay informed on what is happening at the Capitol. To watch current or previous debates on the floor of the House or Senate, you can visit the Colorado Channel on YouTube. Click [here](#) to watch.

The Colorado General Assembly [website](#) is also a great resource. Some of the information on this site includes tracking bills, listening to committees, and finding contact information for legislators. Committee proceedings the session will now be recorded and available for the public to view live, or archived meetings!

Thank you for allowing me to serve you,



Lisa Frizell

Assistant Minority Leader

Senate District 2

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