

MOVING PUBLIC POLICY FORWARD

COLORADO STATE LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

2019



INTRODUCTION

We work at the state Capitol and with state agencies administering Medicaid and other important public health programs, to ensure Colorado's public policies help Coloradans achieve their best health. Together with our Policy Committee, we have a finger on the pulse of Colorado legislation that both directly and indirectly affects health.

Each year, we identify key priorities for our legislative work that will move Colorado closer to health equity. To that end, we evaluate each bill's potential health equity impacts, especially in assessing data related to race, income, and ZIP code, to ensure that we are supporting policies that benefit the Coloradans and communities that face the greatest health inequities.

Although nearly every bill we supported this session passed, and some important progress was made toward health equity, there were some big disappointments, too. While great gains were made in housing, education, behavioral health, and other areas, Colorado missed key opportunities to advance immigrant health and paid leave by dramatically weakening bills through amendments. We've already got big plans for next year's session!

52 BILLS WE ADVOCATED FOR OR AGAINST THIS YEAR

49 SUPPORTED

3 MONITORED

0 OPPOSED

46 SUCCESSFULLY PASSED

BIG WIN

Senate Bill 139—PASSED

This bill expands access to driver's licenses for immigrants without documentation, which makes it easier for affected individuals to get to their doctor appointments and makes our roads safer.

BIG WIN

House Bill 1170—PASSED

Until this bill, broken appliances and mold weren't considered hazardous for renters. Now landlords will have to fix these and other issues in less than 72 hours in order to protect tenants' health and safety.

OUR 2019 PRIORITIES

This session, we prioritized improving the health and safety of Colorado's immigrants, advancing payment reform, and increasing access to housing, food, and other basic needs that help families thrive. We also supported efforts to protect the health care safety net system, improve access to behavioral health care, increase affordability and transparency, and mitigate the impact of social determinants on health.

BILLS WE SUPPORTED THAT PASSED

	COVERAGE / CARE	17
	IMMIGRANT HEALTH	2
	PAYMENT REFORM / HEALTH CARE COSTS	8
	SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH	19

PRIORITY BILLS THAT PASSED

HB 1004: Affordable Insurance

Requests a proposal for how Coloradans could purchase low-cost coverage from Medicaid or another public coverage program

HB 1010: Freestanding ED Licenses

Creates a new license for standalone

emergency departments, which protects consumers from unsavory business practices

HB 1017: Children's Social/Emotional Health

Increases access to social workers for elementary school students to support their social and emotional well-being



HB 1025: “Ban the Box”

Prohibits job applications from asking about criminal history because its an inaccurate and discriminatory way to judge job seekers



HB 1038: Dental Services for Pregnant Women

Adds coverage for dental services to CHP+ because dental care during pregnancy is very important to the health of mother and baby



HB 1118: Fixing Lease Violations

Increases the time tenants have to fix lease violations from three days to ten to protect renters from eviction-related health issues



HB 1122: Maternal Mortality

Creates a committee to study the causes of maternal mortality and recommend solutions



HB 1124: Government Overreach

Protects the civil rights of immigrants by limiting how local law enforcement can carry out federal immigration enforcement activities



HB 1129: Ban Conversion Therapy

Bans conversion therapy for minors because oppressing sexual orientation or gender identity has long-term, negative impacts on health



HB 1170: Warranty of Habitability

Increases protections for renters by adding mold and broken appliances to the list of things landlords must fix, and decreases how much time they have to fix them



HB 1171: Access to School Lunches

Expands free school lunches from K-8th grade to K-12th so more kids get healthy meals



HB 1174: No Surprise Billing

Prohibits billing patients for out-of-network care without prior patient notification and limits out-of-network charges



HB 1184: Demographic Notes

Requires research on potential effects of some bills by race, income, location, etc. so groups aren't disproportionately impacted



HB 1189: Wage Garnishment

Reduces the percentage of a person's income subject to garnishment to protect people whose wages are being garnished from poverty-related health issues



HB 1225: No Monetary Bail

Eliminates monetary bail for minor offenses so that affected individuals aren't jailed for having limited financial resources



HB 1233: Investing in Primary Care

Creates a group to research affordability standards for insurance premiums and sets targets for investment in primary care



HB 1239: Census Outreach Grants

Authorizes outreach grants to historically-undercounted communities so they'll be counted in the Census and Colorado will get adequate federal funding for public programs



HB 1262: Full-Day Kindergarten

Funds full-day kindergarten because income shouldn't determine access to education



HB 1309: Mobile Home Parks

Increases rights related to mobile homes and the land they're on so tenants are protected from housing-related health issues



HB 1320: Hospital Community Benefit Accountability

Increases transparency and accountability in the use of funds earmarked for community health as required by the federal government



SB 001: Opioid Treatment Pilot

Expands a pilot program for treating opioid addiction in Pueblo to multiple other communities with high needs



SB 139: More Driver's Licenses for Immigrants

Expands the number of offices that issue driver's licenses to immigrants without documentation from three to ten so immigrants can access jobs, resources, and health care



SB 180: Eviction Defense Fund

Creates a legal defense fund for Coloradans facing eviction from their homes to protect renters from eviction-related health issues



SB 188: Paid Family/Health Leave

Creates a taskforce to design and implement a new insurance program that provides working Coloradans with paid time off for family and medical issues

OTHER BILLS THAT PASSED

-  **HB 1005:** Creates a tax credit for early childhood educators
-  **HB 1009:** Increases recovery resources for people with substance use disorders
-  **HB 1039:** Allows access to gender-affirming identification for transgender/intersex Coloradans
-  **HB 1106:** Limits rental application fees to the actual cost of processing them
-  **HB 1127:** Allows the Lieutenant Governor to serve as the director of the Office of Saving People Money on Health Care
-  **HB 1131:** Increases transparency of prescription cost information
-  **HB 1168:** Creates reinsurance payments for insurance to lower premium costs
-  **HB 1176:** Creates a taskforce to study health reform options
-  **HB 1193:** Improves substance use disorder treatment for high-risk families
-  **HB 1211:** Eliminates requirements to get pre-approval for some medications
-  **HB 1216:** Decreases the price of insulin

-  **HB 1245:** Establishes a monthly cap on how much sales tax businesses keep
-  **HB 1287:** Increases access to behavioral health treatment
-  **HB 1326:** Reviews a dental services program that serves low-income seniors
-  **SB 005:** Decreases prescription drug costs by importing from Canada
-  **SB 008:** Outlines how individuals with substance use disorders are cared for in the criminal justice system
-  **SB 010:** Allows grant funds to be used for behavioral health services in schools
-  **SB 015:** Creates a committee to study health care issues affecting Coloradans
-  **SB 195:** Improves behavioral health services and coordination for youth
-  **SB 227:** Allows schools to store medication that reverses the effects of opioid overdoses
-  **SB 228:** Requires providers prescribing opioids to attend training and adds other addiction prevention measures
-  **SB 238:** Increases wages for home health workers and enforces training

CONCLUSION

The 2018 election brought the most diverse class of legislators in Colorado's history. This led to robust discussion and passage of bills addressing the gender pay gap, discrimination against people who are justice-involved, and more equitable access to behavioral health care services. It also offered numerous opportunities to engage in legislation connected to the social determinants of health, such as tenants rights, consumer rights, and immigrant rights. The subject matter and overall tone of this session reflected a more inclusive general assembly.

Our work is far from complete, but we are proud of the advances made in this legislative session.

To learn more about our work at the Capitol, visit: centerforhealthprogress.org/policy.

