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!

¿ Quiere esto en español? ¡Avisenos! weare@centerforhealthprogress.org
52 BILLS WE ADVOCATED FOR OR AGAINST THIS YEAR

49 SUPPORTED
3 MONITORED
0 OPPOSED

46 SUCCESSFULLY PASSED

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.

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.

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.

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.

BILLS WE SUPPORTED THAT PASSED

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

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1025</td>
<td>“Ban the Box” Prohibits job applications from asking about criminal history because it's an inaccurate and discriminatory way to judge job seekers</td>
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<td>HB 1038</td>
<td>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</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 1118</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>HB 1122</td>
<td>Maternal Mortality Creates a committee to study the causes of maternal mortality and recommend solutions</td>
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<td>HB 1124</td>
<td>Government Overreach Protects the civil rights of immigrants by limiting how local law enforcement can carry out federal immigration enforcement activities</td>
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<td>HB 1129</td>
<td>Ban Conversion Therapy Bans conversion therapy for minors because oppressing sexual orientation or gender identity has long-term, negative impacts on health</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB 1170</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>HB 1171</td>
<td>Access to School Lunches Expands free school lunches from K-8th grade to K-12th so more kids get healthy meals</td>
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<td>HB 1174</td>
<td>No Surprise Billing Prohibits billing patients for out-of-network care without prior patient notification and limits out-of-network charges</td>
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<td>HB 1184</td>
<td>Demographic Notes Requires research on potential effects of some bills by race, income, location, etc. so groups aren’t disproportionately impacted</td>
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<td>HB 1189</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>HB 1225</td>
<td>No Monetary Bail Eliminates monetary bail for minor offenses so that affected individuals aren't jailed for having limited financial resources</td>
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<td>SB 001</td>
<td>Opioid Treatment Pilot Expands a pilot program for treating opioid addiction in Pueblo to multiple other communities with high needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB 139</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>SB 180</td>
<td>Eviction Defense Fund Creates a legal defense fund for Coloradans facing eviction from their homes to protect renters from eviction-related health issues</td>
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<td>SB 188</td>
<td>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</td>
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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](http://centerforhealthprogress.org/policy)