

Kiowa County *Press*

75¢
Rack Price

KiowaCountyPress.net

October 2, 2026

Volume 139, Number 40



PERIODICAL

About the Front Page



Clouds over Kiowa County, Colorado, heralding the coming of some welcome rain over the past week.

Photo: Jeanne Sorensen

KiowaCountyPress.net

Vernon Koch honored with Quilt of Valor

The Vernon (Beattle) Koch family were present as he was awarded a Quilt of Valor September 12, 2026, at his home in Eads, Colorado.

His Granddaughter, Ashley, had this to say about her grandfather's military career: "When America called my Grandpa Beattle to service, he was proud to answer the call. In 1971, at 20 years old, he was drafted into the army and went through basic AIT training at Fort Lewis in Washington.

When he completed his training, he went on to serve during the war in Vietnam and at Fort Riley in Kansas. During his nearly two full years of service during the war, he was a mortar platoon gunner in the 196th Infantry Brigade.

He has many amazing stories about his time in Vietnam and shared that he received an Infantryman's Badge for his bravery while under fire in combat.

Not only is my grandpa a brave soldier, he is a venerable man our country and our



family is proud of, Grandpa we can't thank you enough for your service, and you more than deserve the honor of receiving this Quilt of Valor."

Beattle also received a

certificate that states, "The Quilts of Valor Foundation wishes to recognize you for your service to our nation. We consider it our privilege to do so. Though we may never know the extent of your sacrifice to protect and defend the

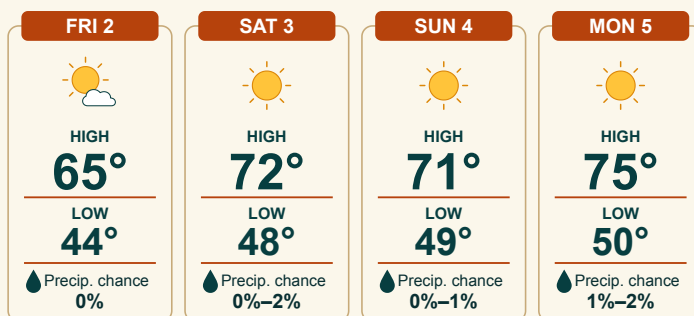
United States of America, we award you the Quilt of Valor as an expression of gratitude from a grateful nation." The quilt was presented by Colorado Prairie Quilters member, Carole Spady.

KIOWA COUNTY WEATHER

OCTOBER 2, 2026

FOUR-DAY FORECAST

Oct. 2-5, 2026



Precipitation chance: NWS range for day and night

THIS WEEK IN WEATHER HISTORY

On this day in 1986, Eads recorded a high of 95°F — the September 28 record on file.

NOAA Eads station records since 1907

OBSERVED WEATHER

Sept. 22-28, 2026 • 8 a.m. readings, previous 24 hours

Date	High °F	Low °F	Rain in.	Snow in.
Sep 22	75	56	0.05	
Sep 23	82	60	0.00	
Sep 24	71	60	1.61	
Sep 25	71	57	0.01	
Sep 26	70	50	0.00	
Sep 27	88	54	0.00	
Sep 28	85	59	0.01	

THIS YEAR VS. LAST	2026	2025
Week high / low	88 / 50	88 / 44
September rain, in.	3.64	1.23
Rain, year to date	10.45	16.51
September snow, in.	—	0.00
Snow, year to date	9.62	9.13

Kiowa County
Press

138 years and counting!

(USPS 2959-4000)

Legal newspaper in Kiowa County, CO

Periodical Postage paid at
Eads, Colorado 81036

POSTMASTER:

Send change of address to:
P.O. Box 248
Eads, CO 81036-0248

Deadline for Legal Notices:
4:00 p.m. Tuesday

Jeanne Sorensen - Print Editor
Chris Sorensen - Online Editor and
Publisher

1208 Maine Street • PO Box 248
Eads, CO 81036-0248
719-438-5800

editor@KiowaCountyPress.net

Office Hours:

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
(closed for lunch 1:00-2:00 p.m.)
Weekends by appointment.

Most content in this issue - and
more - is also available at
KiowaCountyPress.net.

75¢ / week print copy at the
newspaper business office and
merchants across Kiowa County.

Electronic subscriptions

\$24/year - anywhere in the world

Print subscriptions

\$30/year - Kiowa County
\$35/year - Colorado
\$40/year - All other states

Print edition published
Friday of each week.

KiowaCountyPress.net

Find more weather information, including current conditions and drought updates, at KiowaCountyPress.net.

ABOUT TOWN

Doris Lessenden



"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28 (NRSVUE)

That has been one of my favorite verses for many years. I have felt it is so true of those who love the Lord Jesus. I have loved Father God since childhood, and I know that He watches over me and answers my prayers. I have a good life. Oh, yes. There have been a few challenges along the way...but there is a reason, and I learned to cope.

Many lives around the community of Eads revolved around the homecoming activities last week. If you have access to Eads School Facebook, you may see some of the comical or surprising costumes. We have seen about six or more senior students from Eads around here working with the staff members they are shadowing, as they care for residents or outpatients who come for therapies or care.

I have observed that the many young men and women who come from Eads High appear to be older and more

capable than many young people. They have certainly endeared themselves to many people around Weisbrod and Prairie Pines and downtown.

At the homecoming activities, the older or more mature poured a lot of gas on the dampened wood to get a good fire going, and the cheers started louder. Because of several serious injuries in football, our Eads football team didn't have enough players to continue the season. So we are grateful that the other young men could finish the season by playing with the Wiley team.

Those who did go to the bonfire were able to see the crowning of the king and queen and to see the royalty court. I was gratified to see photos of the pretty dresses and attire of the students. Congratulations to those students who were chosen by their fellow students. Anna Wollert was crowned queen and Weston Mitchek is the king of EHS. Two fine young people!

The Eads girls easily won the volleyball games Friday. Saturday evening, they could go to the homecoming dance. Adults, do you remember those days?

I have heard many people upset and disgusted because there are only two main roads or streets to get into the north part of town. The Maine and Rittgers streets railroad crossings have been closed since Friday, September 18, while they lay two new railroad rails across those streets, and they are now waiting for asphalt to be laid.

Saturday morning, Septem-

ber 26, dawned with sunny weather, unlike most of the cloudy weather that we have had all week. I was so glad for the guests of Tyler and Colby Hill of Haswell, who hosted a big birthday party for their young son, Trace, at the Eads Senior Citizen Center. Both rooms were filled with their extended Stoker-Lessenden families and then lots of Colby's school friends, many of whom went to Tennessee to Ty and Colby's wedding. Those friendships have grown and enlarged since Tyler and Colby moved to Colorado. Of course, our family is so happy to have Colby back here in Colorado. Tyler assures me that he really likes to live here when I have said, "But it is so green and lovely back there." He assures me that the temperatures and the lack of bugs and moist heat are important factors to him. He is a jewel too.

When I came home from the birthday party, I joined the ladies on the balcony deck to listen to the wonderful piano music. In a few seconds I recognized that it was Burl Scherler from over southwest of Sheridan Lake. They loved to hear him outside, and there were even more gathered around him inside at the piano! We loved having him

to sing with and hum along. Afterwards I assured him that if he saw my tears, they were not for sadness but for happiness to hear how beautifully he plays such wonderful, powerful, loud runs on the keyboard, and for my memories and thankfulness to God.

Friday evening Gail Voss brought a book to me that was written by Gary Shotton, his autobiography. It is wonderful, so inspiring, with photos and such wonderful sharing of his life in Kiowa County. I always think of him as one of my "star" science fair students who continued on to graduate from the Colorado School of Mines. Gary continued to be a successful geological engineer and then a Christian businessman who spoke and inspired people in 35 countries. Gail also included a program from his funeral in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, in August of this year. People can check this book out at the senior center after October 1.

The Eads Praise Community Church hosted the Melton family of gospel singers from Illinois Sunday evening. They are a family of parents and twin daughters age 16 and a daughter age 21, who were lovely in harmony and presentation. During the service

Pastor's Pearls

Pastor Rich Z

STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES

"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones."

Proverbs 3:7,8

Betty (McKnight) Clark and D.L. and Judy Weeks were presented with community awards and flowers to honor them. Most moving and heart-touching to me were the letters that were written and the spoken words that were shared about how wonderful these people have been in our communities and with their families, schools, churches, and organizations, as well as occupations and family life. Judy Weeks was age 5 and I was 12 when we were in the same Pueblo hospital wards for polio care. That was a painful and tearful time.

But we were survivors.

Pages from the Past

19 Years Ago
October 7, 2011

TJ Watts & Wade Kreutzer won Team Roping Championship in USTRC Southern CO Classic held in Pueblo. The win qualified them in the national finals of Team Roping in Oklahoma City.

25 Years Ago
October 5, 2001

Students at Eads school have been collecting money & items of comfort for the victims of the September 11 tragedy.

40 Years Ago
October 3, 1986

The Plainview Marching Band competed in the Holly Gateway Parade taking home First Place honor.

50 Years Ago
October 1, 1976

Heavy rains this past week Big Sandy became a swift-moving river as it pushed fences, coyotes, debris & even roads out of its southward path.

Kiowa county residents can receive free vaccinations against the

swine flu.

75 Years Ago
October 5, 1951

Pikes Peak Natural Gas Co of Goodland KS has the franchise distribution system in the town of Eads. Crews arrived to get started on the natural gas system.

100 Years Ago
October 8, 1925

Mr. Colebourn, the honey man of Wiley was in Eads with his pet monkey amusing the children. **A dance will follow the** picture show Monday night. Music by the Eads boys & big time is assured.

**988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE**

Hometown Gas & Grill
719-438-2206
Eads CO-OP
719-438-2201

GNBank
The Best Place to Bank and Borrow
719-438-5331

139 Years and Counting!
**Kiowa County
Press**
719-438-5800

USDA UPDATE

Kiowa County USDA Service Center Staff

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

● **CRP CONTRACT MANAGEMENT-** Producers grazing CRP acreage to meet contract management requirements must remove the livestock by September 30.

● **ARC-PLC ELECTION and ENROLLMENT-** 2026 crop year - September 16 through December 11, 2026

● **LIVESTOCK FORAGE PROGRAM -** Kiowa County eligible for 5-month payment. Apply before March 1, 2027.

● **FALL ACREAGE REPORTING DEADLINE-** November 15, 2026 All fall seeded crops will need to be reported to crop insurance and/or FSA by the date of November 15th.

● **NON-INSURED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM or NAP** Sales closing date for native

grass is December 1, 2026. Cost is \$325.00 per producer, per crop.

VISIT Farmers.gov for more information regarding deadlines and programs available through FSA and NRCS.

OCTOBER PAYMENT CYCLE

CRP annual rental payments are set to be issued beginning Friday, October 2. Most offices will most likely not start issuing the payments until Monday, October 5th. If you have changed bank accounts, please notify the FSA office ASAP or the payment will be delayed.

2025 ARCPLC payments will be issued mid-October. For 2025, the election of either ARC-CO or PLC is irrelevant, producers will be paid on the higher of PLC or ARC-CO for the commodity.

ACREAGE REPORTING

Here in the Kiowa County FSA office, we're going to try something new concerning acreage reporting and ARCPLC enrollment. Each operator will be assigned an employee, and the operator will work with that employee for all of crop year 2027. The employee will complete both fall and spring acreage reporting, ARCPLC election and enrollment and obtain eligibility paperwork.

If you normally report planted acres to your crop insurance agent first; please request that the agent forward that information on to the FSA office.

Fall acreage reporting deadline is November 15, 2026.

2026 ARCPLC ELECTION AND ENROLLMENT

ARCPLC election and enrollment are now underway. Below are some talking points regarding 2026 and 2027 crop year. The office will most likely complete a multi-year contract, that will reduce the workload for the office in future years. If an operator enrolls into a multi-year contract, that operator can change the election during the applicable crop year election and enrollment process.

● 2026 - Sept. 16 through Dec. 11, 2026

● 2027- Nov. 2, 2026, through March 15, 2027

Producers have the option to sign a new multi-year con-

tract for 2026 through 2031.

Review the talking points below.

ARCPLC AND BASE ALLOCATION

● Agricultural producers can begin enrolling in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently updated to include more than 30 million new base acres.

● This expansion, the first in 20 years, was made possible by the Working Families Tax Cuts Act and is part of USDA's efforts to put Farmers First.

● Now that the base allocation process is complete, producers can make ARCPLC elections and enroll for the 2026 crop year from Sept. 16 through Dec. 11, 2026, and for the 2027 crop year from Nov. 2, 2026, through March 15, 2027. Producers can enroll into

● ARC-CO, based on county yield data for the commodity.

● PLC or Price Loss Coverage, based on national price for the commodity.

● Payments are based on 85% of the crop base on the farm. Producers can select ARC-CO or PLC on any commodity that has base acres on the farm.

● ARC-IC, Individual Coverage, looks at the combined revenue of all covered commodities planted across your entire enrolled farm. Payments are issued on 65% of the total base acres on the farm

tection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm

● Although election changes for 2026 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year.

● Existing multi-year contracts ended in 2025, but producers have the option to sign a new multi-year contract for 2026 through 2031

● Producers who opt out of a multi-year contract can enroll for the 2027 crop year starting Nov. 2, 2026, through March 15, 2027

● If producers do not submit their 2026 election by Dec. 11, 2026, their election remains the same as their 2025 election for crops on the farm, and the farm is ineligible for payments for the 2026 program year.

● Landowners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

● Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

BASE

ALLOCATION NOTIFICATIONS

● The opportunity for landowners to review their base allocation summaries and take necessary action ended Aug. 31, 2026.

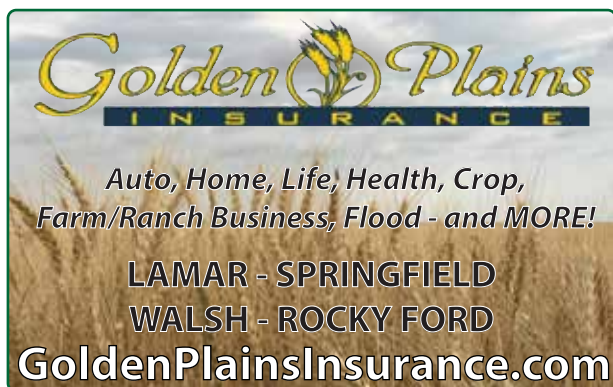
● This included correcting inaccurate information, designating subsequent acres or opting out of adding base acres

● Landowners did not lose base acres through the base allocation process

● If landowners did not notify FSA of changes, the base allocation summary is con-

● Because eligible acres exceeded the nationwide 30-million-acre cap, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is applying an across-the-board, prorated reduction of 3.69% to all newly allocated base acres

● Producers can now change their election and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which both provide crop-by-crop pro-



Golden Plains
INSURANCE

Auto, Home, Life, Health, Crop,
Farm/Ranch Business, Flood - and MORE!

LAMAR - SPRINGFIELD
WALSH - ROCKY FORD

GoldenPlainsInsurance.com

USDA Service Center

KIOWA COUNTY Contact Information

409 E. Lowell Avenue - PO Box 188, Eads, CO 81036
Telephone **719-438-5851** - FSA (Ext 2), NRCS (Ext 3).
FSA Fax number: fax2mail 844-332-7501

FSA - Farm Service Agency Staff

- Dawna Weirich - CED dawna.weirich@usda.gov
- Brandi Nevius - PA brandi.nevius@usda.gov
- Teri Ellis - PA teri.ellis@usda.gov
- Katie Kopasz - PA katherine.kopasz@usda.gov

OFFICE EMAIL: SM.SA.CO.KIOWA@USDA.GOV

Kiowa County FSA Office Hours
Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

NRCS - Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff

409 E. Lowell Avenue - PO Box 188, Eads, CO 81036
Telephone **719-438-5851** - FSA (Ext 2), NRCS (Ext 3).
FSA Fax number: fax2mail 844-332-7501

- James Brenner - james.brenner@usda.gov -
Acting Resource Team Leader

Kiowa County Farm Loan Contact Information

Telephone **719-336-3437** (ext 2)

- Nicole Lubbers - nicole.lubbers@usda.gov

Cheyenne County FSA Office Hours
Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm



Continued on Page A5

Rain trims extreme and exceptional drought as Colorado closes out the water year

CHRIS SORENSEN

(Kiowa County Press)

Rain over parts of Colorado last week pulled back the state's most severe drought categories, according to the National Drought Mitigation Center, though exceptional drought still grips much of the central mountains and the San Luis Valley. The U.S. Drought Monitor map released Thursday, September 24, reflects conditions as of 8 a.m. Tuesday, September 22.

Extreme and exceptional drought combined now cover 38 percent of Colorado, down from 44 percent a week earlier, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The National Drought Mitigation Center said most of the High Plains "received beneficial rainfall," but noted that more precipitation will be needed to ease extreme drought across much of Colorado, where areas of exceptional drought remain in the central part of the state.

Colorado drought conditions - September 22, 2026 - National Drought Mitigation Center

SNOWPACK

Colorado's 2026 water year ends Wednesday, September 30, closing a year that saw drought steadily tighten its hold on the high country. When the water year began on September 30, 2025, 46 percent of the state was free of drought and no area was classified in exceptional drought. Today just 6 percent of Colorado is drought-free and exceptional drought covers 13 percent of the state, concentrated along the mountain spine that feeds the state's major rivers.

Mountain snowpack is typically negligible this time of year, and the new accumulation season is only beginning. That leaves reservoirs and streams heading into winter dependent on how quickly fall and early-winter storms can rebuild snowpack across the central and southern

mountains, where the deepest drought is centered.

Near-term moisture may help. The National Drought Mitigation Center reported that remnants of a tropical system are expected to bring significant moisture to the Four Corners states and the western Great Plains over the next several days, with heavy rainfall in the forecast. The 6- to 10-day outlook for September 29 through October 3 favors above-normal precipitation over much of the central United States.

DROUGHT CONDITIONS

Exceptional drought, the most severe category, eased from 15 percent to 13 percent of Colorado this week, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The largest pullback came along the western edge of the exceptional drought core in the Colorado River corridor west of the Continental Divide, where conditions improved to extreme drought. The core itself, stretching from the central mountains south through the San Luis Valley, remained in place, including Eagle County, Lake County, Summit County, Chaffee County and Alamosa County, each of which was largely or entirely in exceptional drought a week ago.

Extreme drought contracted from 29 percent to 25

percent of the state. Improvement was visible in northwestern Colorado, where extreme drought gave way to severe drought in several areas, and in the southwestern part of the state, where moderate drought expanded.

On the southeastern plains, the two small pockets of extreme drought that sat along the lower Arkansas Valley a week ago were removed, and moderate drought expanded across much of the region, continuing the improvement that began the previous week. Baca County remains the driest area on the southeastern plains, with extreme drought still covering its southern portion. In northeastern Colorado, abnormally dry conditions expanded slightly, while the area free of drought held near 6 percent of the state.

USDA Update Continued on page A4

sidered accurate and complete; however, an across-the-board factor will apply

- FSA determined the base allocation percentage reduction using all acreage reported as eligible, and new base acres will automatically be allocated to farms after applying the 3.69% reduction.

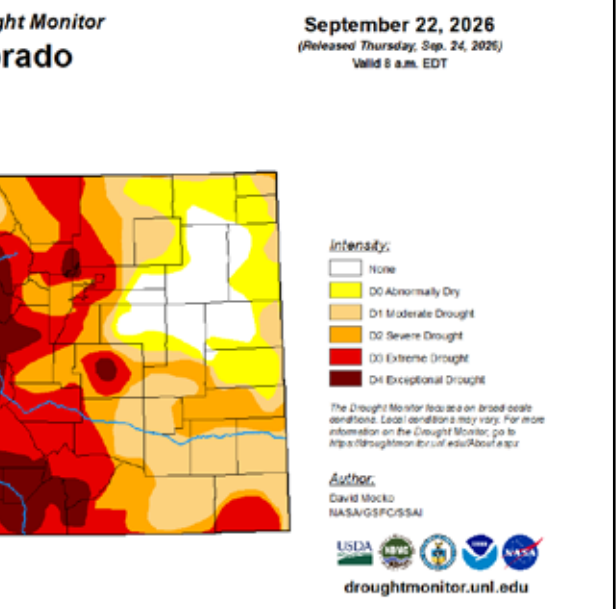
- Base allocation notifications will be available beginning Sept. 16, 2026.

- Landowners can access notifications online at fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc using a Login.gov account.

Landowners who do not currently have a Login.gov account can contact their FSA county office to obtain their base allocation notification beginning Sept. 16, 2026.

CROP INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC election and enrollment can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products.



Week	Date	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	9/22/26	6	8	18	29	25	13
Last Week to Current	9/15/26	6	6	16	28	29	15
3 Months Ago to Current	6/23/26	0	3	12	47	29	9
Start of Calendar Year to Current	1/6/26	26	28	30	11	4	1
Start of Water Year to Current	9/30/25	46	9	9	22	14	0
One Year Ago to Current	9/23/25	43	10	9	22	15	0

STATISTICS

Compared to the previous week, drought-free area held at 6 percent of Colorado, while abnormally dry conditions grew from 6 to 8 percent. Moderate drought expanded from 16 to 18 percent and severe drought from 28 to 29 percent. Extreme drought declined from 29 to 25 percent, and exceptional drought fell from 15 to 13 percent, shifting a portion of the state into less severe categories.

One year ago, on Sep-

tember 23, 2025, conditions were far milder. Forty-three percent of the state was free of drought, and no part of Colorado was in exceptional drought. Abnormally dry conditions covered 10 percent of the state, moderate drought 9 percent, severe drought 22 percent and extreme drought 15 percent.

Drought categories include (ranked from least to most severe) abnormally dry (D0), moderate (D1), severe (D2), extreme (D3), and exceptional (D4) drought.

or PLC are ineligible for the Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.

Crop insurance information is available through USDA's Risk Management Agency.

DROUGHT MONITOR

The red in Kiowa County is gone off the drought monitor. Hopefully, with the predicted moisture for this week, the color will be yellow or white in a couple of weeks

Colorado's Medicaid costs exceed budget by \$443 million

JOELLE WEBB

(The Center Square)

Medicaid expenses are expected to be \$443 million over the budget in Colorado in 2026-27.

That's almost three times the previous fiscal year's budget gap.

For 2025-2026, the Medicaid program was over the budget by \$157.9 million, which amounted to 2.7% of the state Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's appropriations.

The numbers mean Colorado's Medicaid spending is growing much faster than the state can afford, said Mark Ferrandino, director of the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting. That spending dilemma is in addition to Colorado recently being accused of owing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid \$8 million for faulty and inaccurate payments.

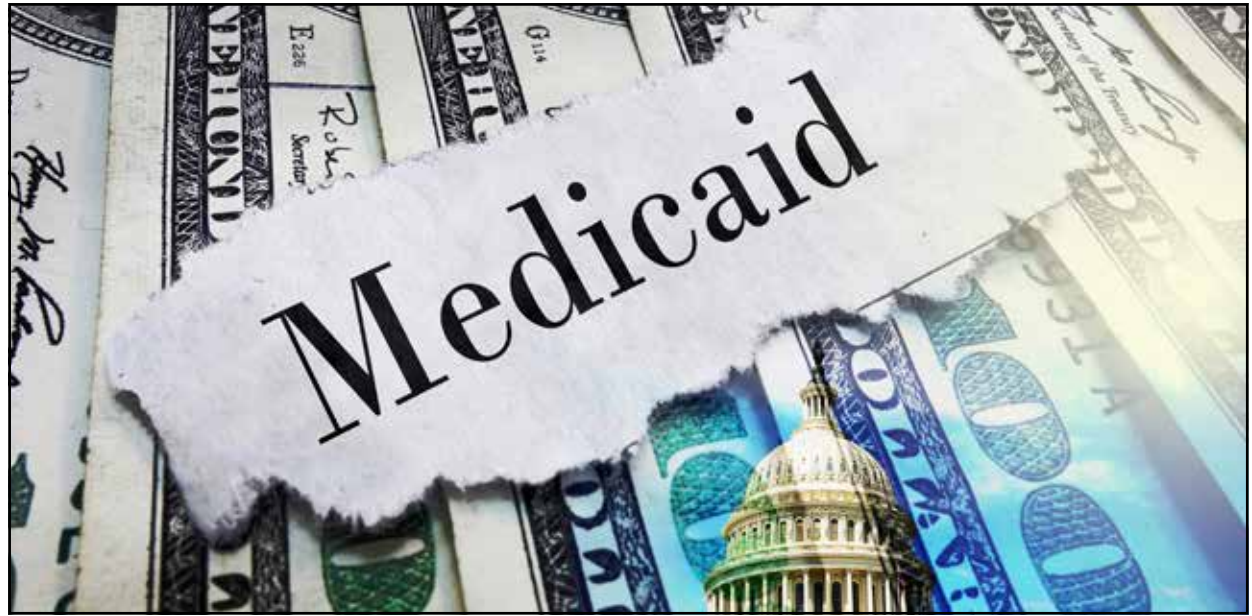
Ferrandino recently discussed the budget gaps with legislators. He noted Medicaid services are costing much more than previously expected.

About a year ago, the legislature was already wrestling with the problem, as covered in this paper's report on **competing Medicaid cost-control plans Colorado budget writers were weighing.**

For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, Colorado lawmakers appropriated \$5.775 billion, according to the September 17 Medicaid Budget report. The forecast adjustment increased by \$443 million, resulting in a new total of more than \$6.218 billion for the adjusted budget.

While states across the country are experiencing problems with Medicaid funding, lawmakers such as state Representative Kyle Brown, D-North Denver, claimed Colorado's budget is a unique dilemma.

Brown said Colorado's allocated Medicaid funding has grown at a larger and quicker pace than any other portion of the state's budget. This is in large part due to more people utilizing the service and a substantial increase



in insurance providers' rates – including the cost of prescription drugs and behavioral health care.

Colorado has also witnessed a massive increase in those receiving Medicare and Medicaid coverage. Cara Welch, the Colorado Hospital Association's communications director, sent The Center Square its quarterly financial update, which included a graph showing that the number of individuals covered by Medicare and Medicaid has grown by nearly 44% since 2024.

However, due to budget cuts to Medicare and Medicaid as part of the Republican-dominated Congress's passage of the Big Beautiful Bill Act in 2025, federal dollars only pay about 70 cents to every dollar charged by hospitals. The legislation reflects President Donald Trump's priorities for domestic policies.

According to a new report by the Colorado Hospital Association, the federal law will lower the amount of funds accessible through Medicare provider fees from 6% net patient revenue to 3.5% through 2032. The association said that will cause the state to risk losing more than \$11 billion in federal money.

"Medicaid costs are rising nationally, even as enrollment remains flat or declines," said Marc Williams,

the public information officer for the Colorado Department of Health Care and Policy Financing.

"HCPF is seeing similar trends reported by other state Medicaid agencies and national organizations, with cost growth driven by health care utilization, long-term care, pharmacy, behavioral health, and provider and managed care rate increases," Williams told The Center Square.

The Colorado Hospital Association noted the same issues in relation to limited funding for certain services and high utilization.

Costs per person have increased more significantly than the uptick in the number of Coloradans enrolled, according to Welch, the association's spokesperson.

On that matter, Williams referenced the KFF's 2025 survey of state Medicaid officials. Williams said the survey by KFF, a nonprofit that studies health care, "found similar cost pressures, while Health Affairs [a news website] reported that Medicaid spending per enrollee increased 16.6% in 2024, compared with 6.5% in 2023."

Ally Sullivan, Governor Jared Polis's deputy press secretary, said the Democratic governor shared similar concerns with the Department of Health Care and Policy Financing.

"The primary drivers of the FY 2025-26 over-expenditure are greater-than-expected costs in acute care; prescription drugs costs that were impacted by federal policies that resulted in fewer rebates from drug manufacturers; behavioral health and community-based long-term care," Sullivan told The Center Square.

During the health care department's last meeting in July, officials discussed numbers in a presentation regarding a monumental Colorado bill called "Cover All Coloradans." One of the slides expressly states, as part of Trump's Big Beautiful Bill, it will "[d]isenroll certain members such as refugees and asylees."

The Big Beautiful Bill Act does not mention refugees and asylees as being covered by general Medicaid dollars. However, prior sections of the bill, such as section 1903(v)(4), say coverage of some individuals in those categories would be preserved by the new law – meaning refugees and asylees would be eligible for qualifying emergency services.

The federal bill also placed stricter restrictions on not just residency, but nationality status, for those eligible to receive federal Medicaid dollars. The recent \$8 million repayment bill Colorado received from the federal gov-

ernment was not explicitly related to Medicaid funding for noncitizens.

Colorado was under federal investigation in 2025 as part of crackdown to track down federal dollars being spent on noncitizens for health care. The state was warned by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid that if Colorado did not hand over documents relating to patients' personal information – which allegedly included some noncitizens – the Trump administration would withhold nearly \$18 million in federal funding. That's a different matter than the \$8 million overpayment.

"In the face of federal cutbacks, ensuring eligible Coloradans have access to Medicaid is a top priority," Sullivan told The Center Square. "The governor supports data-driven strategies to put Medicaid on a more sustainable path to ensure that Coloradans who are eligible can continue to receive healthcare coverage. The state and the Legislature have been working for over two years to create a sustainable funding model that slows the growth of Medicaid."

Colorado has failed to stay within budget for the last two years for health care spending. It is now entering its third year with significant budget deficits.

Aerospace firms face competition, provide \$399M in taxes

LIAM HIBBERT

(The Center Square)

Colorado remains a leader in the nation's high-paying aerospace sector, but could risk losing ground as other states expand into the field, according to observers inside and outside the industry.

A look at **how Colorado businesses have been expanding across the state** offers broader context for the industries driving the state's economic growth.

"We think this is an area that the state could improve its game on and become more competitive against some of those other states that are very well funded and very organized," said Bob Cone, program manager at Aerospace Colorado, an association promoting the state's aerospace and defense industry.

"We are not as well organized right now," said Cone, who's also a board member for the Colorado Space Business Roundtable.

Cone told The Center Square he agreed with a new Colorado Chamber of Commerce report about aerospace - an industry that gives a boost to the state's tax base.

In a state that often faces budget squeezes, the aerospace industry brought in an estimated \$399 million in taxes across 2025, according to the chamber's report. The total state budget is \$46.8 billion.

Colorado's aerospace industry, valued at \$14.2 billion according to the Colorado Chamber of Commerce, directly supports over 61,000 jobs in the state.

"It keeps our universities going," Cone said. "It keeps CU Boulder [University of Colorado, Boulder] going, which graduates the largest number of aerospace engineer graduates of any university in the country. It keeps those aerospace program educators employed and in Boulder, but also in Colorado Springs, in Denver, in Golden at the School of Mines and other places where they are educating the aerospace workforce."



"There's an economic impact too from all those people going to school and getting advanced degrees and supporting those education institutions in addition to what they do when they go out and become part of the workforce, working for an aerospace company," said Cone. "They buy a house, they buy food, and they go up to the mountain skiing - all of the things that we do here in Colorado."

Advocates argued the sector is under competitive pressure, while Governor Jared Polis called the chamber's report "strange."

"Colorado is in a good, strong position now," said Rachel Beck, executive director of the Colorado Chamber Foundation. "But in order for us to keep that position, we're going to need to be more proactive in terms of how we support the industry and how we are doing economic development related to it - if we're going to keep up with other states."

The aerospace industry has long been a major player in Colorado, with an economic presence going back to before NASA's formation in 1958, Cone said.

The industry directly supported over 61,000, or roughly 2% of the state's total job market, with a typical salary of \$179,500 - nearly double the average Colorado worker's. Beck added that each aerospace job created two more jobs in the state.

"These are good, high-paying jobs for Colorado," said Beck. "Many of them don't

require a degree. There are lots of opportunities in the industry for a variety of folks to earn a good living."

But the industry has begun to see some warning signs as other states look to expand their footprint in aerospace, according to the Colorado Chamber report.

Beginning late 2025, the White House ordered the relocation of the U.S. Space Command headquarters to Alabama from Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado. Between 2019 and 2025, Colorado added over 9,000 aerospace jobs, keeping up with the standard pace of industry growth over that period, according to the chamber's

report. But in 2025, the state lost 171 jobs in the industry.

"I don't know that represents a downturn as much as it is a blip," said Cone of Aerospace Colorado. "At least that's how I would see it right now, because I walk and talk and shake hands with aerospace people pretty much all day every day, and it just seems to me that companies are growing."

The Colorado Chamber report argued the state has too many regulations in place that slow down business development and make it too costly.

Beck gave the example of slow building permits in Colorado making other states more attractive to business. In August, Polis signed an executive order to simplify the building permit process.

"Colorado's aerospace industry is growing fast in part from our work at the state to build and support the strongest aerospace workforce, including by building more housing, investing in education and pathways to skills while saving families money, and attracting businesses that create more jobs and grow our economy," Polis told The Center Square in an email. "These are all part

of the reasons Colorado is the best place to start and grow a company, especially in aerospace one of our fastest growing areas."

The Democratic governor also highlighted NASA's selection of Arapahoe Community College, located in the Denver area, as an Aerospace Workforce Hub in August.

But with the fear of outside competition slowing Colorado's aerospace industry and eating at its tax base, the chamber's report recommended several changes. The chamber's biggest priorities are for the state government to increase its support for the industry through better marketing and fewer regulations.

"What we're looking for is for the state to really support [aerospace] from an economic development perspective," said Beck. "Doing things like marketing our state as a hub for those businesses, removing barriers to permitting and making it easier for businesses to get into sites that they need."

The chamber also called for more workforce training programs from the state and for Colorado to become a more business-friendly environment.

Colorado health insurance premiums expected to jump by 10% next year

SARA WILSON

(Colorado Newswire)

Coloradans who buy their health insurance on the individual market, rather than getting coverage through their employer, will see around a 10% increase in their premiums next year, the state's Department of Insurance announced Tuesday.

Last year, a report flagged that Colorado health insurance premiums could spike in 2026 - the state's latest announcement confirms those fears were well-founded.

The state's average is less than the 15% national median, but it differs based on region. People in the Grand Junction area will experience a 15.5% increase, while those in the Eastern Plains are on

the lower end with a 5.9% increase.

In the small group market, premiums are expected to increase by 14%. Rates increase every year to some extent.

"Despite the loss of the enhanced premium tax credits, we are doing everything we can to keep health insurance prices down so Coloradans can afford access to health care," Michael Conway, the state's insurance commissioner, said in a statement. "I want to thank our rate review team for all their hard work this filing season. Because of their diligence, we are saving Coloradans millions of dollars. But make no mistake: Congress still needs to restore the subsidies that millions of Americans relied on to afford their health insurance."

Conway was referring to Congress's failure to extend subsidies, known as enhanced premium tax credits, that helped people afford health insurance on the individual market set up by the Affordable Care Act.

Colorado's individual health insurance marketplace is called Connect for Health.

Colorado lawmakers passed a bill this year to fund its own smaller insurance subsidy. Financially-assisted customers in Colorado will have a monthly premium increase of around \$20, versus around \$69 per month without the support, according to the state.

Open enrollment begins November 1.

State says there's enough evidence to investigate Weiser

JOELLE WEBB

(The Center Square)

The Colorado Secretary of State's Office says there's enough evidence to warrant an investigation into Attorney General Phil Weiser's compliance with campaign finance laws.

State law doesn't allow campaign donations to exceed \$1,450. The office of Secretary of State Jena Griswold, a Democrat, issued its determination after reports of the Weiser campaign failing to make refunds for 46 donations that exceeded \$1,450. Under state law, any amount beyond \$1,450 must be refunded within 10 days, which, according to the complaints against Weiser, was not done.

Weiser, a Democrat, is running against Republican candidate Victor Marx to succeed Democratic Governor Jared Polis, who's termed out.

Following two campaign finance complaints to the Colorado Secretary of State's Office earlier this month against Weiser, the state's election division on Tuesday

issued a notice of initial review. It offered an opportunity for Weiser's gubernatorial campaign to fix problems and come into full compliance by October 6.

Two complaints were filed with the Secretary of State's Office on September 8 and September 10, respectively, by Danielle Neuschwanger, a Colorado Springs area real estate broker, against Weiser. Neuschwanger ran unsuccessfully in the Republican primary for governor in 2022 and went into the general election as the American Constitution Party candidate. That was year Polis was re-elected governor.

Neuschwanger's first complaint identified 18 instances on Colorado's TRACER website, where campaign contributions are publicly available, that the Weiser campaign did not refund contributors who made donations over the legally allowed amount of \$1,450 within 10 days after they were accepted.

The second complaint, which was filed two days later, identified 28 instances where



the same allegation applied. Neuschwanger claimed these additional 28 contributions also violated the law.

The complaints show the TRACER website listing donations as high as \$2,392.

The Secretary of State's Campaign and Political Finance Rules, specifically Rule

10.6 (8 CCR 1505-6), states that once a candidate discovers an excess dollar amount in donation, they must refund the excess amount within 10 days of the receipt, or three days after receiving notification from the filing office, whichever is sooner.

On Tuesday, the Secretary of State's Election Division released a response that included a notice and opportunity to "cure" or resolve the issue. Weiser's campaign has until October 6, or 10 business days, to "submit a Notice of Intent to Cure form to the Division and to cure any deficiencies specified in [the] notice or provide other relevant information on how Respondents have cured the alleged violations and substantially complied with the law."

Jack Todd, the Secretary of State Office's communications director, told The Center Square Wednesday that the office was unable to comment further about Weiser. Todd also did not specify what the repercussions would be if Weiser's campaign does not refund the donations exceeding \$1,450 by the October 6 deadline.

But Rule 10.6 of the campaign finance rules says an administrative enforcement action could be triggered.

Nate Jackson, Weiser's campaign spokesperson, told The Center Square that "the

campaign takes all its obligations under Colorado law seriously. As noted in the complaint, our campaign has already cured all the alleged violations."

The Center Square was able to verify on the TRACER website that some contributions were refunded. But they were not refunded within the 10-day period required by Colorado election law, according to the website's data.

"This complaint - filed by a Victor Marx supporter and former Republican candidate for governor - is unserious," Jackson told The Center Square on Wednesday. "Nothing can distract from Marx's egregious and careless flouting of campaign finance laws - violations so serious that he could face potentially historic, unprecedented fines from the state."

The TRACER website shows Neuschwanger did not make any contributions to Marx's campaign.

Neuschwanger was not available for an interview before the publication of this story.

Marx's campaign emailed The Center Square Wednesday about the Weiser campaign's response to the allegations.

"We are disappointed, though hardly surprised, that Phil Weiser would once again try to sidestep his own conduct by pointing fingers everywhere but the mirror," said Dan McCauley, the Marx campaign's executive assistant.

"Mr. Weiser calls this complaint 'unserious.' That is a curious word choice from a candidate whose campaign just had to 'cure' a stack of campaign finance violations it never should have committed," McCauley said.

The Secretary of State's Office, meanwhile, has said it will make a determination about an allegation made in early August against Marx. The allegation was made by Darcy Schoening, a former director of special initiatives for the Colorado Republican Party. She alleged that across 111 contributors, there were 197 illegal campaign donations.

Wanted: Colorado parents to help direct new school meal grants

ERIC GALATAS

(Colorado News Connection)

Colorado is rolling out nearly \$24 million in grants to support the **Healthy School Meals for All** program passed by voters in 2022.

School districts are also creating Student Parent Advisory Committees to ensure the grants make school meals more nutritious, culturally relevant and appealing to kids.

Amalia Villalta's two daughters attend middle and high school in Jefferson County. She said she signed up for committee work because today's children are tomorrow's leaders.

"I invite all parents in every single county in Colorado to get involved because every decision we make today will impact the health and the future of our children," Villalta urged.

The grants mark a major

milestone in the continued rollout of the popular program ensuring every Colorado student has access to free, nutritious school meals. The money will help schools across the state upgrade cafeteria equipment, purchase food from local farms and ranches and increase pay for front line school nutrition staff. Interested parents should contact their school's head cook or visit **Guidebook.NourishColorado.org**.

Jessica Wright, senior director of healthy food in institutions for the advocacy group Nourish Colorado, said her team's training and technical assistance can help cafeterias transition from unpacking highly processed foods to meals made from scratch with local ingredients. Despite this year's drought and a late freeze destroying many crops, she said schools are learning how to adapt their menus while still being

a reliable customer for food producers.

"Farmers can be able to see school meal programs as one market channel that they can rely on and receive fair value for the food that they are spending their livelihoods growing, raising and producing for us," Wright explained.

Villalta stressed when students have access to nutritious meals they will actually eat, they are better prepared to succeed in the classroom. She noted the parents she works with have already introduced three new dishes at Jeffco Schools, one from Venezuela and two from Mexico, which got good reviews from students of all backgrounds.

"We discovered that when you present those dishes, and they include local produce and they are presented in a very natural way, they received 100% acceptance among the students," Villalta reported.

ID number would have to appear on Colorado mail ballots if amendment passes

LINDSEY TOOMER

(Colorado Newsline)

Coloradans who vote with a mail ballot must sign the ballot envelope. If voters approve a proposed constitutional amendment in November, they would also need to include an ID number on the envelope.

In 2020, Colorado expanded mail ballot tracking tools for voters — see **how Colorado's mail ballot verification system was built up before Amendment 84 was proposed.**

Amendment 84 would require voters to write the last four digits of their Social Security number, their Colorado driver's license number or their REAL ID number on their mail ballot envelope to ensure it is counted.

Two issue committees formally filed with the Colorado secretary of state's office to oppose the measure, and voter advocacy organizations have also voiced their opposition, including the League of Women Voters of Colorado, Mi Familia Vota and Common Cause Colorado. The Colorado Democratic Party also opposes it.

Suzanne Taheri, a conservative attorney and former deputy secretary of state, is backing the initiative alongside Chuck Broerman, a conservative former El Paso County clerk, through the Colorado Voter Trust Initiative. The initiative is funded by the Coalition for American Prosperity and Growth, a "dark money" group.

Having these extra administrative barriers, strict new ID mandates or additional verification hurdles will only make it harder for eligible Latinos and other citizens to participate.

— Christo Luna, director in Colorado of Mi Familia Vota

The amendment would affect only mail ballots, which are automatically mailed to every registered Colorado voter. The vast majority of Coloradans do not vote in person. Those who do already



need to present a valid ID at the polls. As a constitutional amendment, the measure would need 55% of the vote to pass.

Supporters of the measure say it creates a secondary verification method to confirm a ballot belongs to the right voter, reinforcing confidence in elections. Taheri did not respond prior to publication to Newsline's questions about the goals, logistics and costs of the measure.

Opponents say the proposal adds privacy concerns for voters without further securing Colorado's election process. The measure will lead to disenfranchisement, because more ballots could end up rejected and not counted over discrepancies in what voters put on their ballot envelope, they say.

Secretary of State Jena Griswold's office said it does not comment on ballot measures since it runs and certifies elections in the state, even measures like Amendment 84 that would affect her office.

Nonpartisan legislative staff's analysis of the measure estimated it would increase spending for county clerks by \$2.5 million in the first year and up to \$1.2 million in future years. The costs include additional work hours for election judges to verify ID numbers, a curing process for voters to fix discrepancies, and a redesign of ballot materials and envelopes. The secretary of state's office would also see increased costs if the amendment passes.

Matt Crane, executive director of the Colorado County Clerks Association, said the organization is still working to understand the logistical and fiscal impact Amendment 84 would have on county clerks, he said.

County clerks would need to redesign their mail ballot envelopes, and it's unclear what that would cost, Crane said. They're also working to determine how the amendment would affect different communities, like college students who might not have a Colorado license or know their Social Security number.

The association tries to avoid taking positions on ballot measures since it's the "independent referee for elections," Crane said, but occasionally it will. Some clerks have voiced support for the measure, while others are against it.

'SOLUTION IN SEARCH OF A PROBLEM'

Colorado's existing signature verification process for mail ballots is already secure and recognized as "a gold standard," Christo Luna, director in Colorado of Mi Familia Vota said.

"Having these extra administrative barriers, strict new ID mandates or additional verification hurdles will only make it harder for eligible Latinos and other citizens to participate, increasing the risk that legitimate ballots are rejected unnecessarily," Luna said. "We do feel that if this passes, it's definitely going to be a big problem here

in Colorado."

The new requirement would discourage people from voting, given concerns about their sensitive identification information, Luna said. He said it would also diminish community and government trust.

Amendment 84 is a politically motivated attempt to make it harder for people to vote and will result in eligible Colorado voters having their ballots rejected and votes not counted.
— **ALY BELKNAP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMON CAUSE COLORADO**

Aly Belknap, executive director of Colorado Common Cause, said a requirement to place personally identifiable information on a ballot can put Colorado voters at risk of having their identities stolen or compromised. Voters already provide an ID number when they register to vote, she said.

"Amendment 84 is a politically motivated attempt to make it harder for people to vote and will result in eligible Colorado voters having their ballots rejected and votes not counted," Belknap said in a statement.

It would draw out the time it takes election officials to process and count votes, Belknap said, delaying official election results.

The League of Women Voters of Colorado opposes Amendment 84, because Colorado already has a secure and reliable system to verify

mail ballots, Beth Hendrix, executive director of the League, said. All it will do is lead to the rejection of more ballots from eligible voters.

"This measure, it won't make our elections safer," Hendrix said. "It just makes them harder to navigate, and it puts eligible Coloradans' votes at risk over simple clerical errors."

Hendrix expects the measure would result in a substantial work load increase for election workers, too.

Handwriting varies from person to person, Hendrix said, and the necessity for elections staff to verify ID numbers creates more opportunities for a ballot to be rejected. Colorado has a system in place for voters to "cure" their ballots if a signature is rejected, and a similar system would be needed to cure ID numbers election officials cannot read or match to an eligible voter.

"The whole point seems to be to keep noncitizens from voting," Hendrix said. "And noncitizens do not vote. It is illegal for them to do that, and the proven cases where it has happened, I mean, the numbers are so minuscule that they would not threaten any election. So this is a solution in search of a problem."

Thousands of Coloradans need to cure their ballots through the signature verification process each election, and that number can increase if election officials need to verify another item like an ID number.

The Bell Policy Center, a liberal nonprofit advocacy organization, said in its explanation of the measure that while ID numbers offer a "more objective form of voter verification" than signatures, the requirements "do nothing to improve election security given the lack of evidence of mail voter fraud."

"However, they do create new barriers to voting for eligible voters who may not have certain forms of ID, including people who are older, low-income, live in rural areas, disabled, and are from communities of color," the Center's explainer says.

AREA SCHOOLS - SPORTS SCORES- SCHEDULES



VOLLEYBALL

SCORES

CLASS 1A

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

- Greeley County @ Cheyenne Wells 2-10
- Greeley County 3
- Cheyenne Wells 0
- Walsh 1-9 @ Moscow
- Walsh 0
- Moscow 2

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- #19 Burlington (2A) 7-3 @ #19 Eads 6-5
- Burlington 3
- Eads 1
- #6 Cheraw 10-2 @ #2 Swink 10-0
- Cheraw 2
- Swink 3
- #8 Hi-Plains 7-3 @ #5 Granada 10-2
- Hi-Plains 2
- Granada 3
- #16 South Baca 7-3 @ #4 McClave 11-4
- South Baca 0
- McClave 3
- Springfield 5-9 @ #21 Wiley 8-6
- Springfield 1
- Wiley 3
- #15 Stratton 6-2 @ Idalia 5-6
- Stratton 3
- Idalia 2

- Kit Carson 2-10 @ (2A) Rocky Ford 3-12
- Kit Carson 3
- Rocky Ford 0
- #11 Flagler @ (2A) Byers
- Flagler 3
- Byers 2
- (2A) #3 Evangel Christian Academy @ Genoa-Hugo/Karval
- Evangel Christian 3
- Genoa-Hugo/Karval 0

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

- Bethune 5-9 @ #14 Otis 11-5
- Bethune 0
- Otis 3
- #19 Burlington (2A) 7-3 @ Cheyenne Wells 2-10
- Burlington 3
- Cheyenne Wells 0
- Kit Carson 2-10 @ #6 Cheraw 10-2
- Kit Carson 0
- Cheraw 3
- #16 South Baca 7-3 @ Springfield 5-9
- South Baca 3
- Springfield 2
- #11 Flagler 10-4 @ (2A) Limon 4-5
- Flagler 3
- Limon 0
- Genoa-Hugo/Karval @ #24 Kiowa
- Genoa-Hugo/Karval 1
- Kiowa 3

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

- #11 Flagler 10-4 @ Deer Trail 2-9
- Flagler 3
- Deer Trail 0
- #8 Hi-Plains 7-3 @ Genoa-Hugo/Karval 1-11
- Hi-Plains 3
- Genoa-Hugo/Karval 1
- Manzanola 1-6 @ #19 Eads 6-5
- Manzanola 0
- Eads 3
- #21 Wiley 8-6 @ #5 Granada 10-2
- Wiley 0
- Granada 3
- Des Moines @ Kim/Branson
- Des Moines 3
- Kim/Branson 0
- #15 Stratton @ (2A) Crowley County
- Stratton 3
- Crowley County 0

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

- #8 Hi-Plains 7-3 @ #2 Swink 10-0
- Hi-Plains 0
- Swink 3
- #4 McClave 11-4 vs. #14 Otis 11-5 (Tournament)
- McClave 2
- Otis 0
- #4 McClave vs (2A) #3 Evangel Christian Academy Tournament
- McClave 2
- Evangel Christian Academy 1

Walsh 1-9 @ #6 Cheraw 10-2

- Walsh 0
- Cheraw 3
- #6 Granada vs (2A) #5 Akron Tournament
- Granada 1
- Akron 2
- #6 Granada vs (2A) #3 Evangel Christian Academy Tournament
- Granada 1
- Evangel Christian Academy 2
- #4 McClave vs (2A) #5 Akron Tournament
- McClave 2
- Akron 0
- #6 Granada vs (2A) Custer County Tournament
- Granada 2
- Custer County 0

CLASS 2A

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- Las Animas 4-5 @ Crowley County 2-9
- Las Animas 3
- Crowley County 0
- #4 Merino 8-2 @ Limon 4-5
- Merino 3
- Limon 1

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

- Crowley County 2-9 @ Fowler 4-5
- Crowley County 0
- Fowler 3
- Rocky Ford 3-12 @ Rye 6-7
- Rocky Ford 0
- Rye 3

CLASS 3A

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- Colorado Springs Christian 5-8 @ #23 Lamar 7-3
- Colorado Springs Christian 1
- Lamar 3
- Fountain Valley (2A) 1-5 @ La Junta 8-4
- Fountain Valley 2
- La Junta 3

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

- Banning Lewis Academy 2-7 @ La Junta 8-4
- Banning Lewis Academy 3
- La Junta 0
- #23 Lamar 7-3 @ Woodland Park 5-3
- Lamar 0
- Woodland Park 3

- Saturday, September 26 Rye (2A) 6-7 vs. La Junta 8-4 (Tournament)
- Rye 1
- La Junta 2
- Swallows Charter Academy (2A) 8-3 vs. La Junta 8-4 (Tournament)
- Swallows Charter Academy 1
- La Junta 2
- Thomas MacLaren School (2A) 4-7 vs. La Junta 8-4 (Tournament)
- Thomas MacLaren School 1
- La Junta 2

EADS EAGLES ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP

4TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4TH 9:00 A.M.

A STRONG ALUMNI COMMUNITY BUILDS BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

HOLE SPONSORSHIP \$250

HOLE PRIZE SPONSOR \$75

MISC. SPONSOR ANY AMOUNT

Fundraiser for the Eads Alumni Association Scholarship Fund

Reach out to Dawna Weirich or Megan Herren for more information.

HONORING OUR PAST • SUPPORTING OUR FUTURE



VOLLEYBALL

SCHEDULE

CLASS 1A

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- Cheyenne Wells 2-10 @ Genoa-Hugo/Karval 1-12
- #18 Holly 8-4 @ #19 Eads 6-5
- #17 South Baca 7-3 @ #5 Granada 10-3
- #23 Wiley 8-6 @ Kit Carson 2-10
- #16 Stratton 7-2 @ Limon (2A) 4-5
- Walsh 1-9 @ Las Animas (2A) 4-5
- Kim Branson 0-12 @ (2A) Trinidad 3-7
- #2 Swink 10-0 (2A) #24 Hoehne

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- #18 Holly 8-4 @ #17 South Baca 7-3
- Kit Carson 2-10 @ Bethune 5-9
- Manzanola 1-6 @

#5 Cheraw 10-2

- #2 Swink 10-0 @ #6 Granada 10-3
- #23 Wiley 8-6 @ Kim/Branson 0-12

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- Genoa-Hugo/Karval 1-12 @ #11 Flagler 10-4
- #5 Granada 10-3 @ Walsh 1-9
- Idalia 5-6 @ Bethune 5-9
- #21 Wiley 8-6 @ Cheyenne Wells 2-10
- Springfield 5-9 @ Las Animas (2A) 4-5
- #15 Stratton 7-2 @ (2A) #5 Akron 10-4

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- Custer County (2A) 4-7 vs #2 Swink 10-0 Tournament
- #19 Eads 6-5 @ Idalia 5-6
- #20 Holyoke (2A) 8-5 @ Cheyenne Wells 2-10
- Sangre de Cristo 5-7 vs #2 Swink 10-0 Tournament
- The Vanguard School

CLASS 2A

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- Rocky Ford 3-12 @ Swallows Charter Academy 8-4
- Walsenburg 3-7 @ Crowley County 2-10
- Burlington 7-3 @ (1A) #24 Kiowa 6-3

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- Rye 8-7 @ Fowler 4-5
- Swallows Charter Academy 8-4 @ Crowley County 2-10

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- Rocky Ford 3-12 @ Limon 4-5

CLASS 3A

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- La Junta 8-4 @ Manitou Springs 8-6

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- Atlas Preparatory School (2A) 0-13 @ La Junta 8-4
- #22 Lamar 7-3 @ James Irwin 4-7

AREA SCHOOLS - SPORTS SCORES - SCHEDULES



FOOTBALL

SCORES

6 MAN

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

#12 Bethune 3-3 @ #7 Otis 5-0

- Bethune 36
- Otis 86
- #22 Genoa-Hugo 1-4 @ #25 Kiowa 0-5
- Genoa-Hugo 46
- Kiowa 6

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

#3 Cheyenne Wells 4-1 @

#20 Weldon Valley 1-4

- Cheyenne Wells 65
- Weldon Valley 18
- #10 Wiley 3-2 @ #5 Granada 4-1
- Wiley 18
- Granada 69
- Flagler @ Deer Trail
- Flagler 45
- Deer Trail 12

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

#9 Walsh 3-2 @ #16 Cheraw 2-2

- Walsh 47
- Cheraw 12

8 MAN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

#5 McClave 5-0 @ Holly 1-4

- McClave 58
- Holly 6
- Rocky Ford 2-4 @ #10 Las Animas 5-0
- Rocky Ford 6
- Las Animas 51
- Springfield 0-4 @ #16 Fowler 4-1
- Springfield 8
- Fowler 48
- #13 Stratton 3-1 @ #21 Crowley County 2-2
- Stratton 34
- Crowley County 6

CLASS 1A

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

#2 Limon 5-0 @ Bennett 1-4

- Limon 54
- Bennett 6
- #5 Burlington @ (2A)Salida
- Burlington 42
- Salida 7



SOFTBALL

SCORES

CLASS 3A

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

#17 La Junta 11-7 @ Florence 9-8

- La Junta 2
- Florence 5
- #18 Rocky Ford 9-8 @ #8 Lamar 11-3
- Rocky Ford 2
- Lamar 8

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Florence 9-8 @ #8 Lamar 11-3

- Florence 0
- Lamar 5

#17 La Junta 11-7 @ #23 Southeast Colorado 4-8

- La Junta 5
- Southeast Colorado 4
- Rampart (4A) 7-10 @ #18 Rocky Ford 9-8
- Rampart 13
- Rocky Ford 1
- Wray 9-10 @ Limon 0-17
- Double Header
- Wray 20
- Limon 5
- Wray 20
- Limon 8



SOFTBALL

SCHEDULE

CLASS 3A

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- #8 Lamar - 11-3 @ #23 Southeast Colorado - 4-8

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- Holyoke - 5-12 @ Burlington - 10-6
- Limon - 0-18 @ #18 Rocky Ford - 9-8

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- Burlington - 10-6 @ Wray - 9-10
- Double Header
- Holyoke 3-12 @ Limon 0-18 Double Header

- #18 Pueblo Central (4A) - 10-8 @ #17 La Junta - 11-7
- #18 Rocky Ford - 9-8 @ Woodland Park - 8-10
- #6 The Classical Academy - 11-4 @ #8 Lamar - 11-3
- #23 Southeast Colorado 4-8 @ Alamosa 9-9

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- #18 Rocky Ford - 9-8 @ #23 Southeast Colorado - 4-8

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- #10 Pueblo County (4A) - 14-3 @ #8 Lamar - 11-3



FOOTBALL

SCHEDULE

6 MAN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- #19 Manzanola - 1-2 @ #14 Cheraw - 2-2

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- #22 Genoa-Hugo - 1-4 @ #9 Flagler - 4-2
- #6 Granada - 4-1 @ #10 Walsh - 3-2
- #1 Idalia - 5-0 @ #13 Bethune - 3-3
- #8 Wiley - 3-2 @ #4 Cheyenne Wells - 4-1

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10

- La Veta 2-2 @ Branson/Kim 3-2

- #19 Stratton - 3-1 @ #21 Akron - 2-2

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- #16 Crowley County - 2-2 @ Calhan - 1-3

CLASS 1A

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- Byers - 0-5 @ #6 Burlington - 3-1
- #12 Colorado Springs Christian - 5-0 @ #1 Limon - 5-0

CLASS 2A

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- #17 Banning Lewis Academy - 4-1 @ #13 Lamar - 4-2
- #20 Florence - 1-4 @ #6 La Junta - 5-0

8 MAN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- Holly 1-4 @ #14 Fowler 4-1
- Springfield - 0-4 @ #8 Las Animas - 5-0



SHARE YOUR Story

The Kiowa County Press invites you to share what's happening in your world with our readers.

Send your stories and photos from southeast Colorado life to editor@KiowaCountyPress.net

2027 EHS ALL-SCHOOL REUNION

Plans are being made for next year's all school reunion.

Scan the QR code with your phone and complete the contact information. Let the committee know your ideas and willingness to help.

Fly Eagles Fly

Follow us on Facebook @ Eads Eagles All-School Reunion for updates throughout the coming year.

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

AREA SCHOOL CALENDARS



OCTOBER 5-6

- High School Boys State Golf

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- 4:30 p.m. High School Softball vs Lamar @ Wiley

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball vs Holly
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football vs Holly
- 5:00 p.m. High School Volleyball vs Holly

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 4:30 p.m. High School Softball @ Alamosa
- End of 1st Quarter

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 9:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Plainview

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 9:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Plainview
- 11:00 a.m. High School Softball @ The Classical Academy
- 1:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Idalia



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Las Animas

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

- Picture Retakes - High School Volleyball

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 8:00 a.m. P/T Conferences No School elementary
- End of First Quarter

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball Granada
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football Granada
- 4:30 p.m. High School Volleyball Granada
- 7:00 p.m. High School

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 9:00 a.m. LCC Day/Night College Fair

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball vs McClave
- 5:00 p.m. High School Volleyball vs McClave

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- FFA State Range Judging @ Lamar

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 2:00 p.m. Early Release
- 2:15 p.m. Parent/Teacher Conferences

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:30 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Vilas
- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball @ Cheyenne Wells
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football vs Cheyenne Wells
- 5:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Cheyenne Wells
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football @ Cheyenne Wells

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

- 8:30 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Vilas
- High School Softball Regionals
- Junior High Volleyball League Tournament @ Cheyenne Wells

Football Granada

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 9:00 a.m. Junior High Volleyball Ark Valley League Tourney @ Springfield

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football Boise City

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Syracuse (Syracuse & Rolla)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball Manzanola
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football Manzanola

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

- 9:00 a.m. High School Volleyball @ Kit Carson Quad (Kit Carson, Deer Trail, Hoehne)



MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- 9:00 a.m. High School Boys Golf State TBA V
- 4:15 p.m. Junior High Cheer Practice, Tigers Den Gym

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 9:00 a.m. High School Boys Golf State TBA V
- 12:45 p.m. Job Corp Presentation (Juniors & Seniors), Mr. Muth Room
- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball at Hugo V
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball at Hugo A/B

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

- 12:15 p.m. FFA Chapter Meeting, Conference Room
- 6:00 p.m. Tiger Tumbling Event Night, Tiger Den Gym

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 4:15 p.m. Junior High Cheer Practice, Tigers Den Gym

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 7:55 a.m. GT BOCES - 3rd-6th Grade, Burlington Colorado
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football w/Wiley at CW
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball w/Wiley at CW B/A
- 5:00 p.m. High School Volleyball w/Wiley at CW Junior Varsity/V



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High & High School Volleyball VS South Baca, At Granada

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 8:00 a.m. End of 1st Quarter
- 4:30 p.m. High School Volleyball VS Swink, AT-Granada

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High & High School Volleyball AT Walsh
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High & High School Football AT

- 7:00 p.m. High School Football w/Wiley at CW

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 2:00 p.m. High School Volleyball w/Holyoke at CW Junior Varsity/V

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 12:15 p.m. FBLA Meeting at Lunch, Mrs. Scheimers Room
- 4:15 p.m. Junior High Cheer Practice, Tigers Den Gym

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 10:00 a.m. Colorado Ballet Performance, Main Gym
- 3:00 p.m. High School Volleyball w/Kit Carson at CW Junior Varsity/V
- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball w/Kit Carson B/A
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football w/Kit Carson

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 8:00 a.m. FFA CDE State Range Judging, Lamar Community College, 2401 S Main St Level, Room 125, Lamar

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 4:15 p.m. Junior High Cheer Practice, Tigers Den Gym
- 4:30 p.m. Parent Teacher Conference

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:00 a.m. Parent Teacher Conference
- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball w/Eads B/A

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 8:00 a.m. 2nd Quarter Begins
- 2:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball VS Alta Vista, AT Granada

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 6:30 p.m. School Board Meeting

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 8:00 a.m. Junior High & High School Volleyball AT Holly, AT Holy
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football AT Holly

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:00 a.m. High School Football BYE



MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- 2:00 p.m. Junior High Girls Wrestling Pre-Season Meeting
- 4:30 p.m. High School Softball v Lamar

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball @ Kit Carson
- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Kit Carson, Kit Carson HS
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football @ Kit Carson

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball @ Kim
- 4:30 p.m. High School Softball @ Alamosa
- 4:30 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Kim, Kim HS
- End of Quarter #1

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 9:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Plainview
- 1:00 p.m. Junior High Football @ Cheyenne Wells
- 3:00 p.m. High School Volleyball @ Cheyenne Wells, Cheyenne Wells HS
- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball @ Cheyenne Wells
- 6:00 p.m. High School Football @ Cheyenne Wells
- Staff Workday

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 9:00 a.m. Junior High Volleyball Ark Valley Tournament, TBD
- 11:00 a.m. High School Softball @ TCA
- Cheer @ NOCO Showdown (Berthoud High School)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 7:00 p.m. School Board Work Session, Wiley School Library

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 7:30 a.m. Career Cabs-Otero College (10th grade), Otero College, 1802 Colorado Ave, La Junta

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 2:00 p.m. Fall P/T Conferences

AREA SCHOOL CALENDARS



Speaking/Chili Supper/
Rent-A-Hand

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 9:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl, Plainview School District RE-2

OCTOBER 10-11

- FFA Fall Leadership Conference, CSU Ft Collins

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 10:00 a.m. High School Vball @ Rye (Junior Varsity,V)
- 11:00 a.m. SECO Softball @ TCA

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 10:00 a.m. College Fair for 11th/12th @LCC
- 3:00 p.m. Jr High Fball vs Fowler
- 4:00 p.m. High School Junior Varsity Football vs Fowler
- 4:30 p.m. Accountability Meeting
- 5:30 p.m. FFA Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 3:00 p.m. Jr High Vball @ Eads
- Flu Shot Clinic for staff

- and students
- High School Volleyball @ Eads (Follow Junior High)
- High School Vball @ Eads (Follow Junior High)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 9:00 a.m. ACT 11th/12th
- 1:30 p.m. Admin/Transportation
- FFA - State Range, Lamar

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- High School Volleyball vs Cheraw (following Junior High)
- High School Vball vs Cheraw (Follow Junior High)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:30 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl, Vilas School District RE-5
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football @ Fowler
- 7:00 p.m. High School Fball @ Fowler

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

- Junior High Volleyball League Tournament @ Cheyenne Wells
- Jr High Vball League Tournament @ Cheyenne Wells

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 5:00 p.m. Family Reading Night
- 7:00 p.m. Powderpuff Football Game
- FFA State Range at LCC
- Homecoming Dress-Up Day: Pitbull
- Picture Retakes (K-12th Grade)
- Preschool Pictures

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- Burning of the "S"
- End of 1st Quarter
- Homecoming Dress-Up Day: Y2K
- Preschool - 1st Quarter Culmination Day

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 10:30 a.m. Homecoming Parade
- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball with Swink
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football with Swink
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football with Elkhart
- High School Knowledge Bowl @Vilas
- Homecoming Dress-Up Day: Longhorn Spirit
- Teacher Work Day



MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- High School Golf State - Rollins Hills Golden

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 3:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball at Eads
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football at Eads
- 5:00 p.m. High School Volleyball at Eads

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

- 7:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl Practice
- 4:05 p.m. Junior High Knowledge Bowl Practice
- FFA - Chapter Creed

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 2:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball at South Baca
- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball at South Baca

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 9:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Plainview
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football at Fowler

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 9:00 a.m. Junior High Volleyball at Springfield

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball at Plainview
- 7:00 p.m. School Board Meeting
- Career Fair

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- High School Volleyball at Syracuse, KS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 7:00 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl Practice
- 4:05 p.m. Junior High Knowledge Bowl Practice
- State Range @ Lamar

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 2:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball vs Granada
- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball vs Granada
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football vs Granada

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:30 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Vilas
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football at Rocky Ford



OCTOBER 5-8

- Scholastic Book Fair

OCTOBER 5-6

- State Golf

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

- 5:00 p.m. High School Junior Varsity Football with Las Animas
- Junior High/High School Eligibility

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball with McClave
- 5:00 p.m. Junior High Football with McClave

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

- Arbor Day @ 3:00

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 4:30 p.m. High School Volleyball with Hoehne (Junior Varsity,V)
- FFA Creed Speaking

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 4:00 p.m. High School

- Volleyball @ Las Animas
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Football @ Las Animas
- 7:00 p.m. High School Football @ Las Animas
- High School Knowledge Bowl @Plainview 9:00
- High School Knowledge Bowl @Plainview 9:00

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 9:30 a.m. Cross Country @ Air Academy
- Junior High Volleyball League Tournament in Springfield

OCTOBER 12-16

- Homecoming 2026

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 3:30 p.m. Iron Man Volleyball Games
- 5:00 p.m. Accountability Meeting
- Homecoming Dress-Up Day: Adam Sandler
- Junior High Eligibility

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 3:30 p.m. Iron Man Volleyball Games
- Homecoming Dress-Up Day: Guy Ferri



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 1:50 p.m. Elementary F.T. - Harris's Pumpkin Patch
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball vs. The Hawks
- End of Quarter 1

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- Knowledge Bowl

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 9:00 a.m. LCC College Fair
- 4:00 p.m. Junior High Volleyball vs. Holly
- Junior High Volleyball TBA

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

- P/T conferences

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 8:30 a.m. High School Knowledge Bowl @ Vilas



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

- 4:00 p.m. High School Volleyball vs Swink, Kit Carson High School

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

- 4:00 p.m. Parent Teacher Conferences



Send your stories and photos from southeast Colorado life to editor@KiowaCountyPress.net

The Kiowa County Press invites you to share what's happening in your world with our readers.

Four weeks after the Pueblo spill, E. coli exceeds the standard from Pueblo to Holly

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

Four weeks after the Pueblo sewage spill, E. coli in the Arkansas River is still above the state's swim beach standard at nearly every sampling site from Pueblo to Holly, and the river directly below John Martin Dam, which had complied on every sample for three weeks, is now failing too. State health officials say rain has kept pushing bacteria into the river, and that contaminated water has reached the lower valley through a canal that bypasses the reservoir.

On Tuesday, September 22, the newest day of results posted to the state's sampling dashboard, 17 of 20 sites exceeded the standard of 235 colony-forming units per 100 milliliters. The Highway 50 bridge near Lamar read 727 for the second day in a row.

The river below the McClave drainage read 1,046, up from 114 the day before. Below John Martin Dam the reading was 649, after 1,203 on Monday, September 21. Holly read 1,553 on September 21 and 236 on September 22. Only Fountain Creek at Pueblo, Granada and the reservoir itself complied.

The reservoir has never come close to the line. Sampled at the east boat ramp almost daily since September 11, it has read between 1 and 53, with 50 on September 22.

RAIN, AND A CANAL AROUND THE RESERVOIR

The pattern of the past two weeks is rain followed by a jump in readings. NOAA's record for Pueblo's airport shows rain on Wednesday, September 16, and the next day readings spiked at Pueblo, Fountain Creek and above the St. Charles River, where

the sample came back at 1,986. Rain fell again on Sunday, September 20, and Monday, September 21. The federal river gauge at Las Animas rose from 32 cubic feet per second on September 20 to 124 on September 22, and the readings at Boone, Nepesta, County Road 24.5 and La Junta all went to the top of the lab's scale, above 2,419, on September 21. Runoff carries bacteria from streets, fields and ditches into a river, so readings climb after a storm and fall as the pulse passes, as they did after the rain of September 8.

The lower river has not been the clean end of the system since the first runoff pulse reached it. Lamar read 1,414 on Sunday, September 13, and Granada 1,203 on September 15, and Holly has exceeded the standard on five of the last seven sampling days. But the river directly below the dam had complied on every one of its 17 samples until September 21, when it read 1,203. In a fact sheet linked from its spill page, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment says the contaminated water "has now traveled downstream beyond John Martin Reservoir due to a canal bypassing the reservoir." The state does not name the canal. The Fort Lyon Canal, which takes water from the river above the reservoir and carries it past the dam, read 816 at County Road

RR on September 22, and the Catlin Canal headgate read 1,203.

The department's advisory has not changed. It still tells people to stay out of the river from where Fountain Creek enters it through John Martin Reservoir, and it has not extended that advisory below the dam, where the readings are now as high as those above it. CDPHE has issued no news release on the spill since September 4, when it lifted the advisory for the reservoir.

WHO IS SAMPLING, AND HOW THE STATE LABELS IT

Since Saturday, September 12, most of the river samples have been collected by a third-party contractor, according to the state's data, which lists the sampling organization for each result. CDPHE staff still sample the sites below the dam and at McClave, and the City of Pueblo's wastewater department samples the Catlin Canal headgate. Before September 12 the state listed its own staff as the sampler at every site.

The state has also changed how it labels results. Through mid-September the dashboard called each sample "safe" or "not safe for recreation." Every result, including the older ones, is now labeled as complying with or exceeding the swim beach standard. The fact sheet explains the standard: under state water quality rules, a single sample above 235 requires a swim beach to close, and the department says that number, and not the 126 limit that applies to some kinds of irrigation, is the one it uses for the river. The department also says it has no river standard for E. coli that protects agricultural use, and it points growers to the Colorado Department of Agriculture for guidance.

Beyond bacteria, the state has tested the river for metals, nutrients and dissolved minerals at sites from Pueblo to Holly and posted those results as a spreadsheet, with samples through September 8.

HOW THE SPILL HAPPENED, IN THE CITY'S WORDS

The City of Pueblo posted a fuller account of the spill on September 14. The leak was found when the treatment plant's average flow for August 26 came in 3 million gallons below what it should have been, Wastewater Director Andra Ahrens said. Once the cause was identified, it took two hours to divert the flow and stop the release.

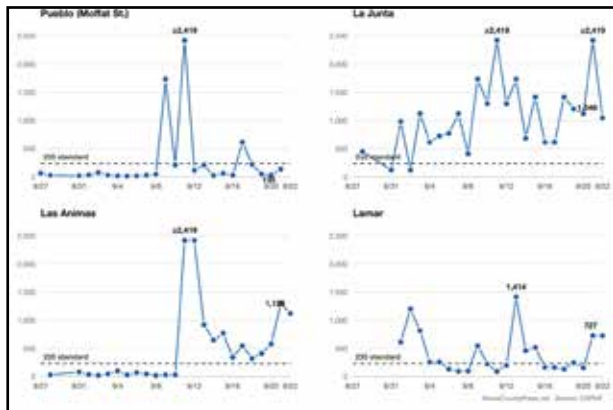
The city's sewer runs inside its storm sewer along that stretch: a 48-inch sanitary pipe inside a 102-inch brick storm pipe, from Santa Fe Avenue to Confluence Park, where the two separate. The sanitary pipe had been put under pressure to bypass a 60-inch pipe that was being rehabilitated, and the pressure broke a patch on the sanitary pipe. Sewage flowed into the storm pipe and out its channel into the river. The state's fact sheet describes it as a contractor repairing sewage pipes who inadvertently broke a main line. The state has put the volume at about 4.25 million gallons.

WHAT STILL APPLIES

The department's guidance for the river from Fountain Creek through John Martin Reservoir remains in place: do not swim, wade, tube, kayak or fish; keep children, pets and livestock out of the water; do not drink untreated river water or use it on fruits or vegetables eaten raw. Anyone who gets in the water should wash with soap and clean water and see a doctor if diarrhea, vomiting, cramps or fever follow.

Readers below the dam are left to judge for themselves. The state's own numbers now show Lamar, McClave and the river below the dam above the swim beach standard, while the advisory stops at the reservoir.

The Press has covered the spill since it reached John Martin, including the first two weeks of readings, the runoff surge of September 9, and the record-low year of river below the dam that has left so little water to dilute it.



MARK HILLMAN'S CAPITOL REVIEW

Mark Hillman



**BALLOT QUESTIONS 87, NN
PLAY COLORADO VOTERS FOR
SUCKERS**

Two questions on our November ballot would end tax policies that have served Colorado well for more than 30 years.

Amendment 87 seeks to replace Colorado's simple, flat-rate income tax with a progressive tax that raises your rate as your income grows.

Proposition NN would raise the state's constitutional spending limit so high state government won't be required to refund statewide over-collections anytime in the foreseeable future.

Together, these two measures essentially play Colorado voters for suckers, suggesting yet again that politicians need our hard-earned money more than we do. Worse still, lawmakers would be rewarded for rapidly expanding social welfare entitlements while struggling to meet bare minimums for K-12 education.

In 1987, Colorado instituted a simple, flat-rate income tax, signed into law by Democratic Gov. Roy Romer and passed by a Republican legislature. For every dollar of taxable income, both individuals and businesses pay 4.4% in state income tax.

Amendment 87 would change that by giving a very small reduction – \$325 at

most – to taxpayers earning less than \$100,000. Rates stay the same for income between \$100,000 and \$500,000, and increase drastically on higher incomes to as much as 8.4%.

Here's what they don't tell you: these rates are never adjusted for inflation.

If your family income is \$75,000 today, in ten years it will need to be \$100,000 just to keep up with inflation. Most Colorado workers also get raises for seniority and promotions.

But remember Amendment 87 only gives a \$325 tax cut on the first \$100,000. Proponents certainly know that households making under \$100,000 are a declining share of Colorado's population.

So everyone's taxes will go up with inflation.

While proponents talk about "taxing the wealthy," they ignore that businesses are taxed at the same rates as individuals. A business with taxable income of \$1 million is likely your home-owned local store, but in just one year, it's taxes will increase by \$15,925.

A big employer with \$10 million in taxable income will see its tax bill jump by \$375,925. That's a loud signal to move jobs out of Colorado.

Next, Amendment 87 puts Colorado sports teams at a disadvantage against their competitors. Why play for the Broncos, Nuggets, Avalanche or Rockies and pay 8.4% tax, when you could sign with teams in Texas, Florida, Washington, Nevada or Tennessee which have no income tax at all?

Verse 2 in this sucker's chorus is Prop NN which sings the familiar refrain, "Vote YES for the children!" This proposal

from the legislature promises to increase funding for public schools by 2% per year for the next 10 years at a cost of roughly \$240 million a year.

But now carefully read the deceptive wording of the ballot question: "Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year ... funded by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending *only* by the amount spent on K-12 education..." (italics added).

Most voters will assume that means raising the limit *only* by the extra amount needed to boost K-12 spending by 2% per year. Instead, lawmakers slipped in a different term, "the amount spent on K-12 education." Not the extra amount, but the total amount.

So instead of raising the

limit by \$240 million, they want to raise the spending limit by \$4.6 billion. That's nearly 20 times more than needed and \$4 billion a year more than the state currently collects.

Why? To make room for new the anticipated tax increase from Amendment 87 and to give the legislature even more room to raise "fees" without voter approval.

Legislators tried a similar bait-and-switch in 2023, offering voters a small property tax reduction in exchange for a \$2 billion increase in the spending cap. Voters rejected that scheme 59%-41%.

The reality is Colorado state government has a spending problem – not a revenue problem. Lawmakers added 7,000 new state employees in the past eight years and extended Medicaid coverage to illegal immigrants and

able-bodied adults.

Medicaid is now the largest department in the state budget, crowding out K-12 education. Why? Because legislators increased Medicaid spending by \$7.8 billion in the past decade while spending on K-12 education grew by only \$1.8 billion.

If lawmakers wanted to make public schools their priority, they have the money to do it. Instead, they've chosen to expand entitlements and grow state payrolls, then demand we pay more for schools.

Colorado's budget "crisis" is a legislative fiction, created by deliberate choices, and backed by a bet that taxpayers will be suckers in November.

Mark Hillman served as Senate Majority Leader and State Treasurer. To read more or comment, go to www.MarkHillman.com.



In Memory

**Bernard A
Kelly**

**April 14, 1929
September 20, 2026**

15, 2005, at the age of 71.

After his wife passed, he enjoyed reading western books.

He is preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Pat; his wife, Bonnie; and his son, James.

Those left to cherish his memories are his children: daughter, Kathleen Kelly of Arvada, Colorado; daughter, Sheila and her husband Nick Gallegos of Clarence Center, New York; son, Kevin Kelly and daughter, Maureen Lang Of Hermosa Beach, California. Also surviving him are his seven grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Cheyenne Wells Knights of Columbus in Bernard's memory and may be left at or sent to Love Funeral Home, 377 15th Street, Burlington, Colorado 80807.

Bernard's wishes were to be cremated and no services held. He wanted to be scattered in Britton, South Dakota, with his beloved wife Bonnie.

Arrangements are under the direction of Love Funeral Home.

Longtime Cheyenne Wells, Colorado resident Bernard A. Kelly began his Heavenly journey to his eternal home on September 20, 2026.

Bernard was born on April 14, 1929 to Ambrose E. and Elsie C. (Becker) Kelly in Britton, South Dakota. He was one of two children born to this union. He grew up in eastern South Dakota in the town of Britton. Bernard attended school in Britton, South Dakota and graduated from Britton High School in 1947. After high school, he enlisted in the United States Army in 1947. While enlisted, he was a paratrooper and glider man in the 504th Parachute Infantry where he was also the Platoon Leader Intelligence and Resonance Section. He was honorably discharged from the Army in 1950 in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. After finishing his time in the mil-

itary, he attended college at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, Colorado earning his masters in 1959 in School Administrations and his bachelors as a Language Arts Teacher.

He met and later married the love of his life, Bonnie L. Bowerman on August 29, 1953, in Greeley, Colorado. He was the father of five children, four of which are scattered amongst the United States.

Bernard was in school administration for the Cheyenne Wells school district for 27 years in which his duties consisted of teacher, principle and superintendent. He was in education for thirty years total. Bonnie and Bernard enjoyed dancing and having dinner dates. They were present at all or most of the community activities. His wife Bonnie passed away on June

Kiowa County Commissioners Meeting Minutes - September 15, 2026

The Regular meeting of the Kiowa County Commissioners was called to order on September 15, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Donald Oswald.

PRESENT:

- Donald Oswald, Chairman
- Howard "Butch" Robertson, Commissioner
- Mike Lening, Commissioner - Virtual
- Adrienne Yates, County Clerk
- Tina Adamson, County Administrator

MEMBERS OF AUDIENCE:

- Betsy Barnett

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Donald Oswald called to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Lening opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Robertson moved to approve the minutes from August 27, 2026. Oswald seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lening moved to approve the vouchers as presented; Robertson seconded, motion carried.

Commissioner Oswald moved to approve the agenda as presented; Lening seconded. Motion carried

OLD BUSINESS:

Grant Updates: Adamson is working on the mini grants to be submitted. Iconergy advised they are not able to move forward with a contract with the county at this time. There was discussion about other options for updating the courthouse windows and HVAC system. Materials are enroute for the transit building and coroner space. Adamson is finalizing the underfunded courthouse grant application.

Landfill / Recycling Update: The board discussed the proposal for new equipment by Landfill Foreman Jeff Scranton for a sorter. Adamson will have Scranton provide

more information for the next meeting. No decision made today.

Housing Update: No update
Planning & Zoning Update: There was discussion regarding the work session held 9/14/2026 and review of comments.

Fair Update: Between Friday and Saturday's BBQ's there were a total of 1,072 wristbands sold. Admission to the bouncy houses was 166, and laser tag had 107. With revenue still to be collected from some groups, the total so far is \$5094. Our judge for the parade this year was Cory Owens of Colorado Springs and the winners were:

- **4-H & FFA:** 1st Place -Youth Council, 2nd Place -Prairie Queen 4-H
- **Organizations:** 1st Place -Veterans, 2nd Place -Prairie Pines
- **Businesses:** 1st Place -Harris Pumpkin Patch, 2nd Place -Ferris Trucking
- **Open Class:** 9 Classic Ve-

hicles entered, 1st Place -Nathaniel Mitchek with Lime Green Chevy Pickup, 2nd Place -Troy Joy with Black & Gold '79 Fire bird

- **Judges Choice:** KCFPD Unit #7 Fire & Rescue

Ballot Questions: Adamson provided the resolution for the 5.25% Limitation Ballot Question 2026-9

APPOINTMENTS:

Betsy Barnett- Brownsfield Grant: Barnett presented a proposal to have the county apply on her behalf for a Brownsfield Grant to clean up their property off the highway. Due to the underground tanks the applicant must be a non-profit or government entity. There would be no cost to the county, the county would be the main applicant. The board discussed options for becoming the applicant on this project. The board agreed to move forward as long as it didn't become a burden to county employees.

Barnett advised that for the library project to move forward the collateral loan would be \$320,000. GNBank is ready to proceed with using the CD from the county. The project is set to start September 15, 2026. Barnett will contact the bank and coordinate with the treasurer to move the funds. Robertson moved to reaffirm the motion to put up a CD at the bank for use as collateral. Lening seconded the motion. Roll Call-Robertson: yes, Lening: yes, Oswald: yes. Motion carried. Barnett exited the meeting at 10:53 a.m.

Sheriff Bryan Williams entered the meeting at 10:58 a.m.: Williams was requesting an update on any decisions regarding the new body and vehicle cameras as the discount offered runs out at the end of September. The board has not made a decision at this time. Williams exited the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Audrey Johnson, Director Social Services: DSS Update: Johnson entered the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Johnson provided an update on their caseload and to advise she has hired an eligibility tech who will start October 1st. The contract

with Prowers County tech is going well. The contract with Goodwill to process LEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) applications this year is complete and the office is prepping last year's applications for Goodwill to have on hand. Johnson asked about upgrading the phone system due to ongoing issues. Adamson advised replacing the phone system county-wide has been approved for replacement which included DSS and Public Health. Johnson exited the meeting at 1:41 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: CANCELLED

Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) for the purpose of receiving legal advice on 1041 Regulation matters and C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4)(f)(i) for personnel matters.

Oswald moved to recess for lunch at 11:58 a.m. Lening seconded, motion carried. The meeting resumed at 1:07 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Monthly reports were handed out to the Board.

Time-Off Requests: None
New Hire Report/ Employee Update: None

5.25% Limitation Ballot Question Resolution 2026-9: Oswald moved to approve, Lening seconded, Motion carried.

Plainview School Letter of Support Request: Adamson will draft a letter of support to the State regarding the highway between Plainview and the state line.

Historic Preservation Letter of Support Request: Lening moved to sign letter of support, Robertson seconded. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Oswald moved to adjourn at 2:30 pm; Robertson seconded. Motion carried. Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

/s/Donald Oswald
Donald Oswald, Chairman
BOCC 9-24-2026

/s/Adrienne Yates
Adrienne Yates, County Clerk



Crisis can take many forms for different people.

When a farmer or rancher is facing a crisis, it can create an emotional toll on every aspect of life. From paying bills, to feeding their children, caring for the livestock and crops, retirement options, and even what they will be able to leave their heirs, the worry and anxiety can be overwhelming.

The agricultural community has always come together to help our neighbors in times of need and this effort is all about continuing to pull together to help others through stressful times.

The Prowers County Commissioners invites local farmers and ranchers to join us for a community film screening event centered around the impacts of rural life. "Legacy" highlights the ups and downs of agriculture's realities with real Colorado stories. You'll learn about real people who have been impacted by mental health and what resources are available in our community.

Mark your calendars for **5:30 p.m., October 12, 2026** at the Holly Pride Center, 201 South Main Street, Holly, Colorado for an evening of meaningful conversations about the struggles of life in agriculture.

No matter what you are going through, you do not have to go through it alone. Times change but looking out for one another never will.

Reservations for a FREE ticket to the event must be received by October 5, 2026.

To reserve your FREE ticket please contact the
Prowers County Administration Office at 719-336-8025
or by e-mail: ctyadmin@prowerscounty.net.

Prowers County Board of County Commissioners

KIOWA COUNTY BALLOT

KiowaCountyPress.net - Friday, October 2, 2026 **A17**

Find fall colors at Colorado state parks this season

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

Colorado's fall foliage season is underway, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife is inviting outdoor enthusiasts to experience the changing colors at state parks while urging visitors to plan ahead and protect natural resources.

"We ask that folks rushing for gold plan ahead and have location backup plans because parks get crowded, and parking is limited at certain trailheads," said Todd Farrow, park manager at Golden Gate Canyon State Park. "Please only park in designated areas and remember that parking along roads is prohibited."

Park rangers can issue parking tickets or tow vehicles parked illegally or blocking traffic. Visitors are encouraged to go during the week or plan early-morning trips to avoid crowds. A daily or annual state park pass, including the Keep Colorado Wild Pass, is required for entry. Camping reservations are available, with options including tent sites, cabins, yurts, and ADA-accessible sites.

To plan a visit, use the State Park Finder Tool and interactive map at cpw.state.co.us/state-parks, or download the free COTREX app at trails.colorado.gov to find trailheads and trail maps with fall color routes.

"The COTREX app gives you the ability to find dozens of routes that our partner agencies recommend for the best fall colors near their trails," said State Trails Program Coordinator Joe O'Brien. "You can use the filter tool next to the search bar, then select 'fall colors' from the tags list to see those recommended trails."

Visitors should stay on

marked trails to reduce injury risk and protect roadside plants and wildlife. Printed trail maps are available at park visitor centers.

Parking in undesignated areas can destroy vegetation, ignite wildfires, and block emergency vehicles. Visitors should not carve into trees, pull down branches, or move and stack rocks, which stabilize trails and prevent erosion.

Colorado is home to approximately 17,000 to 20,000 black bears. Bears may enter campsites and trails where trash and human food are available. Visitors should store food in approved bear-resistant containers, out of sight in a locked vehicle, or suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 10 feet from any part of a tree. Never spray bear spray on a tent, campsite, or belongings — it is effective only when sprayed directly at an approaching bear. If a black bear makes contact, do not play dead; fight back aggressively.

Elk and moose are currently in their annual rut and can become territorial and attack when threatened. Give all wildlife extra space, respect area closures, keep dogs leashed, and do not feed wildlife. Carry bear spray in bear country. Watch for wildlife on or along roadways. If you see wildlife that appears sick or injured, leave it alone and contact your local Colorado Parks and Wildlife office at cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/ContactUs.aspx.

"How we explore our outdoor spaces matters. Conservation starts small, but all of our proactive steps to leave a state park better than we found it add up in a meaningful way," said Farrow. "No matter where you plan to explore this fall, please respect our natural resources, park staff, volunteers and fellow recreationists."

For more bear safety information, visit bearwise.org. For more on outdoor recreation at Colorado state parks, visit cpw.state.co.us.

State Ballot Measures

Amendment 85 (CONSTITUTIONAL)

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning ballot question language, and, in connection therewith, requiring all state and local ballot questions to be written in plain language and at no more than an 8th grade reading level and prohibiting a state statute from requiring language that conflicts with these requirements in ballot questions for citizen-initiated measures?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Amendment 86 (CONSTITUTIONAL)

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning congressional redistricting, and, in connection therewith, reenacting the current process for congressional redistricting in the Colorado Constitution and prohibiting modifications to a final map unless at least three public meetings are held, the modifications do not have the effect of dividing communities of interest or purposefully favoring one political party, and are approved by the congressional redistricting commission and the Colorado Supreme Court?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Amendment 87 (CONSTITUTIONAL)

SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED \$2.7 BILLION ANNUALLY, IN ORDER TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE LEVELS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INCLUDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES; TO THE EXTENT OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REPEALING EXISTING LAW AND CREATING NEW LAW TO REPLACE THE UNIFORM STATE INCOME TAX RATE WITH A GRADUATED INCOME TAX STRUCTURE; AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, AMENDING THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS TO ELIMINATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TAXABLE NET INCOME TO BE TAXED AT ONE RATE WITH NO ADDED TAX ON INCOME; ESTABLISHING VARIOUS INCOME TAX RATES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAXABLE INCOME EARNED BY INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND CORPORATIONS, WHILE MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 4.4% TAX ON INCOME FROM THE SALE OF A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE, WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTIMATED CHANGE IN INCOME TAXES OWED BY INDIVIDUALS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE; AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO RETAIN AND SPEND ANY INCREASED REVENUE FROM THE NEW TAX STRUCTURE, AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE, TO SUPPLEMENT CURRENT LEVELS OF FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category			
Income Categories	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914
Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service.			

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition NN (STATUTORY)

Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year for the next ten years, with investments used to increase teacher pay, improve teacher retention, lower class sizes, and increase access to career and technical courses, without raising taxes but instead funding by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending only by the amount spent on public K-12 education as a voter-approved revenue change, and requiring an annual publicly released, independent audit to show how the new investments are spent?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

State Ballot Measures

Proposition 132 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning criminal penalties for felony and certain synthetic opioids, and, in connection therewith, increasing the felony classifications of drug-related crimes for distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of felony and certain synthetic opioids; creating mandated treatment for certain drug felony violations based on possession amount; and changing sentencing provisions to narrow or eliminate exemptions for crimes related to felony and certain synthetic opioids and drug-related deaths?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition 133 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law concerning human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, and, in connection therewith, creating new law expanding human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor and increasing the penalty to be life in prison without parole or release?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition 134 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law restricting participation in all K-12 and collegiate school sports based on the participant's sex as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system, and, in connection therewith, requiring a school, institution of higher education, or athletic association to designate each school or intramural athletic team or sport as male, female, or coeducational; only allowing participants to compete on the team or sport of their designated sex or to compete on a coeducational team; creating an exception to allow a female to participate on a male-designated team or sport if there is no female team available; prohibiting a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization, or athletic association from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate teams or sports for females; and providing the commissioner of education with the authority to enforce the proposed initiative for K-12 school districts?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition 135 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law by prohibiting surgery on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics, and, in connection therewith, prohibiting any health-care professional or other person from knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery to a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibiting the use of state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement, or insurance coverage to pay for this type of surgery?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition 136 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes capping the state income tax rate at 4.4% of federal taxable income for individuals and corporations?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Proposition 137 (STATUTORY)

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law to increase water and land conservation funding without raising taxes, and, in connection therewith, through a voter-approved revenue change, allowing the state to keep and spend a portion of revenue from the state sales tax on sporting goods and equipment to conserve and protect Colorado's water, land, and forests, prevent wildfires, support outdoor recreation training and activities, and reduce revenue spent on these conservation purposes if necessary to preserve funding for certain tax credits?

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

County Ballot Measures

County Ballot Issue 1A

SHALL KIOWA COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED FOR GENERAL COUNTY PURPOSES (50%) AND COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (50%) BY THE PROPOSED 1.5% COUNTYWIDE SALES AND USE TAX WHICH IS TO BE LEVIED AND IMPOSED, COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2027 AND CONTINUING FOR 15 YEARS; WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GENERATE THE FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR INCREASE OF \$500,000 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER, MORE OR LESS, TO BE ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED AS DETERMINED DURING THE COUNTY BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, AND BE IMPOSED AS FOLLOWS: A SALES TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE SALE OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AT RETAIL AND THE FURNISHING OF SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; A USE TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE STORAGE, USE OR CONSUMPTION IN THE COUNTY OF ANY CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING MATERIALS PURCHASED AT RETAIL EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER VEHICLES PURCHASED AT RETAIL ON WHICH REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; EXEMPTING SALES OF AGRICULTURE ITEMS AS DEFINED IN C.R.S. 39-26-716 (1)-(4); PROVIDED THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY TO INCREASE ANY OTHER FEE OR TAX, INCLUDING PROPERTY TAXES, AND SHALL THIS TAX INCREASE CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD APPLY TO THE COUNTY UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS OR TABOR; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-87

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

County Ballot Issue 1B

SHALL KIOWA COUNTY WAIVE THE 5.25% PROPERTY TAX LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 29-1-1702 C.R.S. AND BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE FULL AMOUNT OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED BEGINNING IN 2026 AND FOR ALL FUTURE PROPERTY TAX YEARS; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97

YES / FOR ☐
NO / AGAINST ☐

Mark both sides of the ballot

Support Youth
Academic and
Athletic Programs

Colorado PUC urges eligible residents to apply for federal Lifeline phone and broadband discounts

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission is encouraging income-qualified residents to apply for the federal Lifeline Program, which provides monthly discounts on phone and broadband services.

"Access to the digital world is no longer a luxury — it is a necessity for our work, safety and health. The PUC wants to make sure that income-qualified consumers can enroll in the Lifeline Program for discounts on critical communication services which help them to find jobs, access health care services, connect with family and call for help in an emergency," said PUC Director Rebecca White.

Eligible consumers — those who participate in certain public assistance programs or qualify based on income — can receive a discount of up to \$9.25 per month on broadband or bundled phone and broadband service, up to \$5.25 per month for voice-on-

ly service, and up to \$34.25 per month for residents of qualifying Tribal lands.

Approximately 91,191 Coloradans are currently enrolled in Lifeline. The PUC estimates more than 550,000 individuals qualify statewide.

"The PUC wants to help any Coloradan who could qualify to apply for and receive these broadband and phone assistance benefits," White said.

Residents can apply online, download an application, or request a physical application be mailed to them by visiting the Federal Communications Commission at <https://www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers> or the Lifeline support site at www.lifelinesupport.org. An instructional American Sign Language video describing the program and its benefits is available at <https://youtu.be/wwwjVrd5xHc>.

Residents needing assistance with the program may contact the PUC's Consumer Affairs Office at 303-894-2070 or 800-456-0858 (outside Denver).

'Not responsible for damage' signs on commercial vehicles carry no legal weight, state patrol says

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

The Colorado State Patrol is reminding motorists that "not responsible for damage to glass" signs displayed on commercial motor vehicles have no legal effect on liability under Colorado law.

Under Colorado Revised Statute 42-4-1407, no vehicle may be driven or moved on any highway unless it is constructed, loaded, or covered to prevent any of its load from blowing, dropping, sifting, leaking, or otherwise escaping. A sign disclaiming responsibility does not relieve a carrier of the duty to properly secure a load and is not a waiver of legal responsibility.

If debris from a vehicle causes damage, the circumstances of how the debris fell and whether the load was properly secured may be relevant in determining re-

sponsibility. Damage to a vehicle does not automatically establish that a commercial motor vehicle or another vehicle was at fault. A motorist reporting damage from falling debris should be prepared to prove the debris came from that vehicle and was not road debris kicked up by tires.

The Colorado State Patrol also urges drivers to use common sense and maintain at least 300 feet of following distance behind commercial motor vehicles regardless of liability considerations, noting that dealing with an insurance claim is a difficult process even when coverage applies.

Colorado's highways are a shared responsibility. Properly securing cargo helps prevent dangerous debris from entering the roadway, while maintaining a safe following distance gives motorists more time to react to hazards.

Official Ballot for 2026 General Election Kiowa County, Colorado Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Precinct: 4354731001 - 2
Ballot Type: 2
Ballot Style: 001-2

Adrienne Yates

Clerk and Recorder

To vote for a named candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice. Use blue or black ink.

To vote for an eligible write-in candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line and print the name of the candidate on the line. If a race does not contain a write-in line, you cannot vote for a write-in candidate.

To make a correction in a race with more than one candidate, draw a bold line through the oval and candidate name marked by mistake, then fill in the oval next to the correct name. To withdraw a vote for the only candidate in a race, you must request a replacement ballot.

WARNING: Any person who, by use of force or other means, unduly influences an eligible elector to vote in any particular manner or to refrain from voting, or who falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any mail ballot before or after it has been cast, or who destroys, defaces, mutilates, or tampers with a ballot is subject, upon conviction, to imprisonment, or to a fine, or both. Section 1-7.5-107(3)(b), C.R.S.

Federal Offices	State Offices	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)
United States Senator (Vote for One)	State Senator - District 35 (Vote for One)	District Court Judge Shall Judge Tammyn L. Johnson of the 15th Judicial District be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐
Republican ☐ Mark Baisley	Republican ☐ Rod Pelton	Ballot Measures Ballot questions referred by the general assembly or any political subdivision are listed by letter, and ballot questions initiated by the people are listed numerically. A ballot question listed as an "amendment" proposes a change to the Colorado constitution, and a ballot question listed as a "proposition" proposes a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes. A "yes/for" vote on any ballot question is a vote in favor of changing current law or existing circumstances, and a "no/against" vote on any ballot question is a vote against changing current law or existing circumstances.
Democratic ☐ John Hickenlooper	Democratic ☐ Duane L. Gurule	State Ballot Measures Amendment 81 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring law enforcement to notify the department of homeland security when a person is charged with either a violent crime or any crime if the person has a prior felony conviction if law enforcement cannot determine that the person is lawfully present in the United States? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Forward ☐ Bob Chew	Laborer ☐ Richard Graf	Amendment 82 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating new law granting the right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating in homes or businesses and for distributors and utilities to sell natural gas to consumers? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Approval Voting ☐ Christopher Baum	Unaffiliated ☐ Travis Star Nelson	Amendment 83 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating a constitutional right to hunt, fish, and harvest fish and wildlife by traditional methods, including all species of fish and wildlife managed by the state except non-game species, endangered species, or any species that is illegal to hunt under federal law, and, in connection therewith, establishing hunting and fishing as the preferred means of managing fish and wildlife populations; and preserving the right of the state to regulate hunting, fishing, and wildlife management if necessary for sound scientific wildlife conservation and management, public safety, or to preserve the future of hunting and fishing opportunities for all species? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Laborer ☐ Blake Huber	State Representative - District 47 (Vote for One)	Amendment 84 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring a voter to sign and include the last four digits of their social security number or their Colorado driver's license or identification card number on the outside of their mail ballot for any federal or state election, and, in connection therewith, allowing the voter to correct missing or incorrect information, including with alternative forms of identification, and prohibiting a county clerk and recorder from counting the mail ballot unless the problem is fixed? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Unity ☐ Adam Withrow	Democratic ☐ Vic Meyers	
Write-in ☐	Republican ☐ Ty Winter	
Representative to the 120th United States Congress - District 4 (Vote for One)	Kiowa County Offices	
Republican ☐ Lauren Boebert	County Commissioner - District 2 (Vote for One)	
Democratic ☐ Eileen Laubacher	Republican ☐ Howard Robertson	
Laborer ☐ Douglas Mangeris	County Clerk and Recorder (Vote for One)	
Write-in ☐	Republican ☐ Adrienne Yates	
State Offices	County Treasurer (Vote for One)	
Governor / Lieutenant Governor (Vote for One Pair)	Republican ☐ Diana Flory	
Republican ☐ Victor Marx / George Washington Markert	County Assessor (Vote for One)	
Democratic ☐ Phil Weiser / Lesley Dahlkemper	Republican ☐ Marci Miller	
American Constitution ☐ Stephen T. Hamilton / James K. Treibert	County Sheriff (Vote for One)	
Laborer ☐ Eric Mulder / Wayne Harlos	Republican ☐ Bryan Williams	
Unity ☐ Jeff Peckman / T.J. Cole	County Surveyor (Vote for One)	
Approval Voting ☐ Erik Underwood / Frank Atwood	There are no candidates for this office.	
Unaffiliated ☐ Greg Lopez / Taralyn Romero	County Coroner (Vote for One)	
Secretary of State (Vote for One)	Republican ☐ Jimmy Brown	
Democratic ☐ Amanda Gonzalez	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)	
Republican ☐ James Wiley	Colorado Supreme Court Justice	
Laborer ☐ Sean Vadney	Shall Justice William W. Hood, III of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
American Constitution ☐ Amanda Campbell	Colorado Court of Appeals Judge	
Forward ☐ Celeste Landry	Shall Judge Rebecca Rankin Freyre of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
State Treasurer (Vote for One)	Shall Judge Elizabeth L. Harris of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Democratic ☐ Jeff Bridges	Shall Judge Katharine E. Lum of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Republican ☐ Kevin Grantham	Shall Judge Pax Moultrie of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Laborer ☐ Jodie Barr	Shall Judge Karl L. Schock of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Approval Voting ☐ Marilee Langner Sturgis	Shall Judge Grant Sullivan of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Attorney General (Vote for One)	Republican ☐ Michael J. Allen	
Democratic ☐ Jena Griswold	Democratic ☐ Jena Griswold	

Mark both sides of the ballot

Colorado evaluates precision-guided aerial water-delivery system for wildfire suppression

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

Colorado's Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting is testing a GPS-guided aerial water-delivery device designed to suppress new and emerging wildfires earlier and in environments where traditional aircraft cannot safely operate.

The Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting (CoE), part of Colorado's Division of Fire Prevention and Control, is conducting operational testing, evaluation and validation of the Precision Guided Suppression Unit (PGSU), developed by Prime Minute, a public safety and natural disaster response technology company.

Unlike traditional aerial water delivery — which requires aircraft to fly low and directly over a fire — the PGSU can be released from 12,000 feet above ground level. After deployment, the unit uses GPS guidance and onboard flight controls to steer toward a predetermined target, with aerodynamic control surfaces that adjust its flight path in response to changing wind and weather conditions.

Each PGSU weighs about 1,000 pounds and carries 110 gallons of water. The operational concept involves an aircraft deploying multiple units over an emerging fire si-

multaneously, with each unit releasing its water through a dispersal system that spreads the payload across a 35-foot suppression radius.

"This technology offers a unique opportunity to deliver rapid initial attack from new heights. Traditional aerial suppression tools are sometimes limited by the need to fly low and slow over the fire, which restricts when and where they can be used safely. The PGSU allows us to suppress new and emerging wildfires in situations and environments that have previously been out of reach," said Anthony Somogyi, Aviation Projects Manager for the CoE.

The CoE's testing will assess the PGSU's safety, precision and accuracy, and examine how deploying multiple units could be integrated into existing wildfire operations.

"Public safety has an extraordinary culture of continuous improvement, and those incremental gains make us safer and more effective," said Ben Miller, Director of the Colorado Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting. "But the wildfire environment is changing so rapidly that it demands that we ask whether there is an entirely different way to accomplish the mission."

Miller added: "Incremental improvement will always be essential. But somebody also has to look beyond the next improvement and explore the capabilities we may need tomorrow. At the end of the day, we improve the system after every mission, but to gain ground, we may need to change the system."

Founded in 2014, the CoE is a research and development organization within the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. Testing of third-party products is strictly for research and does not constitute a commercial endorsement.

More information about the PGSU project is available at cofiretech.gov/pgsu.

State Ballot Measures	State Ballot Measures	County Ballot Measures																																								
Amendment 85 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning ballot question language, and, in connection therewith, requiring all state and local ballot questions to be written in plain language and at no more than an 8th grade reading level and prohibiting a state statute from requiring language that conflicts with these requirements in ballot questions for citizen-initiated measures? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 132 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning criminal penalties for felony and certain synthetic opioids, and, in connection therewith, increasing the felony classifications of drug-related crimes for distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of a controlled substance and certain synthetic opioids; creating mandated treatment for certain drug felony violations based on possession amount; and changing sentencing provisions to narrow or eliminate exemptions for crimes related to felony and certain synthetic opioids and drug-related deaths? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED FOR GENERAL COUNTY PURPOSES (50%) AND COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (50%) BY THE PROPOSED 1.5% COUNTYWIDE SALES AND USE TAX WHICH IS TO BE LEVIED AND IMPOSED, COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2027 AND CONTINUING FOR 15 YEARS; WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GENERATE THE FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR INCREASE OF \$500,000 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER, MORE OR LESS, TO BE ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED AS DETERMINED DURING THE COUNTY BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, AND BE IMPOSED AS FOLLOWS: A SALES TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE SALE OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AT RETAIL AND THE FURNISHING OF SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; A USE TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE STORAGE, USE OR CONSUMPTION IN THE COUNTY OF ANY CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING MATERIALS PURCHASED AT RETAIL EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER VEHICLES PURCHASED AT RETAIL ON WHICH REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; EXEMPTING SALES OF AGRICULTURE ITEMS AS DEFINED IN C.R.S. 39-26-716 (1)-(4); PROVIDED THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY TO INCREASE ANY OTHER FEE OR TAX, INCLUDING PROPERTY TAXES, AND SHALL THIS TAX INCREASE CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD APPLY TO THE COUNTY UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS OR "TABOR"; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-87 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																								
Amendment 86 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning congressional redistricting, and, in connection therewith, reenacting the current process for congressional redistricting in the Colorado Constitution and prohibiting modifications to a final map unless at least three public meetings are held, the modifications do not have the effect of dividing communities of interest or purposefully favoring one political party, and are approved by the congressional redistricting commission and the Colorado Supreme Court? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 133 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law concerning human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, and, in connection therewith, creating new law expanding human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor and increasing the penalty to be life in prison without parole or release? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1B SHALL KIOWA COUNTY WAIVE THE 5.25% PROPERTY TAX LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 29-1-1702 C.R.S. AND BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE FULL AMOUNT OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED BEGINNING IN 2026 AND FOR ALL FUTURE PROPERTY TAX YEARS, ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																								
Amendment 87 (CONSTITUTIONAL) SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED \$2.7 BILLION ANNUALLY, IN ORDER TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE LEVELS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INCLUDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES TO THE EXTENT OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REPEALING EXISTING LAW AND CREATING NEW LAW TO REPLACE THE UNIFORM STATE INCOME TAX RATE WITH A GRADUATED INCOME TAX STRUCTURE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, AMENDING THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS TO ELIMINATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TAXABLE NET INCOME TO BE TAXED AT ONE RATE WITH NO ADDED TAX ON INCOME, ESTABLISHING VARIOUS INCOME TAX RATES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAXABLE INCOME EARNED BY INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND CORPORATIONS, WHILE MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 4.4% TAX ON INCOME FROM THE SALE OF A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE, WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTIMATED CHANGE IN INCOME TAXES OWED BY INDIVIDUALS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE, AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO RETAIN AND SPEND ANY INCREASED REVENUE FROM THE NEW TAX STRUCTURE, AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE, TO SUPPLEMENT CURRENT LEVELS OF FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS? <table><thead><tr><th>Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category</th><th>Current Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>\$25,000 or less</td><td>\$59</td><td>\$50</td><td>-\$9</td></tr><tr><td>\$25,001 - \$50,000</td><td>\$751</td><td>\$632</td><td>-\$119</td></tr><tr><td>\$50,001 - \$100,000</td><td>\$1,877</td><td>\$1,666</td><td>-\$210</td></tr><tr><td>\$100,001 - \$150,000</td><td>\$4,126</td><td>\$3,828</td><td>-\$298</td></tr><tr><td>\$150,001 - \$200,000</td><td>\$9,344</td><td>\$9,019</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$200,001 - \$500,000</td><td>\$19,288</td><td>\$18,963</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$500,001 - \$1,000,000</td><td>\$29,432</td><td>\$34,196</td><td>+\$4,764</td></tr><tr><td>\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000</td><td>\$41,196</td><td>\$55,110</td><td>+\$13,914</td></tr><tr><td>\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service. YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -	\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9	\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119	\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210	\$100,001 - \$150,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298	\$150,001 - \$200,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325	\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764	\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914	\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000				Proposition 134 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law restricting participation in all K-12 and collegiate school sports based on the participant's sex as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system, and, in connection therewith, requiring a school, institution of higher education, or athletic association to designate each school or intramural athletic team or sport as male, female, or coeducational; only allowing participants to compete on the team or sport of their designated sex or to compete on a coeducational team; creating an exception to allow a female to participate on a male-designated team or sport if there is no female team available; prohibiting a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization, or athletic association from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate teams or sports for females; and providing the commissioner of education with the authority to enforce the proposed initiative for K-12 school districts? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	School District Ballot Measures County School District RE-1 Issue 4A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. RE-1 DEBT BE INCREASED UP TO \$4.55 MILLION WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF UP TO \$9.1 MILLION, AND SHALL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY UP TO \$410,000 ANNUALLY, WITH THE INCREASE IN DEBT TO OCCUR ONLY IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES AN AWARDED "BEST" GRANT (WHICH IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE REPAYED), TO FINANCE THE COSTS OF: ADDRESSING THE DISTRICT'S HIGHEST-PRIORITY FACILITY DEFICIENCIES AND HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY NEEDS THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATING AND CREATING A UNIFIED, SAFE, AND SECURE PK-12 CAMPUS; BY THE ISSUANCE AND PAYMENT OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS WHICH SHALL BEAR INTEREST, MATURE, PERMIT REDEMPTION, AND BE ISSUED AT SUCH TIME AND PRICES (AT, ABOVE OR BELOW PAR), AND CONTAINING TERMS CONSISTENT WITH THIS BALLOT MEASURE AS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DETERMINES, AND SHALL AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES BE LEVIED WITHOUT LIMIT AS TO THE MILL RATE TO GENERATE AMOUNTS, NOT TO EXCEED THE ABOVE AMOUNTS, SUFFICIENT IN EACH YEAR TO TIMELY PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -																																							
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9																																							
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119																																							
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210																																							
\$100,001 - \$150,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298																																							
\$150,001 - \$200,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325																																							
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325																																							
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764																																							
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914																																							
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000																																										
Proposition NN (STATUTORY) Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year for the next ten years, with investments used to increase teacher pay, improve teacher retention, lower class sizes, and increase access to career and technical courses, without raising taxes but instead funded by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending only by the amount spent on public K-12 education as a voter-approved revenue change, and requiring an annual publicly released, independent audit to show how the new investments are spent? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 135 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law by prohibiting surgery on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics, and, in connection therewith, prohibiting any health-care professional or other person from knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery to a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibiting the use of state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement, or insurance coverage to pay for this type of surgery? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									
	Proposition 136 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes capping the state income tax rate at 4.4% of federal taxable income for individuals and corporations? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									
	Proposition 137 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law to increase water and land conservation funding without raising taxes, and, in connection therewith, through a voter-approved revenue change, allowing the state to keep and spend a portion of revenue from the state sales tax on sporting goods and equipment to conserve and protect Colorado's water, land, and forests, prevent wildfires, support outdoor recreation training and activities, and reduce revenue spent on these conservation purposes if necessary to preserve funding for certain tax credits? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									

Mark both sides of the ballot



FEMA denies individual assistance and hazard mitigation funding portions of Colorado's major disaster declaration

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

FEMA denied the Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program portions of Colorado's Major Disaster Declaration request on Friday, September 18, 2026, leaving Pueblo and Custer County residents without direct federal housing and rebuilding aid.

The denial came despite Colorado recently receiving federal approval for the Public Assistance portion of its disaster declaration, which covers repair of critical infrastructure and debris cleanup on public and private property. Coordination between state and local governments on that work is already underway.

"The recent approval of Colorado's Major Disaster Declaration request was the important first step to clear debris and allow communities to begin the process to recover. I am disappointed that Colorado was denied these additional portions of our request that would have further supported impacted families and communities. However, the state is already hard at work coordinating debris cleanup with local governments. The state is evaluating Colorado's options and next steps following the denial of these additional resources," said Governor Jared Polis.

Individual Assistance would have provided temporary housing, home repairs, essential personal property, crisis counseling, disaster case management, disaster unemployment assistance, and disaster legal services to individuals and families in Pueblo and Custer Counties. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds proactive resilience measures such as flood prevention, stormwater system upgrades, and wildfire mitigation. FEMA estimates that hazard mitigation spending saves an average of \$6 for every \$1 spent.

The disaster declaration request had received broad, bipartisan support from Colorado's congressional delegation, state legislators, local elected officials, first responders, utilities, businesses, nonprofits, and community organizations, all of whom detailed extensive damage caused by the Aspen Acres and Gold Mountain Fires and subsequent flooding and debris flows.

The state is assessing next steps and has 30 days to appeal the denial.



GNBank
The Best Place to Bank and Borrow

1220 Maine St. ■ Eads, CO ■ (719) 438-5331
gn-bank.com

Official Ballot for 2026 General Election
Kiowa County, Colorado
Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Precinct: 4354731002
Ballot Type: 2
Ballot Style: 902-2

Clerk and Recorder

To vote for a named candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice. Use blue or black ink.

To vote for an eligible write-in candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line and print the name of the candidate on the line. If a race does not contain a write-in line, you cannot vote for a write-in candidate.

To make a correction in a race with more than one candidate, draw a bold line through the oval and candidate name marked by mistake, then fill in the oval next to the correct name. To withdraw a vote for the only candidate in a race, you must request a replacement ballot.

WARNING: Any person who, by use of force or other means, unduly influences an eligible elector to vote in any particular manner or to refrain from voting, or who falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any mail ballot before or after it has been cast, or who destroys, defaces, mutilates, or tampers with a ballot is subject, upon conviction, to imprisonment, or to a fine, or both. Section 1-7.5-107(3)(b), C.R.S.

Federal Offices	State Offices	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)
United States Senator (Vote for One) Republican Mark Baisley ☐ Democratic John Hickenlooper ☐ Forward Bob Chew ☐ Approval Voting Christopher Baum ☐ Libertarian Blake Huber ☐ Unity Adam Withrow ☐ Write-in _____	State Senator - District 35 (Vote for One) Republican Rod Pelton ☐ Democratic Duane L. Gurule ☐ Libertarian Richard Graf ☐ Unaffiliated Travis Star Nelson ☐ State Representative - District 47 (Vote for One) Democratic Vic Meyers ☐ Republican Ty Winter ☐ Kiowa County Offices County Commissioner - District 2 (Vote for One) Republican Howard Robertson ☐ County Clerk and Recorder (Vote for One) Republican Adrienne Yates ☐ Governor / Lieutenant Governor (Vote for One Pair) Republican Victor Marx / George Washington Markert ☐ Democratic Phil Weiser / Lesley Dahikemper ☐ American Constitution Stephen T. Hamilton / James K. Treibert ☐ Libertarian Eric Mulder / Wayne Harlos ☐ Unity Jeff Peckman / T.J. Cole ☐ Approval Voting Erik Underwood / Frank Atwood ☐ Unaffiliated Greg Lopez / Taralyn Romero ☐ Secretary of State (Vote for One) Democratic Amanda Gonzalez ☐ Republican James Wiley ☐ Libertarian Sean Vadney ☐ American Constitution Amanda Campbell ☐ Forward Celeste Landry ☐ State Treasurer (Vote for One) Democratic Jeff Bridges ☐ Republican Kevin Grantham ☐ Libertarian Jodie Barr ☐ Approval Voting Marilee Langner Sturgis ☐ Attorney General (Vote for One) Republican Michael J. Allen ☐ Democratic Jena Griswold ☐	District Court Judge Shall Judge Tarryn L. Johnson of the 15th Judicial District be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐ Ballot Measures Ballot questions referred by the general assembly or any political subdivision are listed by letter, and ballot questions initiated by the people are listed numerically. A ballot question listed as an "amendment" proposes a change to the Colorado constitution, and a ballot question listed as a "proposition" proposes a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes. A "yes/for" vote on any ballot question is a vote in favor of changing current law or existing circumstances, and a "no/against" vote on any ballot question is a vote against changing current law or existing circumstances. State Ballot Measures Amendment 81 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring law enforcement to notify the department of homeland security when a person is charged with either a violent crime or any crime if the person has a prior felony conviction if law enforcement cannot determine that the person is lawfully present in the United States? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐ Amendment 82 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating new law granting the right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating in homes or businesses and for distributors and utilities to sell natural gas to consumers? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐ Amendment 83 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating a constitutional right to hunt, fish, and harvest fish and wildlife by traditional methods, including all species of fish and wildlife managed by the state except non-game species, endangered species, or any species that is illegal to hunt under federal law, and, in connection therewith, establishing hunting and fishing as the preferred means of managing fish and wildlife populations; and preserving the right of the state to regulate hunting, fishing, and wildlife management if necessary for sound scientific wildlife conservation and management, public safety, or to preserve the future of hunting and fishing opportunities for all species? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐ Amendment 84 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring a voter to sign and include the last four digits of their social security number or their Colorado driver's license or identification card number on the outside of their mail ballot for any federal or state election, and, in connection therewith, allowing the voter to correct missing or incorrect information, including with alternative forms of identification, and prohibiting a county clerk and recorder from counting the mail ballot unless the problem is fixed? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐

Mark both sides of the ballot

Colorado secures \$13.7 million in federal funding for farm and ranch conservation

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

The Colorado Department of Agriculture has secured \$13.7 million from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help agricultural producers access emerging markets while supporting conservation practices on Colorado's working lands.

The funding comes through the Advancing Markets for Producers program, formerly known as the Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities. All funding will be distributed as direct-to-producer grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$300,000 depending on the program, and is expected to cover two years of grants.

"Agriculture is essential to our way of life in Colorado, and now we can offer more support to our farmers and ranchers and invest in our future success. Our farmers and ranchers are leaders in conservation and protecting the lands we love. This funding will strengthen that work and support more participation in these efforts," said Governor Jared Polis.

"This is real money in the pockets of Colorado's farmers and ranchers who are using soil health practices in their land management to make their operations more profitable and the land healthier," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kate Greenberg. "This funding will help agricultural producers build more resilient operations that can withstand the challenges of a changing climate. By using this year's tough growing season as an example of what we

have to prepare against, this funding will help farmers and ranchers get ready for a drier future."

Funding will be directed through existing Colorado Department of Agriculture grant programs, including Colorado Proud, Colorado State Conservation Board grants, the Colorado Soil Health Program SHOW grants, the Climate Resilience Grant Program, the Climate Smart Markets Program, the Noxious Weeds Program, and the Urban Agriculture Program.

Conservation practices eligible under the program include cover-cropping, reduced or no-till farming, irrigation water management, noxious weeds management, rotational grazing, and nutrient management. These practices have been shown to increase soil health, reduce erosion, improve water retention, and aid carbon sequestration.

"Bringing AMP funding to Colorado is a major success for Colorado's farmers and ranchers, particularly considering the many challenges the agricultural industry faces," said Evanne Caviness, Director of the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Conservation Services Division. "With this funding, Colorado's producers will receive critical financial support to do what they do best: feed our nation while stewarding the working lands that make our state the incredible place that it is."

The department's Conservation Services and Markets divisions will collaborate to help producers grow commodities using conservation practices while also accessing new and emerging markets. The funding supports two of the department's five strategic directions: Environmental Stewardship and Climate Resilience, and Market and Economic Productivity.

More information on participating grant programs is available at ag.colorado.gov.

Support
Youth
Academic
and
Athletic
Programs



State Ballot Measures	State Ballot Measures	County Ballot Measures																																								
Amendment 85 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning ballot question language, and, in connection therewith, requiring all state and local ballot questions to be written in plain language and at no more than an 8th grade reading level and prohibiting a state statute from requiring language that conflicts with these requirements in ballot questions for citizen-initiated measures? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 132 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning criminal penalties for felony and certain synthetic opioids, and, in connection therewith, increasing the felony classifications of drug-related crimes for distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of a controlled substance and certain synthetic opioids; creating mandated treatment for certain drug felony violations based on possession amount; and changing sentencing provisions to narrow or eliminate exemptions for crimes related to a felony and certain synthetic opioids and drug-related deaths? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED FOR GENERAL COUNTY PURPOSES (50%) AND COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (50%) BY THE PROPOSED 1.5% COUNTYWIDE SALES AND USE TAX WHICH IS TO BE LEVIED AND IMPOSED, COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2027 AND CONTINUING FOR 15 YEARS; WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GENERATE THE FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR INCREASE OF \$500,000 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER, MORE OR LESS, TO BE ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED AS DETERMINED DURING THE COUNTY BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, AND BE IMPOSED AS FOLLOWS: A SALES TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE SALE OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AT RETAIL AND THE FURNISHING OF SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; A USE TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE STORAGE, USE OR CONSUMPTION IN THE COUNTY OF ANY CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING MATERIALS PURCHASED AT RETAIL EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER VEHICLES PURCHASED AT RETAIL ON WHICH REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; EXEMPTING SALES OF AGRICULTURE ITEMS AS DEFINED IN C.R.S. 39-26-716 (1)-(4); PROVIDED THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY TO INCREASE ANY OTHER FEE OR TAX, INCLUDING PROPERTY TAXES, AND SHALL THIS TAX INCREASE CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD APPLY TO THE COUNTY UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS OR TABOR; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																								
Amendment 86 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning congressional redistricting, and, in connection therewith, reenacting the current process for congressional redistricting in the Colorado Constitution and prohibiting modifications to a final map unless at least three public meetings are held, the modifications do not have the effect of dividing communities of interest or purposefully favoring one political party, and are approved by the congressional redistricting commission and the Colorado Supreme Court? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 133 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law concerning human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, and, in connection therewith, creating new law expanding human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor and increasing the penalty to be life in prison without parole or release? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1B SHALL KIOWA COUNTY WAIVE THE 5.25% PROPERTY TAX LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 29-1-1702 C.R.S. AND BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE FULL AMOUNT OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED BEGINNING IN 2026 AND FOR ALL FUTURE PROPERTY TAX YEARS, ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																								
Amendment 87 (CONSTITUTIONAL) SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED \$2.7 BILLION ANNUALLY, IN ORDER TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE LEVELS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INCLUDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES TO THE EXTENT OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REPEALING EXISTING LAW AND CREATING NEW LAW TO REPLACE THE UNIFORM STATE INCOME TAX RATE WITH A GRADUATED INCOME TAX STRUCTURE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, AMENDING THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS TO ELIMINATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TAXABLE NET INCOME TO BE TAXED AT ONE RATE WITH NO ADDED TAX ON INCOME, ESTABLISHING VARIOUS INCOME TAX RATES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAXABLE INCOME EARNED BY INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND CORPORATIONS, WHILE MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 4.4% TAX ON INCOME FROM THE SALE OF A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE, WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTIMATED CHANGE IN INCOME TAXES OWED BY INDIVIDUALS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE, AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO RETAIN AND SPEND ANY INCREASED REVENUE FROM THE NEW TAX STRUCTURE, AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE, TO SUPPLEMENT CURRENT LEVELS OF FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS? <table><thead><tr><th>Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category</th><th>Current Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>\$25,000 or less</td><td>\$59</td><td>\$50</td><td>-\$9</td></tr><tr><td>\$25,001 - \$50,000</td><td>\$751</td><td>\$632</td><td>-\$119</td></tr><tr><td>\$50,001 - \$100,000</td><td>\$1,877</td><td>\$1,666</td><td>-\$210</td></tr><tr><td>\$100,001 - \$150,000</td><td>\$4,126</td><td>\$3,828</td><td>-\$298</td></tr><tr><td>\$150,001 - \$200,000</td><td>\$9,344</td><td>\$9,019</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$200,001 - \$500,000</td><td>\$19,288</td><td>\$18,963</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$500,001 - \$1,000,000</td><td>\$29,432</td><td>\$34,196</td><td>+\$4,764</td></tr><tr><td>\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000</td><td>\$41,196</td><td>\$55,110</td><td>+\$13,914</td></tr><tr><td>\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000</td><td>\$14,196</td><td>\$55,110</td><td>+\$13,914</td></tr></tbody></table> Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service. YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -	\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9	\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119	\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210	\$100,001 - \$150,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298	\$150,001 - \$200,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325	\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764	\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914	\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$14,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914	Proposition 134 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law restricting participation in all K-12 and collegiate school sports based on the participant's sex as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system, and, in connection therewith, requiring a school, institution of higher education, or athletic association to designate each school or intramural athletic team or sport as male, female, or coeducational; only allowing participants to compete on the team or sport of their designated sex or to compete on a coeducational team; creating an exception to allow a female to participate on a male-designated team or sport if there is no female team available; prohibiting a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization, or athletic association from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate teams or sports for females; and providing the commissioner of education with the authority to enforce the proposed initiative for K-12 school districts? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	School District Ballot Measures County School District RE-1 Issue 4A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. RE-1 DEBT BE INCREASED UP TO \$4.55 MILLION WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF UP TO \$9.51 MILLION, AND SHALL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY UP TO \$410,000 ANNUALLY, WITH THE INCREASE IN DEBT TO OCCUR ONLY IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES AN AWARDED "BEST" GRANT (WHICH IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE REPAYED), TO FINANCE THE COSTS OF: ADDRESSING THE DISTRICT'S HIGHEST-PRIORITY FACILITY DEFICIENCIES AND HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY NEEDS THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATING AND CREATING A UNIFIED, SAFE, AND SECURE PK-12 CAMPUS; BY THE ISSUANCE AND PAYMENT OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS WHICH SHALL BEAR INTEREST, MATURE, PERMIT REDEMPTION, AND BE ISSUED AT SUCH TIME AND PRICES (AT, ABOVE OR BELOW PAR), AND CONTAINING TERMS CONSISTENT WITH THIS BALLOT MEASURE AS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DETERMINES, AND SHALL AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES BE LEVIED WITHOUT LIMIT AS TO THE MILL RATE TO GENERATE AMOUNTS, NOT TO EXCEED THE ABOVE AMOUNTS, SUFFICIENT IN EACH YEAR TO TIMELY PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -																																							
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9																																							
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119																																							
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210																																							
\$100,001 - \$150,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298																																							
\$150,001 - \$200,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325																																							
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325																																							
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764																																							
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914																																							
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$14,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914																																							
Proposition NN (STATUTORY) Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year for the next ten years, with investments used to increase teacher pay, improve teacher retention, lower class sizes, and increase access to career and technical courses, without raising taxes but instead funded by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending only by the amount spent on public K-12 education as a voter-approved revenue change, and requiring an annual publicly released, independent audit to show how the new investments are spent? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 135 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law by prohibiting surgery on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics, and, in connection therewith, prohibiting any health-care professional or other person from knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery to a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibiting the use of state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement, or insurance coverage to pay for this type of surgery? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									
	Proposition 136 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes capping the state income tax rate at 4.4% of federal taxable income for individuals and corporations? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									
	Proposition 137 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law to increase water and land conservation funding without raising taxes, and, in connection therewith, through a voter-approved revenue change, allowing the state to keep and spend a portion of revenue from the state sales tax on sporting goods and equipment to conserve and protect Colorado's water, land, and forests, prevent wildfires, support outdoor recreation training and activities, and reduce revenue spent on these conservation purposes if necessary to preserve funding for certain tax credits? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																									

Mark both sides of the ballot

IRS extends tax relief for farmers and ranchers affected by drought in 49 states

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

The Internal Revenue Service has issued guidance extending tax relief for farmers and ranchers in 49 states and other regions who were forced to sell or exchange livestock due to drought conditions, giving affected producers more time to replace their herds and defer taxes on gains from those sales.

Notice 2026-54 lists qualifying areas by county or jurisdiction and covers 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other areas that reported exceptional, extreme, or severe drought during the 12-month period ending August 31, 2026.

"Large swaths of the United States continue to experience drought conditions, distressing hard-working American farmers and ranchers," said IRS Chief Executive Officer Frank J. Bisignano. "By extending relief for those who sell or exchange livestock, the IRS is providing much needed support to those who feed our nation."

The relief generally applies to capital gains from sales or exchanges of livestock held for draft, dairy, or breeding purposes. Sales of livestock raised for slaughter or sporting purposes, and sales of poultry, do not qualify.

To be eligible, farmers and ranchers must show that drought prompted the sales or exchanges and that their area received a federal drought designation.

Livestock must generally be replaced within a four-year period rather than the usual two-year period, with the IRS authorized to extend that window further if drought persists.

Eligible farmers and ranchers whose drought-sale replacement period was scheduled to expire at the end of 2026 will have until the end of their next tax year to replace the sold or exchanged livestock. The extension applies to any region listed as suffering exceptional, extreme, or severe drought conditions during any week between September 1, 2025, and August 31, 2026, as determined by the National Drought Mitigation Center.

Notice 2026-54 is available at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-26-54.pdf>. Details and an example of how this provision works can be found in Notice 2006-82 at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-06-82.pdf>. Additional information on reporting drought sales and other farm-related tax issues is available in Publication 225, Farmer's Tax Guide, at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf>.

38,000+
articles
online at

[KiowaCountyPress.net](https://kiowacountypress.net)

Crow's Family-Owned Since 1937
719-438-5881
1111 Maine Street- Eads CO
<https://crowsstopandshop.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/CrowsGroceryStore>
Stop and Shop
FOOD MARKET

Official Ballot for 2026 General Election Kiowa County, Colorado Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Precinct: 4354731003
Ballot Type: 2
Ballot Style: 003-2

Adrienne Yates
Clerk and Recorder

To vote for a named candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice. Use blue or black ink.

To vote for an eligible write-in candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line and print the name of the candidate on the line. If a race does not contain a write-in line, you cannot vote for a write-in candidate.

To make a correction in a race with more than one candidate, draw a bold line through the oval and candidate name marked by mistake, then fill in the oval next to the correct name. To withdraw a vote for the only candidate in a race, you must request a replacement ballot.

WARNING: Any person who, by use of force or other means, unduly influences an eligible elector to vote in any particular manner or to refrain from voting, or who falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any mail ballot before or after it has been cast, or who destroys, defaces, mutilates, or tampers with a ballot is subject, upon conviction, to imprisonment, or to a fine, or both: Section 1-7.5-107(3)(b), C.R.S.

Federal Offices	State Offices	Judicial Retention Questions
United States Senator (Vote for One)	State Senator - District 35 (Vote for One)	District Court Judge Shall Judge Tamm L. Johnson of the 15th Judicial District be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐
Republican ☐ Mark Baisley	Republican ☐ Rod Pelton	Ballot Measures Ballot questions referred by the general assembly or any political subdivision are listed by letter, and ballot questions initiated by the people are listed numerically. A ballot question listed as an "amendment" proposes a change to the Colorado constitution, and a ballot question listed as a "proposition" proposes a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes. A "yes/for" vote on any ballot question is a vote in favor of changing current law or existing circumstances, and a "no/against" vote on any ballot question is a vote against changing current law or existing circumstances.
Democratic ☐ John Hickenlooper	Democratic ☐ Duane L. Gurule	State Ballot Measures Amendment 81 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring law enforcement to notify the department of homeland security when a person is charged with either a violent crime or any crime if the person has a prior felony conviction if law enforcement cannot determine that the person is lawfully present in the United States? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Forward ☐ Bob Chew	Libertarian ☐ Richard Graf	Amendment 82 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating new law granting the right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating in homes or businesses and for distributors and utilities to sell natural gas to consumers? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Approval Voting ☐ Christopher Baum	Unaffiliated ☐ Travis Star Nelson	Amendment 83 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating a constitutional right to hunt, fish, and harvest fish and wildlife by traditional methods, including all species of fish and wildlife managed by the state except non-game species, endangered species, or any species that is illegal to hunt under federal law, and, in connection therewith, establishing hunting and fishing as the preferred means of managing fish and wildlife populations; and preserving the right of the state to regulate hunting, fishing, and wildlife management if necessary for sound scientific wildlife conservation and management, public safety, or to preserve the future of hunting and fishing opportunities for all species? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Libertarian ☐ Blake Huber	State Representative - District 47 (Vote for One)	Amendment 84 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring a voter to sign and include the last four digits of their social security number or their Colorado driver's license or identification card number on the outside of their mail ballot for any federal or state election, and, in connection therewith, allowing the voter to correct missing or incorrect information, including with alternative forms of identification, and prohibiting a county clerk and recorder from counting the mail ballot unless the problem is fixed? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Unity ☐ Adam Withrow	Democratic ☐ Vic Meyers	
Write-in ☐	Republican ☐ Ty Winter	
Representative to the 120th United States Congress - District 4 (Vote for One)	Kiowa County Offices	
Republican ☐ Lauren Boebert	County Commissioner - District 2 (Vote for One)	
Democratic ☐ Eileen Laubacher	Republican ☐ Howard Robertson	
Libertarian ☐ Douglas Mangeris	County Clerk and Recorder (Vote for One)	
Write-in ☐	Republican ☐ Adrienne Yates	
State Offices	County Treasurer (Vote for One)	
Governor / Lieutenant Governor (Vote for One Pair)	Republican ☐ Diana Flory	
Republican ☐ Victor Marx	County Assessor (Vote for One)	
Democratic ☐ George Washington Markert	Republican ☐ Marci Miller	
Democratic ☐ Phil Weiser / Lesley Dahlkemper	County Sheriff (Vote for One)	
American Constitution ☐ Stephen T. Hamilton / James K. Treibert	Republican ☐ Bryan Williams	
Libertarian ☐ Eric Mulder / Wayne Harlos	County Surveyor (Vote for One)	
Unity ☐ Jeff Peckman / T.J. Cole	There are no candidates for this office.	
Approval Voting ☐ Erik Underwood / Frank Atwood	County Coroner (Vote for One)	
Unaffiliated ☐ Greg Lopez / Taralyn Romero	Republican ☐ Jimmy Brown	
Secretary of State (Vote for One)	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)	
Democratic ☐ Amanda Gonzalez	Colorado Supreme Court Justice	
Republican ☐ James Wiley	Shall Justice William W. Hood, III of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Libertarian ☐ Sean Vadney	Colorado Court of Appeals Judge	
American Constitution ☐ Amanda Campbell	Shall Judge Rebecca Rankin Freyre of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Forward ☐ Celeste Landry	Shall Judge Elizabeth L. Harris of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
State Treasurer (Vote for One)	Shall Judge Katharine E. Lum of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Democratic ☐ Jeff Bridges	Shall Judge Pax Moultrie of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Republican ☐ Kevin Grantham	Shall Judge Karl L. Schock of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Libertarian ☐ Jodie Barr	Shall Judge Grant Sullivan of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐	
Approval Voting ☐ Marilee Langner Sturgis		
Attorney General (Vote for One)		
Republican ☐ Michael J. Allen		
Democratic ☐ Jena Griswold		

Mark both sides of the ballot

Colorado to get \$250M in federal funding for electricity grid improvements

SARA WILSON*(Colorado Newsline)*

The Colorado Energy Office will receive \$250 million from the federal government to improve electricity transmission links between Eastern and Western grids, the U.S. Department of Energy announced Thursday. It's part of \$1.9 billion total to help fund 31 grid-improvement projects.

"This means lower costs and fewer outages for Coloradans," Colorado Governor Jared Polis, a Democrat, said in a statement. "By strengthening Colorado's electric grid and expanding our ability to share power with other regions, we can better protect families and businesses during extreme weather and periods of high demand while continuing to save people money."

Colorado and Oklahoma will get the most federal funds, both at \$250 million. Some projects, including those in Alabama and Mississippi, are aimed at increasing capacity for large-load data centers, and in total, the 31 projects will add 23 gigawatts of capacity to the country's transmission system.

Colorado's project will "expand interregional transfer capability, improve system reliability, enhance operational flexibility, and strengthen grid resilience across Colorado, Texas, and neighboring regions," according to a DOE summary.

The project will move a transmission connection between Colorado and Texas to the higher capacity May Valley substation in south-

eastern Colorado. Higher voltage wires will more than triple the amount of electricity that can move between the two regional grids, from 210 megawatts to 700 megawatts. It could one day carry 2,000 megawatts of electricity.

It is part of a larger set of investments to improve the multi-state transmission system, known as the Colorado-to-Texas Western-Eastern Interior Modernization Initiative, or CO2TX.

"Xcel Energy Services Inc's proposed project will allow optimized use of clean energy resources across a much larger geographical footprint which will save Coloradans money on energy costs," Will Toor, executive director of the Energy Office, said in a statement.

Because the project involves modernizing existing equipment and lines, it is in line with a March executive order from President Donald Trump that seeks to maximize existing right-of-ways instead of new construction.

"Modernizing the Lamar Tie will strengthen the connection between the Western and Eastern electric grids, helping us better serve customers during extreme weather, meet growing energy needs and make the most of affordable energy resources across the region," Robert Kenney, president of Xcel Energy-Colorado, said in a statement.

The money was made available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. Xcel is contributing an 80% funding match for the project.

In 2023, two Colorado utilities received \$48.5 million in USDA loans for grid upgrades, an earlier round of federal investment in the state's electricity infrastructure.

In July, Polis and other Western governors started a task force to prioritize upgrades for the region's energy grid.

State Ballot Measures	State Ballot Measures	County Ballot Measures																																				
Amendment 85 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning ballot question language, and, in connection therewith, requiring all state and local ballot questions to be written in plain language and at no more than an 8th grade reading level and prohibiting a state statute from requiring language that conflicts with these requirements in ballot questions for citizen-initiated measures? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 132 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning criminal penalties for felony and certain synthetic opioids, and, in connection therewith, increasing the felony classifications of drug-related crimes for distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of a controlled substance and certain synthetic opioids; creating mandated treatment for certain drug felony violations based on possession amount; and changing sentencing provisions to narrow or eliminate exemptions for crimes related to a felony and certain synthetic opioids and drug-related deaths? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED FOR GENERAL COUNTY PURPOSES (50%) AND COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (50%) BY THE PROPOSED 1.5% COUNTYWIDE SALES AND USE TAX WHICH IS TO BE LEVIED AND IMPOSED, COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2027 AND CONTINUING FOR 15 YEARS; WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GENERATE THE FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR INCREASE OF \$500,000 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER, MORE OR LESS, TO BE ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED AS DETERMINED DURING THE COUNTY BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, AND BE IMPOSED AS FOLLOWS: A SALES TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE SALE OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AT RETAIL AND THE FURNISHING OF SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; A USE TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE STORAGE, USE OR CONSUMPTION IN THE COUNTY OF ANY CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING MATERIALS PURCHASED AT RETAIL EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER VEHICLES PURCHASED AT RETAIL ON WHICH REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; EXEMPTING SALES OF AGRICULTURE ITEMS AS DEFINED IN C.R.S. 39-26-716 (1)-(4); PROVIDED THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY TO INCREASE ANY OTHER FEE OR TAX, INCLUDING PROPERTY TAXES, AND SHALL THIS TAX INCREASE CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD APPLY TO THE COUNTY UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS OR TABOR; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-87 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																				
Amendment 86 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning congressional redistricting, and, in connection therewith, reenacting the current process for congressional redistricting in the Colorado Constitution and prohibiting modifications to a final map unless at least three public meetings are held, the modifications do not have the effect of dividing communities of interest or purposefully favoring one political party, and are approved by the congressional redistricting commission and the Colorado Supreme Court? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 133 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law concerning human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, and, in connection therewith, creating new law expanding human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor and increasing the penalty to be life in prison without parole or release? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1B SHALL KIOWA COUNTY WAIVE THE 5.25% PROPERTY TAX LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 29-1-1702 C.R.S. AND BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE FULL AMOUNT OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED BEGINNING IN 2026 AND FOR ALL FUTURE PROPERTY TAX YEARS; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																				
Amendment 87 (CONSTITUTIONAL) SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED \$2.7 BILLION ANNUALLY, IN ORDER TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE LEVELS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INCLUDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES TO THE EXTENT OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REPEALING EXISTING LAW AND CREATING NEW LAW TO REPLACE THE UNIFORM STATE INCOME TAX RATE WITH A GRADUATED INCOME TAX STRUCTURE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, AMENDING THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS TO ELIMINATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TAXABLE NET INCOME TO BE TAXED AT ONE RATE WITH NO ADDED TAX ON INCOME, ESTABLISHING VARIOUS INCOME TAX RATES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAXABLE INCOME EARNED BY INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND CORPORATIONS, WHILE MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 4.4% TAX ON INCOME FROM THE SALE OF A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE, WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTIMATED CHANGE IN INCOME TAXES OWED BY INDIVIDUALS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE, AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO RETAIN AND SPEND ANY INCREASED REVENUE FROM THE NEW TAX STRUCTURE, AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE, TO SUPPLEMENT CURRENT LEVELS OF FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS? <table><thead><tr><th>Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category</th><th>Current Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>\$25,000 or less</td><td>\$59</td><td>\$50</td><td>-\$9</td></tr><tr><td>\$25,001 - \$50,000</td><td>\$751</td><td>\$632</td><td>-\$119</td></tr><tr><td>\$50,001 - \$100,000</td><td>\$1,877</td><td>\$1,666</td><td>-\$210</td></tr><tr><td>\$100,001 - \$200,000</td><td>\$4,126</td><td>\$3,828</td><td>-\$298</td></tr><tr><td>\$200,001 - \$500,000</td><td>\$9,344</td><td>\$9,019</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$500,001 - \$1,000,000</td><td>\$19,288</td><td>\$18,963</td><td>-\$325</td></tr><tr><td>\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000</td><td>\$29,432</td><td>\$34,196</td><td>+\$4,764</td></tr><tr><td>\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000</td><td>\$41,196</td><td>\$55,110</td><td>+\$13,914</td></tr></tbody></table> Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service. YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -	\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9	\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119	\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210	\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298	\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325	\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764	\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914	Proposition 134 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law restricting participation in all K-12 and collegiate school sports based on the participant's sex as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system, and, in connection therewith, requiring a school, institution of higher education, or athletic association to designate each school or intramural athletic team or sport as male, female, or coeducational; only allowing participants to compete on the team or sport of their designated sex or to compete on a coeducational team; creating an exception to allow a female to participate on a male-designated team or sport if there is no female team available; prohibiting a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization, or athletic association from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate teams or sports for females; and providing the commissioner of education with the authority to enforce the proposed initiative for K-12 school districts? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County School District RE-1 Issue 4A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. RE-1 DEBT BE INCREASED UP TO \$4.55 MILLION WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF UP TO \$9.51 MILLION, AND SHALL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY UP TO \$410,000 ANNUALLY, WITH THE INCREASE IN DEBT TO OCCUR ONLY IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES AN AWARDED "BEST" GRANT (WHICH IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE REPAYED), TO FINANCE THE COSTS OF: ADDRESSING THE DISTRICT'S HIGHEST-PRIORITY FACILITY DEFICIENCIES AND HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY NEEDS THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATING AND CREATING A UNIFIED, SAFE, AND SECURE PK-12 CAMPUS; BY THE ISSUANCE AND PAYMENT OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS WHICH SHALL BEAR INTEREST, MATURE, PERMIT REDEMPTION, AND BE ISSUED AT SUCH TIME AND PRICES (AT, ABOVE OR BELOW PAR), AND CONTAINING TERMS CONSISTENT WITH THIS BALLOT MEASURE AS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DETERMINES, AND SHALL AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES BE LEVIED WITHOUT LIMIT AS TO THE MILL RATE TO GENERATE AMOUNTS, NOT TO EXCEED THE ABOVE AMOUNTS, SUFFICIENT IN EACH YEAR TO TIMELY PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -																																			
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9																																			
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119																																			
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210																																			
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298																																			
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325																																			
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325																																			
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764																																			
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914																																			
Proposition NN (STATUTORY) Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year for the next ten years, with investments used to increase teacher pay, improve teacher retention, lower class sizes, and increase access to career and technical courses, without raising taxes but instead funded by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending only by the amount spent on public K-12 education as a voter-approved revenue change, and requiring an annual publicly released, independent audit to show how the new investments are spent? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 135 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law by prohibiting surgery on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics, and, in connection therewith, prohibiting any health-care professional or other person from knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery to a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibiting the use of state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement, or insurance coverage to pay for this type of surgery? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																					
	Proposition 136 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes capping the state income tax rate at 4.4% of federal taxable income for individuals and corporations? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																					
	Proposition 137 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law to increase water and land conservation funding without raising taxes, and, in connection therewith, through a voter-approved revenue change, allowing the state to keep and spend a portion of revenue from the state sales tax on sporting goods and equipment to conserve and protect Colorado's water, land, and forests, prevent wildfires, support outdoor recreation training and activities, and reduce revenue spent on these conservation purposes if necessary to preserve funding for certain tax credits? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																					

Mark both sides of the ballot



Colorado Parks and Wildlife lifts voluntary fishing closures on three Northwest Region rivers

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

Colorado Parks and Wildlife lifted voluntary fishing closures on portions of three Northwest Region rivers effective September 19, 2026, citing cooler water temperatures.

The lifted closures affect the following areas:

Colorado River: All voluntary fishing closures from Windy Gap Dam downstream to the Williams Fork confluence near Parshall, and from Red Dirt Creek downstream to the Highway 13 bridge in Rifle. While low flows continue to persist in sections of the Colorado River, cold tributaries, deeper-water refuges in narrow canyon reaches, and larger pools provide cool refuges for fish.

Fraser River: Afternoon voluntary fishing closures from County Road 8 in Fraser downstream to the Colorado

do River confluence outside Granby, including Fraser Flats, Fraser River Canyon, and public waters in Granby.

White River: Afternoon voluntary fishing closures on the North Fork and South Fork from the White River National Forest boundary down to their confluence, and on the White River from the confluence of the North Fork and South Fork downstream to County Road 5.

Full-day voluntary closures remain in place on parts of the Eagle River, Crystal River, Elk River, and Yampa River due to high water temperatures and low flows. A mandatory fishing closure also remains in place on the Yampa River from the Stagecoach State Park dam downstream 0.6 miles to the park boundary.

Anglers are encouraged to check river conditions before traveling.

Colorado's September economic forecast shows growth stable but slowing

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

The Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting released Colorado's September economic and revenue forecast Friday, projecting steady but decelerating growth amid international trade uncertainty and geopolitical conflict.

The office projects economic growth in 2026 will hold at roughly the same pace as 2025 at 2.1 percent, supported by stronger-than-expected consumer spending on durable goods and solid business investment. Colorado housing price growth is slower than the national average, and housing permitting began growing in 2025 despite a national decline — a trend OSPB expects to continue in 2026.

"Coloradans are facing higher costs due to Trump's reckless trade policies and

the war with Iran. With gas and grocery prices still climbing, Coloradans are having to choose between filling the tank and filling the fridge. Despite this, Colorado's economy is stable. We will keep fighting to lower costs for Colorado families," said Governor Jared Polis.

Preliminary estimates from the Office of the State Controller indicate revenue will fall \$175.9 million below the TABOR cap in Fiscal Year 2025-26. TABOR refunds are estimated at \$244.4 million in Fiscal Year 2026-27, driven by economic growth, consumer spending, and corporate profits. Projected TABOR surpluses of \$198.9 million in Fiscal Year 2027-28 and \$334.2 million in Fiscal Year 2028-29 are also anticipated. OSPB expects a balanced budget in Fiscal Year 2026-27, with \$65.2 million in excess of the 13 percent General Fund statutory reserve.

Official Ballot for 2026 General Election Kiowa County, Colorado Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Precinct: 4354731004
Ballot Type: 2
Ballot Style: 004-2

Adrienne Yates
Clerk and Recorder

To vote for a named candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of your choice. Use blue or black ink.

To vote for an eligible write-in candidate, completely fill in the oval to the right of the write-in line and print the name of the candidate on the line. If a race does not contain a write-in line, you cannot vote for a write-in candidate.

To make a correction in a race with more than one candidate, draw a bold line through the oval and candidate name marked by mistake, then fill in the oval next to the correct name. To withdraw a vote for the only candidate in a race, you must request a replacement ballot.

WARNING: Any person who, by use of force or other means, unduly influences an eligible elector to vote in any particular manner or to refrain from voting, or who falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any mail ballot before or after it has been cast, or who destroys, defaces, mutilates, or tampers with a ballot is subject, upon conviction, to imprisonment, or to a fine, or both. Section 1-7.5-107(3)(b), C.R.S.

Federal Offices	State Offices	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)
United States Senator (Vote for One)	State Senator - District 35 (Vote for One)	District Court Judge Shall Judge Tammyn L. Johnson of the 15th Judicial District be retained in office? YES ☐ NO ☐
Republican Mark Baisley ☐	Republican Rod Pelton ☐	Ballot Measures Ballot questions referred by the general assembly or any political subdivision are listed by letter, and ballot questions initiated by the people are listed numerically. A ballot question listed as an "amendment" proposes a change to the Colorado constitution, and a ballot question listed as a "proposition" proposes a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes. A "yes/for" vote on any ballot question is a vote in favor of changing current law or existing circumstances, and a "no/against" vote on any ballot question is a vote against changing current law or existing circumstances.
Democratic John Hickenlooper ☐	Democratic Duane L. Gurule ☐	State Ballot Measures Amendment 81 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring law enforcement to notify the department of homeland security when a person is charged with either a violent crime or any crime if the person has a prior felony conviction if law enforcement cannot determine that the person is lawfully present in the United States? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Forward Bob Chew ☐	Libertarian Richard Graf ☐	Amendment 82 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating new law granting the right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating in homes or businesses and for distributors and utilities to sell natural gas to consumers? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Approval Voting Christopher Baum ☐	Unaffiliated Travis Star Nelson ☐	Amendment 83 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution creating a constitutional right to hunt, fish, and harvest fish and wildlife by traditional methods, including all species of fish and wildlife managed by the state except non-game species, endangered species, or any species that is illegal to hunt under federal law, and, in connection therewith, establishing hunting and fishing as the preferred means of managing fish and wildlife populations; and preserving the right of the state to regulate hunting, fishing, and wildlife management if necessary for sound scientific wildlife conservation and management, public safety, or to preserve the future of hunting and fishing opportunities for all species? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Libertarian Blake Huber ☐	State Representative - District 47 (Vote for One)	Amendment 84 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution requiring a voter to sign and include the last four digits of their social security number or their Colorado driver's license or identification card number on the outside of their mail ballot for any federal or state election, and, in connection therewith, allowing the voter to correct missing or incorrect information, including with alternative forms of identification, and prohibiting a county clerk and recorder from counting the mail ballot unless the problem is fixed? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Unity Adam Withrow ☐	Democratic Vic Meyers ☐	
Write-in ☐	Democratic Ty Winter ☐	
Representative to the 120th United States Congress - District 4 (Vote for One)	Kiowa County Offices	
Republican Lauren Boebert ☐	County Commissioner - District 2 (Vote for One)	
Democratic Eileen Laubacher ☐	Republican Howard Robertson ☐	
Libertarian Douglas Mangeris ☐	County Clerk and Recorder (Vote for One)	
Write-in ☐	Republican Adrienne Yates ☐	
State Offices	County Treasurer (Vote for One)	
Governor / Lieutenant Governor (Vote for One Pair)	Republican Diana Flory ☐	
Republican Victor Marx / ☐	County Assessor (Vote for One)	
Democratic George Washington Markert ☐	Republican Marci Miller ☐	
Phil Weiser / ☐	County Sheriff (Vote for One)	
Lesley Dahlkemper ☐	Republican Bryan Williams ☐	
American Constitution Stephen T. Hamilton / ☐	County Surveyor (Vote for One)	
James K. Treibert ☐	There are no candidates for this office.	
Libertarian Eric Mulder / ☐	County Coroner (Vote for One)	
Wayne Harlos ☐	Republican Jimmy Brown ☐	
Jeff Peckman / ☐	Judicial Retention Questions (Vote Yes or No)	
T.J. Cole ☐	Colorado Supreme Court Justice	YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Erik Underwood / ☐	Shall Justice William W. Hood, III of the Colorado Supreme Court be retained in office?	
Frank Atwood ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Greg Lopez / ☐	Colorado Court of Appeals Judge	YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Taralyn Romero ☐	Shall Judge Rebecca Rankin Freyre of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
Secretary of State (Vote for One)	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Democratic Amanda Gonzalez ☐	Shall Judge Elizabeth L. Harris of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
Republican James Wiley ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Libertarian Sean Vadney ☐	Shall Judge Katharine E. Lum of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
American Constitution Amanda Campbell ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Forward Celeste Landry ☐	Shall Judge Pax Moultrie of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
State Treasurer (Vote for One)	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Democratic Jeff Bridges ☐	Shall Judge Karl L. Schock of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
Republican Kevin Grantham ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Libertarian Jodie Barr ☐	Shall Judge Grant Sullivan of the Colorado Court of Appeals be retained in office?	
Approval Voting Marilee Langner Sturgis ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Attorney General (Vote for One)	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Republican Michael J. Allen ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	
Democratic Jena Griswold ☐	YES ☐ NO ☐	

Mark both sides of the ballot

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing regarding an amended plat, to divide the property located at 601 Sandoval Lane into two tracts, also known as; TRACT #1: LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 AND THE NORTH 10 FEET OF LOTS 6 AND 15, BLOCK 102, FIRST ADDITION TO THE CITY OF LAMAR, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF. TOGETHER WITH VACATED ALLEY LYING ADJACENT TO SAID LOTS. IN THE COUNTY OF PROWERS, STATE OF COLORADO. TRACT #2: LOTS 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 AND THE SOUTH 15 FEET OF LOTS 6 AND 15, BLOCK 102, FIRST ADDITION TO THE CITY OF LAMAR, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF. TOGETHER WITH VACATED ALLEY LYING ADJACENT TO SAID LOTS. ALSO TOGETHER WITH THAT PORTION OF VACATED PINE STREET DESCRIBED AS BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 102; THENCE S.0°33'42"E., 30.50 FEET; THENCE N.89°41'10"W., 260.02 FEET; THENCE N.0°33'42"W., 29.20 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID BLOCK 102; THENCE S.89°58'17"E., 260.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BE-

GINNING, IN THE COUNTY OF PROWERS, STATE OF COLORADO, on October 26, 2026 at 7 PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the City Council Chambers, 102 E. Parmenter Street, Lamar, Colorado.

All interested persons may appear before the City Council at the time and place stated above and be heard during the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted to the office of the City Clerk; Linda Williams, linda.williams@ci.lamar.co.us, 102 E. Parmenter St, Lamar, Colorado by 4:00 PM on October 26, 2026.

Copies of the proposed amended plat are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk, 102 E. Parmenter St, Lamar, Colorado during regular business hours and online at ci.lamar.co.us. Questions may be directed to Stephanie Strube; Community Development Director, 719-336-1303, or email stephanie.strube@ci.lamar.co.us.

Dated this 29th day of September, 2026.

Linda Williams, City Clerk

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Adjustment and Appeals will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the Community Development, 407 E. Olive St., Lamar, CO to consider an application; for an appeal and a zoning variance for a mobile home in a R-2, residential, north of Parmenter. The property that is affected by this application is the following described parcel: 507 E. Parmenter, also known as; The West Fifty Feet (W50') of Lot Ten (10), Block Sixteen (16), Except the North Ten feet (N10') of said lot heretofore reserved for use as an alley, in J.V. Bent's Cottage Place Addition to the Town (Now City) of Lamar, according to the plat thereof, County of Prowers, State of Colorado, and a zoning variance to allow the expansion of a front porch. The applicant is proposing to construct a 2' X 10' overhang over the front door on the west side of the home.

The overhang will extend into the required setback of 30'. The property that is affected by this application is the following described parcel: 605 Willow Valley Drive, also known as; Willow Valley Subdivision, Block 6, West 50' of Lot 4, East 50' of Lot 5, County of Prowers, State of Colorado.

All interested persons may appear before the Adjustment and Appeals at the time and place stated above and be heard during the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted to the office of the City Clerk; Linda Williams, linda.williams@ci.lamar.co.us, 102 E. Parmenter St, Lamar, Colorado by 4:00 PM on October 20, 2026.

Copies of the proposed site plan are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk, 102 E. Parmenter St, Lamar, Colorado during regular business hours and online at ci.lamar.co.us. Questions may be directed to Stephanie Strube; Community Development Director, 719-336-1303, or email stephanie.strube@ci.lamar.co.us.

Dated this 29th day of September, 2026.

Stephanie Strube

Board of Adjustment and Appeals

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

Build the Local Economy.

WE ARE OPEN

Supporting Local Businesses Builds Our Community's Future!

Prairie Pines Assisted Living

We are Committed to Making a Difference in People's Lives

719-438-2141

101 E. Lowell St Eads, CO

prairiepines@esrta.com

<https://www.prairiepinesassistedlivingcommunity.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PrairiePinesAssistedLiving/>

State Ballot Measures	State Ballot Measures	County Ballot Measures																																																		
Amendment 85 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning ballot question language, and in connection therewith, requiring all state and local ballot questions to be written in plain language and at no more than an 8th grade reading level and prohibiting a state statute from requiring language that conflicts with these requirements in ballot questions for citizen-initiated measures? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 132 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning criminal penalties for felony and certain synthetic opioids, and in connection therewith, increasing the felony classifications of drug-related crimes for distribution, manufacturing, dispensing, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, and certain synthetic opioids; creating mandated treatment for certain drug felony violations based on possession amount; and changing sentencing provisions to narrow or eliminate exemptions for crimes related to a felony and certain synthetic opioids and drug-related deaths? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED FOR GENERAL COUNTY PURPOSES (50%) AND COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (50%) BY THE PROPOSED 1.5% COUNTYWIDE SALES AND USE TAX WHICH IS TO BE LEVIED AND IMPOSED, COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2027 AND CONTINUING FOR 15 YEARS; WHICH IS ESTIMATED TO GENERATE THE FIRST FULL FISCAL YEAR INCREASE OF \$500,000 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER, MORE OR LESS, TO BE ALLOCATED AND EXPENDED AS DETERMINED DURING THE COUNTY BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS, AND BE IMPOSED AS FOLLOWS: A SALES TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE SALE OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AT RETAIL AND THE FURNISHING OF SERVICES IN THE COUNTY; A USE TAX AT A RATE OF 1.5% ON THE STORAGE, USE OR CONSUMPTION IN THE COUNTY OF ANY CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING MATERIALS PURCHASED AT RETAIL EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLE AND OTHER VEHICLES PURCHASED AT RETAIL ON WHICH REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; EXEMPTING SALES OF AGRICULTURE ITEMS AS DEFINED IN C.R.S. 39-26-716 (1)-(4); PROVIDED THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY TO INCREASE ANY OTHER FEE OR TAX, INCLUDING PROPERTY TAXES, AND SHALL THIS TAX INCREASE CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD APPLY TO THE COUNTY UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS OR TABOR; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																																		
Amendment 86 (CONSTITUTIONAL) Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado Constitution concerning congressional redistricting, and in connection therewith, reenacting the current process for congressional redistricting in the Colorado Constitution and prohibiting modifications to a final map unless at least three public meetings are held, the modifications do not have the effect of dividing communities of interest or purposefully favoring one political party, and are approved by the congressional redistricting commission and the Colorado Supreme Court? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 133 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law concerning human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude, and in connection therewith, creating new law expanding human trafficking of a minor for sexual servitude to include knowingly trading anything of monetary value to buy or sell sexual activity with a minor and increasing the penalty to be life in prison without parole or release? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	County Ballot Issue 1B SHALL KIOWA COUNTY WAIVE THE 5.25% PROPERTY TAX LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 29-1-1702 C.R.S. AND BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE FULL AMOUNT OF ALL REVENUES GENERATED BEGINNING IN 2026 AND FOR ALL FUTURE PROPERTY TAX YEARS, ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY AND SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 2026-97 YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																																		
Amendment 87 (CONSTITUTIONAL) SHALL STATE TAXES BE INCREASED \$2.7 BILLION ANNUALLY, IN ORDER TO INCREASE OR IMPROVE LEVELS OF PUBLIC SERVICES, INCLUDING K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION SERVICES; BY AN AMENDMENT TO THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION AND A CHANGE TO THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES REPEALING EXISTING LAW AND CREATING NEW LAW TO REPLACE THE UNIFORM STATE INCOME TAX RATE WITH A GRADUATED INCOME TAX STRUCTURE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, AMENDING THE TAXPAYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS TO ELIMINATE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TAXABLE NET INCOME TO BE TAXED AT ONE RATE WITH NO ADDED TAX ON INCOME; ESTABLISHING VARIOUS INCOME TAX RATES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF TAXABLE INCOME EARNED BY INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND CORPORATIONS, WHILE MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 4.4% TAX ON INCOME FROM THE SALE OF A PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE, WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTIMATED CHANGE IN INCOME TAXES OWED BY INDIVIDUALS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE; AND AUTHORIZING THE STATE TO RETAIN AND SPEND ANY INCREASED REVENUE FROM THE NEW TAX STRUCTURE, AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE, TO SUPPLEMENT CURRENT LEVELS OF FUNDING FOR K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, AND EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS? <table><tr><th colspan="5">Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category</th></tr><tr><th>Income Categories</th><th>Current Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Average Income Tax Owed</th><th>Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -</th><th></th></tr><tr><td>\$25,000 or less</td><td>\$59</td><td>\$50</td><td>-\$9</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$25,001 - \$50,000</td><td>\$751</td><td>\$632</td><td>-\$119</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$50,001 - \$100,000</td><td>\$1,877</td><td>\$1,666</td><td>-\$210</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$100,001 - \$200,000</td><td>\$4,126</td><td>\$3,828</td><td>-\$298</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$200,001 - \$500,000</td><td>\$9,344</td><td>\$9,019</td><td>-\$325</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$500,001 - \$1,000,000</td><td>\$19,288</td><td>\$18,963</td><td>-\$325</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000</td><td>\$29,432</td><td>\$34,196</td><td>+\$4,764</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000</td><td>\$41,196</td><td>\$55,110</td><td>+\$13,914</td><td></td></tr></table> Income categories use adjusted gross income reported to the federal Internal Revenue Service. YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category					Income Categories	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -		\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9		\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119		\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210		\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298		\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325		\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325		\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764		\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914		Proposition 134 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law restricting participation in all K-12 and collegiate school sports based on the participant's sex as determined by certain aspects of their biological reproductive system, and in connection therewith, requiring a school, institution of higher education, or athletic association to designate each school or intramural athletic team or sport as male, female, or coeducational; only allowing participants to compete on the team or sport of their designated sex or to compete on a coeducational team; creating an exception to allow a female to participate on a male-designated team or sport if there is no female team available; prohibiting a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization, or athletic association from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation, or taking other adverse action against a school for maintaining separate teams or sports for females; and providing the commissioner of education with the authority to enforce the proposed initiative for K-12 school districts? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	School District Ballot Measures County School District RE-1 Issue 4A SHALL KIOWA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. RE-1 DEBT BE INCREASED UP TO \$4.65 MILLION, WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF UP TO \$9.1 MILLION, AND SHALL DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED BY UP TO \$410,000 ANNUALLY, WITH THE INCREASE IN DEBT TO OCCUR ONLY IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES AN AWARDED "BEST" GRANT (WHICH IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE REPAYED), TO FINANCE THE COSTS OF: ADDRESSING THE DISTRICT'S HIGHEST-PRIORITY FACILITY DEFICIENCIES AND HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY NEEDS THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATING AND CREATING A UNIFIED, SAFE, AND SECURE PK-12 CAMPUS; BY THE ISSUANCE AND PAYMENT OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS WHICH SHALL BEAR INTEREST, MATURE, PERMIT REDEMPTION, AND BE ISSUED AT SUCH TIME AND PRICES (AT, ABOVE OR BELOW PAR), AND CONTAINING TERMS CONSISTENT WITH THIS BALLOT MEASURE AS THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DETERMINES, AND SHALL AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES BE LEVIED WITHOUT LIMIT AS TO THE MILL RATE TO GENERATE AMOUNTS, NOT TO EXCEED THE ABOVE AMOUNTS, SUFFICIENT IN EACH YEAR TO TIMELY PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐
Change in Income Taxes Owed by Income Category																																																				
Income Categories	Current Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Average Income Tax Owed	Proposed Change in Average Income Tax Owed If Passed + or -																																																	
\$25,000 or less	\$59	\$50	-\$9																																																	
\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$751	\$632	-\$119																																																	
\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$1,877	\$1,666	-\$210																																																	
\$100,001 - \$200,000	\$4,126	\$3,828	-\$298																																																	
\$200,001 - \$500,000	\$9,344	\$9,019	-\$325																																																	
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$19,288	\$18,963	-\$325																																																	
\$1,000,001 - \$2,000,000	\$29,432	\$34,196	+\$4,764																																																	
\$2,000,001 - \$5,000,000	\$41,196	\$55,110	+\$13,914																																																	
Proposition NN (STATUTORY) Shall state investment in K-12 public education increase two percent each year for the next ten years, with investments used to increase teacher pay, improve teacher retention, lower class sizes, and increase access to career and technical courses, without raising taxes but instead funded by raising the annual limit on state fiscal year spending only by the amount spent on public K-12 education as a voter-approved revenue change, and requiring an annual publicly released, independent audit to show how the new investments are spent? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐	Proposition 135 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes modifying existing law by prohibiting surgery on a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics, and in connection therewith, prohibiting any health-care professional or other person from knowingly performing, prescribing, administering, or providing any surgery to a minor for the purpose of altering the minor's biological sex characteristics and prohibiting the use of state or federal funds, Medicaid reimbursement, or insurance coverage to pay for this type of surgery? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																																			
	Proposition 136 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes capping the state income tax rate at 4.4% of federal taxable income for individuals and corporations? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																																			
	Proposition 137 (STATUTORY) Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new law to increase water and land conservation funding without raising taxes, and in connection therewith, through a voter-approved revenue change, allowing the state to keep and spend a portion of revenue from the state sales tax on sporting goods and equipment to conserve and protect Colorado's water, land, and forests, prevent wildfires, support outdoor recreation training and activities, and reduce revenue spent on these conservation purposes if necessary to preserve funding for certain tax credits? YES / FOR ☐ NO / AGAINST ☐																																																			

Mark both sides of the ballot

Kiowa County Hospital District Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Kiowa County Hospital District Board was called to order by Karl Eikenberg, Vice Chair at 6:40 pm at the Cobblestone Inn Meeting Room.

ROLL CALL

District Board members present were Pam Cole, Mary Eikner, Jerry Weber, and Karl Eikenberg. Absent was Doug Uhland.

Others present: Beth Bell, Mei Lan Lening, Jasmine Shea, Shannon Dixon and Aidan Hettler via zoom.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA - CONSENT APPROVAL OF MINUTES - CONSENT CREDENTIALING - CONSENT POLICIES/PROCEDURES - CONSENT

A motion was made by Jerry Weber to approve the above consent items as presented. The motion was seconded by

Mary Eikner. All aye.

STANDING REPORTS

MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT

The Board reviewed the CFO report. There were no questions.

MONTHLY OPERATIONS REPORT

Beth Bell told the Board about the EPHC Conference in Denver August 19-21. Weisbrod Health had 14 members from the leadership team attend. Connie Richardson was awarded the Stronger Together Award. The video is on Facebook and on our website. All awards will be posted on there from now on.

Weisbrod Health will have the Annual Chili Cook Off on October 30th. We will also have Connie's retirement party at the same time.

Beth Bell and Shannon Dixon went to tour a building that Weisbrod Health was approached to buy.

Beth Bell told the Board that Weisbrod Health has

signed an agreement with Lincoln Health for Orthopedic services. She has also asked UCHHealth for more cardiology hours monthly. Beth Bell and Aidan Hettler are working on getting Specialty providers lined up so when the new clinic is up and running, we will have the providers ready to fill the roles.

MEDICAL STAFF

Beth Bell gave updates on when Providers will be back and when new ones will start. Shaelynn Rouse will be starting the first part of October. Celia Ibanez should be able to start October 1st as soon as all her credentials are done. Dr. Dennis Linderman's contract has been updated, and he will be having 14 on call shifts per month. Dr. Erik Ritch will be back on September 5th. Dr.

SADAWAY HAS SIGNED A CONTRACT TO START NEXT SEPTEMBER. DR. THORNDIKE WILL START SEEING ESTABLISHED PATIENTS VIA TELE-

HEALTH MONTHLY STARTING OCTOBER 22ND.

GRANT UPDATE

Beth Bell gave update on the different grants that have been submitted. RHTP Grant has been submitted. Weisbrod Health should know by the end of September if we have been awarded the grant. We have not heard back on the HRSA Grant.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

AMBULANCE BARN

Beth Bell updated the Board on the Ambulance Barn. We are still on track to finish September 15th. Upstairs storage is framed in and the concrete is done. Including the alleyway and gutters. Beth Bell is still waiting for Town Council to have a meeting so she can discuss the gutters.

CLINIC UPDATE

Beth Bell updated the

Board on the New Clinic. We are still on track to finish April 2027. Should see signs of the actual building in December. Reliant has said they will be putting in concrete posts to keep the fence up next week.

JUWI PROJECT

Beth Bell stated that the JUWI project has been approved conditionally.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was not necessary to meet in executive session.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m. Jerry Weber made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mary Eikner. All aye.

Respectfully submitted,
Kiowa County Hospital District Board Mary Eikner, Secretary-Treasurer

Colorado awards \$170 million to rural healthcare providers, including in southeast Colorado

KIOWA COUNTY PRESS STAFF

(Kiowa County Press)

Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing announced \$169,587,181 in Rural Health Transformation Program grants to rural healthcare providers across Colorado, with a dozen southeast Colorado organizations among the recipients.

Funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the grants will support access to care and improved health outcomes in rural and frontier communities. The department received 112 eligible applications requesting more than \$250 million for 368 projects. Through a structured, multi-step review process, 91 applicants and approximately 250 projects were selected across 52 rural or frontier counties and 3 rural census tract counties.

Southeast Colorado awardees and their grant

amounts are:

Keefe Memorial Health Service District dba Keefe Memorial Hospital - \$4,087,098
Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center - \$3,564,484
Board of Trustees of Lincoln Community Hospital d/b/a Lincoln Health - \$3,375,541
Kit Carson County Health Service District - \$2,733,655
High Plains Community Health Center, Incorporated - \$2,114,713
Cheyenne County dba Plains to Peaks RETAC - \$1,938,921
Kiowa County Hospital District dba Weisbrod Health - \$1,470,288
Eastern Plains Healthcare Consortium - \$1,420,182
Epifluence LLC - \$1,230,739
Prowers County Hospital District d/b/a Prowers Medical Center - \$776,458
Walsh Hospital District - \$488,364
Southeast Colorado Hospital District - \$237,015

Funded projects span a wide range of priorities, including telehealth expansion and specialty care access,

rural health workforce recruitment and retention, emergency medical services training and equipment, mobile and community-based health services, behavioral

health and substance use disorder care, maternal and pediatric care, whole-blood supply networks reaching 39 Colorado counties, electronic health record modernization,

and regional partnerships allowing rural hospitals and community organizations to share workforce and technology resources.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title: Kiowa County Press		
2. Publication Number: 2958-4000		
3. Filing Date: September 26, 2026		
4. Issue Frequency: Weekly		
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 52		
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$30.00 in Kiowa County		
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: P.O. Box 248, Eads, Kiowa County, CO 81036-0248		
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036-0248		
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Publisher: Chris Sorensen, P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036-0248, Editor: Jeanne Sorensen, P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036-0248, Managing Editor: Chris Sorensen, P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036-0248		
10. Owner: Chris Sorensen, P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036		
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders: RMS Investments, c/o P.O. Box 248, Eads, CO 81036-0248		
12. N/A		
13. Publication Title: Kiowa County Press		
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data: September 18, 2026		
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		
Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest To Filing Date	
	A Total Copies	76
	B1. Pd. Out-County	18
	B2. Pd. In-County	25
	B3. Dealer/Other	13
	B4. Other Mailed	0
	C. Total Pd. Circulation	56
	D1. Free Out-County	2
	D2. Free In-County	2
	D3. Free Other Mail	0
	D4. Other Free Non-Mail	3
	E. Free Dist.	7
	F. Total Distribution	63
	G. Not Distributed	13
	H. Total	76
	I. Percent Paid Circ.	88.9%
	16. Electronic Copy Circulation	
	a. Pd. Electronic	24
	b. Total Pd. Print + Elec	80
	c. Total Dist	87
	d. Percent Paid	91.9%
	17. Publication of Statement of Ownership will be printed in the October 2, 2026 issue of this publication.	
	18. /S/ Chris Sorensen, Publisher	September 26, 2026

City of Lamar ORDINANCE NO. 1287

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAMAR AMENDING CHAPTER 22 FOR SUBDIVISIONS REGULATIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE

WHEREAS, Colorado Revised Statutes § 31-15-401 grants general police powers to the City Council to promulgate ordinances for the health, safety and welfare of the public; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lamar, Colorado ("City") is a Home Rule Municipal Charter of the State of Colorado, duly organized and operating under the constitution and laws of the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lamar's City Council directed the Planning and Zoning Commission to complete a comprehensive update to Chapter 22, Subdivisions regulations, to promote the future development of the City in accordance with the adopted 2025 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lamar Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on September 9th, 2026 and recommended amendments to Chapter 22 Subdivisions with the recommended code updates herein.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That Section 22-3 of the Lamar Municipal Code, is amended by the addition of the following definitions, to appear in alphabetical order:

Section 22-3 Definitions.

Condominium unit means a physical portion of a common interest community which is designated for separate ownership or occupancy and the boundaries of which are described or determined in the declaration.

Secretary means the building department appointed secretary of the planning and zoning commission.

Townhouse or townhouse subdivision means a building consisting of fee simple estates to individual units having common vertical walls, together with fee simple title to the land on which each unit is built and any yard and parking space appurtenant to said unit; and any easements for ingress and egress and for installation, replacement, repair and maintenance of utilities appurtenant to a unit. No townhouse or townhouse project shall have common horizontal walls. No more than one primary structure or more than one single parcel may be part of a townhouse subdivision.

Section 2. That Section 22-4 of the Lamar Municipal Code is repealed and replaced to read as follows:

Sec. 22-4. Pre-application.

(a) Discussions with the City Building Department are in particular recommended in order with Article I of this chapter to obtain the necessary basic information and regulations. Further information should be sought and obtained from an attorney and an engineer or land surveyor by any person contemplating platting a parcel of land. The City Building Department shall consult with and inform other appropriate city officials as necessary regarding any proposed subdivision.

(1) For subdivisions proposing utility or road extensions, applicants must demonstrate how the subdivision will comply with the requirements of Article III. Improvements. Applicants shall prepare a narrative on how the subdivision will install the required utility extensions, roadway improvements, and other public improvements needed for the proposed subdivision.

(b) In the discussion with the City Building Department, a pre-application sketch plan shall be submitted in order to resolve possible points of disagreement and in order to clarify the developer's intent.

(c) The sketch plan and accompanying documents, if any, shall contain at least the following information:

- (1) Layout of streets and lots;
- (2) Existing and proposed covenants and zoning;
- (3) Grading and Drainage plan;
- (4) Available utilities;
- (5) Construction types and sizes;
- (6) Price ranges;
- (7) Proposed commercial uses;
- (8) Relation to traffic arteries, schools, churches and shopping; and
- (9) Title work or deeds of trusts to determine property interests and verification of legal descriptions.

(d) The sketch plan shall be to approximate scale, but need not be drawn mechanically.

(e) Upon review of the sketch plan, the City staff may recommend a non-binding work session for preliminary feedback from City Council prior to a formal application for Preliminary Plat. This work session shall allow the applicant to receive nonbinding feedback on the design and layout, requirements for infrastructure upgrades, waiver requests, phasing, potential city economic incentives, or other feedback before the applicant begins engineering design and surveying plans as required in Sec. 22-5 Preliminary Plat.

Section 3. That Section 22-5 titled Preliminary plat subsections (c), and (f) (1) (g) of the Lamar Municipal Code are amended to read as follows:

(c) The subdivider shall submit a digital file and ten copies of the preliminary plat as well as a digital file and ten copies of a vicinity map, if the vicinity map is not on the preliminary plat, showing the location of the proposed subdivision. These plans shall be filed with the secretary at least ten days prior to the regular planning and zoning commission meeting at which the preliminary plat is to be considered. A sample plat is available in the building department.

(f)(1) g. The school district, and, where applicable, special utility districts, Prowers County, and the state department of transportation.

Section 4. That Section 22-6 titled Final plat. subsections (a) (1), (2), (c) (2), and (d) (2) of the Lamar Municipal Code are amended to read as follows:

Section 22-6 Final Plat

(a) Submission.

(1) After approval of the preliminary plat, the subdivider shall submit a final plat, for each phase if applicable, for recording purposes to the secretary of the planning and zoning commission. Such plat shall be accompanied by the required filing fee. A sample plat is available in the building department.

(2) The original (on Mylar, tracing cloth or similar material), digital file, and ten prints thereof shall be

submitted to the secretary of the planning and zoning commission at least ten days prior to the planning and zoning commission public hearing.

(c) (2) As a condition to the approval of a final plat, the subdivider or landowner shall agree to install improvements as noted and specified in article III of this chapter. In the event that public improvements or infrastructure is required by the planning and zoning commission, a subdivision improvement agreement shall be drafted by the City Attorney memorializing any required improvements, performance bonding, city incentives, and/or phasing of improvements. This agreement shall be approved by City Council with the Final Plat and recorded with the Prowers County Clerk and Recorder simultaneously with the Final Plat.

(d) (2) Also required is a final survey of utilities, as installed, to be submitted to the city engineer. It can be a simplified version of the engineering drawings, but it should record the necessary minor changes of location that are always made in the course of construction. Final release of performance bond will be withheld until as builds are accepted by the secretary.

Section 5. The Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended by the addition of Section 22-7 titled Condominiums to read as follows:

Sec. 22-7. Condominiums

(a) For condominium subdivision, applicants shall be required to undergo the preliminary plat review in accordance to Section 22-5 with the planning and zoning commission prior to beginning construction or development onsite. Once "as-built" surveys are prepared, a final plat pursuant to Section 22-6 is required. In addition to the review process described in this chapter and the subdivision submittal requirements described in Sections 22-5 and 22-6, an application for a condominium plat approval shall contain the following additional information:

- (1) Required parking spaces and joint trash collection areas;
- (2) Floor plans, elevations, and site plan as required to show separate ownership of all separate units, common elements, and limited common elements labeled as such;
- (3) Number, type, and floor area of units, common elements and limited elements, delineated in square feet and fractions thereof proposed use for each unit and land area;
- (4) Statement of the total number of units shown on the proposed plat; and
- (5) Documentation showing compliance with the standards and terms of the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act, C.R.S. § 38-33-201, *et seq.*, as may be amended. Final approval is subject to the review by the City Attorney before the filing of the final plat.

(b) For condominium projects requiring building permits, the applicant shall submit detailed engineering or architectural plans and specifications for all improvements, whether private or public. The City building department shall determine what documentation is necessary for building permit approval.

(c) After buildings have been constructed and final "as-built" surveys have been completed, the applicant shall submit, to City Council, an amended condominium plat showing graphically and dimensionally the subdivision of buildings into volumetric spaces and the relationship of these spaces with the boundaries of the site and other appurtenances on the site. These condominium plats shall comply with the requirements of C.R.S. §38-33.3-209, as may be amended, and may be approved by the Administrator. No individual condominium unit shall be sold into separate ownership until and unless a condominium plat has been approved by the City Council based upon an "as-built" survey of the unit boundaries and such plat has been recorded in the real estate records of Prowers County. A plat note to this effect shall be included on the Final Subdivision Plat for each condominium development.

Section 5. The Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended by the addition of Section 22-8 titled Townhouses of the Lamar Municipal Code is hereby added to read as follows:

Sec. 22-8. Townhouses

A Townhouse conversion subdivision is subject to the review process established in this Chapter, Sec. 22-4, Sec. 22-5, and Sec. 22-6, if more than the individual Townhouse lot is being subdivided. If only a single Townhouse lot is being created, the City Council shall review and approve a Final Plat in accordance with Section 22-71. No preliminary plat or planning and zoning commission approval or plat signature is required for individual Townhouse subdivisions that conform to all other zoning requirements of Chapter 30, if a building permit is filed. The subdivision of existing structures shall require a submittal of a survey and plans to the building department that demonstrate compliance with this section. The subdivision plat of a single lot on which an existing Townhouse dwelling is located or is to be constructed, into two (2) or more separate lots will be approved by City Council if all of the following conditions have been met:

- (1) Common wall. The Townhouse is to be divided along a building code-compliant fire-resistant common wall into two (2) separate single-family dwelling units on separate lots.
- (2) Separate utilities. Utilities are available and each of the dwelling units shall be served by its own separate utility service lines and meters, inclusive of water, sewer, electricity and natural gas.
- (3) Maintenance agreement. A common wall maintenance agreement shall be established and recorded to run with the land comprising of the proposed Townhouse lots or dwelling units.
- (4) Zone district compliance. Except for the original primary structure comprising the dwelling units and any common and/or side-by-side or connected garages or driveways, all new structures, or the expansion of any existing structures on the two (2) new townhouse lots shall be subject to the setback requirements for the underlying zone district in which the lots are located.
- (5) Lot size. Each separate single lot within a townhouse subdivision created shall meet the minimum lot size (square feet) for the underlying zone district in which the lots are located. The individual townhouse

lots proposed may deviate from the minimum lot size, however they shall be the same size, or approximately the same size to each other.

Section 6. The Article III. titled Improvements is hereby numbered to Article IV.

Section 7. The Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended by the addition of a new Section 22-11 to 22-12, to Article III. Titled Subdivision Exemptions, to read as follows:

ARTICLE III. SUBDIVISION EXEMPTIONS.

Sec. 22-11 Purpose.

Subdivision exemptions do not create additional lots or interests but are subdivision actions that result in a material change in the boundaries of a subdivision by way of adding or deleting land or lots to the subdivision, or the reconfiguration, division or aggregation of existing platted lots. Subdivision exemption plats are also used to correct errors on a subdivision plat. The subdivision exemption process is limited to applications that affect no more than ten (10) lots within a subdivision and does not create any new lots. Subdivision exemptions affecting more than ten (10) lots or amendments within a subdivision with an expired subdivision improvements agreement or which affect existing subdivision improvements agreements shall be considered re-subdivisions. The recording of boundary line plats or other plats required to be recorded by a licensed surveyor that do not create additional lots are eligible to be reviewed in accordance to this Article.

Sec. 22-12. Approval Process.

(a) **Preapplication required.** The applicant shall submit a sketch plan to the building department to be reviewed in accordance with Section 22-4. The plat shall contain all necessary information as deemed

necessary by the City and the licensed surveyor of record in compliance with Section 22-6. All lots

contained within the subdivision exemption shall meet the underlying zone district requirements of Chapter 30 zoning.

(b) **Approval.** Once reviewed by the required City departments for compliance with the code, the subdivision exemption shall be placed on a City Council agenda in accordance with Section 22-71 for final approval. The posting of the Subdivision exemption on a Council agenda shall constitute the required public notice for these applications. The mayor shall sign the subdivision final plat on behalf of the City's approval. No public hearing is required by the planning and zoning commission concerning the final plat.

(c) **Recording.** Upon approval by the City, the applicant shall submit the required digital file/mylars, and copies with all required signatures executed. The applicant shall be responsible for all recording fees assessed by the Prowers County Clerk and Recorder.

Sec. 22-12. Type of Subdivision Exemptions.

(a) **Amended Plats.** Amended plats typically correct errors in a previously recorded plat, or adjust the reconfiguration, division or aggregation of existing platted lots.

(b) *Lot line adjustments.* The adjustment of a lot line between two (2) contiguous lots that is necessary to correct a survey or engineering error in a recorded plat, to allow a boundary change between adjacent lots or parcels to relieve hardship or practical necessity, or to allow a transfer of land from a larger conforming lot to a smaller nonconforming lot to make both lots conforming. The lot lines between contiguous lots that are under separate or single ownership may be adjusted if the following conditions are met:

(1) The owners of affected properties whose lot lines are being adjusted shall provide written consent to the application.

(2) The adjustment shall not create the opportunity to further subdivide either lot to create a new lot for resale or development.

(3) All resulting lots shall meet the standards of this Chapter and Chapter 30 zoning. If any of the lots or structures thereon are nonconforming prior to the adjustment, no adjustment shall be allowed that increases the net nonconformity of the lots or structures.

(c) *Elimination of lot lines.* The elimination of lot lines to merge not more than two (2) conforming lots, or two (2) or more nonconforming lots, to create not more than two (2) conforming lots within the applicable zone district. A lot line elimination meeting the requirements established herein shall be approved if the following conditions are met:

(1) Public and private utilities must be present and available to serve the newly created conforming lots. Utilities (whether public or private) to existing structures that, with the elimination of lot lines, will cross a newly created conforming lot shall be provided an easement where the existing utilities are located or shall be relocated into an easement.

(2) The lots to be consolidated shall be under single ownership.

• **Section 8.** That Section 22-33

titled Minimum requirements of the Lamar Municipal Code table, is hereby amended to include the additional classification and width as follows:

• Cul-de-sac 96-foot radius on turnaround

• **Section 9.** That Section 22-63 titled Generally. Sections (a) (6) and (b) (1) of the Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended to read as follows:

• (a)(6) Sidewalks shall be installed on both sides of all streets and shall have a minimum width of five feet and meet ADA requirements unless otherwise waived by the City Council.

• (b) (1) A subdivision improvements agreement shall be prepared by the City Attorney and approved by the City Council for required public improvements or bonding as required in this article at Final Plat.

• **Section 10.** That Section 22-63 titled Generally. Section (a) (4) of the Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby deleted and the remaining subsections to be renumbered in sequential order.

• **Section 11.** That Section 22-64 titled Financing of required improvements. Sections (a)(2) of the Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended to read as follows:

• (2) Street and road construction for all minor street improvements, including base, grading, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, pavement, street trees, street name signs, culverts and bridges;

• **Section 12.** That Section 22-66 titled Guarantees of performance. Sections (a) and (b) of the Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended to read as follows:

Before acceptance of a plat by the City Council, the subdivider shall have designated all necessary streets and alleys in the proposed subdivision together with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, in accordance with the requirements that the City Council may impose and specify as to grading, paving, width, location, drainage, courts, culverts, bridges and other necessary requirements. The subdivider shall enter into a

written agreement with the City Council wherein the subdivider shall have deposited a performance bond in an amount established by the City Council, or have deposited with the city sufficient funds to cover the cost of such improvements, or provide other improvement guarantees acceptable to the City Council, which shall be recorded in the office of the County Clerk. The amount of the performance bond or the funds in escrow shall be determined from the cost estimates as specified in this article.

The City Council shall also require a maintenance bond to remain in effect for one year from acceptance of said improvements, to be posted by the subdivider to ensure the repairs to any installations after completion and acceptance by the city that are made necessary due to negligence, whether intentional or accidental, by the subdivider. Such required repairs might include, among others, the following:

Damage to streets and highways caused by transporting heavy construction equipment over them; or

Cutting and breaking street improvements to provide additional utility connections.

Section 13. That Section 22-71 titled Submission to city council. Section (b) of the Lamar Municipal Code, is hereby amended to read as follows:

(b) Upon receipt of any approved final plat from the planning and zoning commission and its recommendation thereon, the City Council shall schedule a public hearing upon said final plat and planning and zoning commission recommendation. Notice of such public hearing shall be given by posting of the premises proposed to be subdivided, and by publication in the manner of other legal publications at least fifteen days prior to the date of such public hearing. Following public hearing, the City Council, in its discretion, may approve, approve as modified or disapprove any such

final plat and required agreements submitted.

Section 14. Repealer. All ordinances, resolutions, bylaws and regulations of the City in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent only of such inconsistency. This repealer shall not be construed to revive any ordinance, resolution, bylaw or regulation, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

Section 15. Severability. If any section, paragraph, clause or provision or part of this Ordinance shall be held invalid or unenforceable, the invalidity or unenforceability of such section, paragraph, clause or provision shall not affect any other provision of this Ordinance.

Section 16. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect 30 days after publication following final passage and adoption.

INTRODUCED, READ IN FULL, PASSED ON FIRST READING AND ORDERED PUBLISHED this 14th day of September, 2026.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

By Kirk Crespín, Mayor

ATTEST:

By Linda Williams, City Clerk

PASSED ON SECOND READING AND ORDERED PUBLISHED this 28th day of September, 2026.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

By Kirk Crespín, Mayor

ATTEST:

By Linda Williams, City Clerk

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

Your Best Value! Electronic Subscriptions



Just

\$24
per year

only
46¢

per week!

Delivered by
email with a
special bonus
section
exclusively for
electronic
subscribers,
and readable
on most smart
phones and
tablets

Email
editor@KiowaCountyPress.net
today to subscribe!

City of Lamar ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO ZONING THE PROPERTY KNOWN VALCO SUBDIVISION LOT 1; ALSO KNOWN AS, A PORTION OF THE NE ¼ OF THE SE ¼ OF SECTION 30 AND A PORTION OF THE NW ¼ OF THE SW ¼ OF SECTION 29, TOWNSHIP 22 SOUTH, RANGE 46 WEST OF THE SIXTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, PROWERS COUNTY, COLORADO, AS DESCRIBED ON THE PLAT, RECORDED UNDER RECEPTION NUMBER 527423, IN THE OFFICE OF PROWERS COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER, TO THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO, TO HIGHWAY SERVICE DISTRICT (C-3).

WHEREAS, the City of Lamar, Colorado ("City") is a Home Rule Municipal Charter of the State of Colorado, duly organized and operating under the constitution and laws of the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the annexation petition was accepted by the City by passage of Resolution 26-08-01 on August 24, 2026; and

WHEREAS, proper application was made to the Planning & Zoning Commission of the City of Lamar, Colorado for Valco Subdivision Lot 1 to be zoned as a Highway Service District (C-3) Zone District and the

Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval on August 12, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the owners have requested that the property be initially zoned Highway Service District (C-3) upon annexation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the zoning application and agrees with the Planning & Zoning Commission's findings; and

WHEREAS, the Lamar City Council has held a duly noticed public hearing on October 12, 2026, as required by the Lamar Municipal Code and now wish to zone the property to Highway Service District (C-3).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO:

Section 1. The aforementioned recitals are hereby fully incorporated herein.

Section 2. That the Property, known as Valco Subdivision Lot 1 and more particularly described as: a portion of the NE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 30 and a portion of the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 29, Township 22 South, Range 46 West of the sixth principal meridian, Prowers County, Colorado, be and hereby is, annexed to the City of Lamar and made a part of the corporate limits

of the City of Lamar, Colorado, shall be zoned as Highway Service District 1 (C-3) Zone District.

Section 3. Within thirty (30) days after the effective date of this Ordinance, the City Clerk shall incorporate the terms of this Ordinance on the Official Zoning Map described LMC 30-16 and shall cause a printed copy of the amendment to the City Zone District Map to be made, which shall be dated and signed by the Mayor and attested to by the City Clerk and which shall bear the seal of the City. The amended Map shall include the number of this Ordinance. The signed original printed copy of the Zoning Map shall be filed with the City Clerk. The Clerk shall also record a certified copy of this Ordinance with the Prowers County Clerk and Recorder. The City staff is further directed to comply with all provisions of the Lamar Municipal Code, LMC §30-16, to implement the provisions of this Ordinance.

Repealer. All ordinances, resolutions, bylaws and regulations of the City in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent only of such inconsistency. This repealer shall not be construed to revive any ordinance, resolution, bylaw or regulation, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

Severability. Should any one or more sections or provisions of this Ordinance be judicially determined

invalid or unenforceable, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remaining provisions of this Ordinance, the intention being that the various sections and provisions are severable.

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect 30 days after publication following final passage and adoption.

INTRODUCED, READ IN FULL, PASSED ON FIRST READING, and ordered published this 28th day of September, 2026, in accordance with the Home Rule Charter of the City of Lamar, Article V.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

Attest: KIRK CRESPIÑ, Mayor

LINDA WILLIAMS, City Clerk

INTRODUCED, READ IN FULL, AND ADOPTED ON SECOND READING this _____ day of _____, 2026, in accordance with the Home Rule Charter of the City of Lamar, Article V.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

Attest: KIRK CRESPIÑ, Mayor

LINDA WILLIAMS, City Clerk

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-10

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RENEWABLE ENERGY 1041 DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE NEXUS STUDY AND ADOPTING AN IMPACT FEE SCHEDULE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS, Kiowa County ("County") expects to host a large number of renewable energy projects that will require a substantial expansion of capacity of County services and facilities to accommodate such growth while maintaining existing levels of service; and

WHEREAS, the County desires that renewable energy projects bear a proportionate share of the cost of the provision of County facilities and capital improvements required by such development; and

WHEREAS, Kiowa County is a local government authorized to impose impact fees pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-20-104.5 and is authorized to collect impact fees on behalf of the Kiowa County Fire District and the Kiowa County Hospital District pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-1-803; and

WHEREAS, Kiowa County commissioned a Renewable Energy 1041 Development Impact Fee Nexus Study dated September 18, 2026 ("Nexus Study") to evaluate the nexus between new renewable development in the County and the projected impacts that such development will have on County facilities and services; and

WHEREAS, the Nexus Study quantified an impact fee schedule with fees "at a level no greater than necessary to defray such impacts directly related to proposed development," pursuant to C.R.S. § 29-20-104.5(2)(a) ("Fee Schedule"); and

WHEREAS, the Nexus Study quantifies impacts of renewable development projects on the County facilities as well as the Kiowa County Fire District and the Kiowa County Hospital District, at the request of each District; and

WHEREAS, the County intends to collect impact fees for County facilities and for the Districts; and

WHEREAS, the County has adopted Guidelines and Regulations for Areas and Activities of State Interest in Kiowa County pursuant to C.R.S. 24-65.1-101 et seq. ("1041 Regulations"), and intends that the impact fees, as shown in the Fee Schedule in Attachment A, will generally be adequate mitigation to comply with Section 6.304(6) of the County 1041 Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Kiowa County Board of County Commissioners has considered all written and oral evidence on the record before it and determined that it is in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of Kiowa County to adopt the Nexus Study and the Fee Schedule as shown in Attachment A.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF KIOWA COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. Findings. The Kiowa County Board of County Commissioners ("Board") finds that the impact fees as calculate in the Renewable Energy 1041 Development Impact Fee Nexus Study dated September 18, 2026 are fair and reasonable, and that the fee is roughly proportional both in nature and extent to the impact of renewable projects in the County.

Section 2. Adopt Nexus Study. The Board hereby adopts the Renewable Energy 1041 Development Impact Fee Nexus Study dated September 18, 2026 ("Nexus Study").

Section 3. Adopt Fee Schedule. The Board hereby adopts the Fee Schedule as set forth in Attachment A to this Resolution.

Section 4. 1041 Regulations and Relationship to Impact Fees:

A. An Applicant for a Permit pursuant to the County 1041 Regulations ("Applicant") is subject to the County 1041 Regulations in addition to applicable impact fees according to the Fee Schedule in Attachment A, consistent with Section 1.106(4) of the 1041 Regulations.

B. The County shall generally presume that Applicant's payment of the impact fees according to the Fee Schedule is adequate mitigation to comply with Section 6.304(6) of the County 1041 Regulations, unless the applicant or County identifies Project- specific impacts that are not accounted for in the Nexus Study.

Section 5. No Duplicative Fees. No Applicant is required to provide any site-specific dedication or improvement to meet the same need for capital facilities for which a fee is imposed pursuant to the Impact Fee Schedule.

Section 6. May Identify Mutual-Agreable Alternative. If an Applicant owes an impact fee, the Applicant may propose for the County's consideration an in-kind contribution or substitute contribution in lieu of paying all or part of the Impact Fee.

Section 7. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect as of the date of the adoption of this resolution by the Board.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 24th Day of September, 2026, by the Board of County Commissioners of Kiowa County, Colorado.

/s/Donald Oswald
Donald Oswald, BOCC Chair Sept 24 2026
/s/Howard "Butch" Robertson
Howard Robertson, Commissioner
/s/Michael Lening
Michael Lening, Commissioner

ATTEST:
/s/Adrienne Yates
Clerk of the Board
Date ATTEST: 9-24-2026

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

City of Lamar ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO ANNEXING THE PROPERTY KNOWN VALCO SUBDIVISION LOT 1; ALSO KNOWN AS, A PORTION OF THE NE ¼ OF THE SE ¼ OF SECTION 30 AND A PORTION OF THE NW ¼ OF THE SW ¼ OF SECTION 29, TOWNSHIP 22 SOUTH, RANGE 46 WEST OF THE SIXTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, PROWERS COUNTY, COLORADO, AS DESCRIBED ON THE PLAT, RECORDED UNDER RECEPTION NUMBER 527423, IN THE OFFICE OF PROWERS COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER, TO THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

WHEREAS, the City of Lamar, Colorado ("City") is a Home Rule Municipal Charter of the State of Colorado, duly organized and operating under the constitution and laws of the State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has the authority pursuant to the Home Rule Charter and Municipal Annexation Act C.R.S. 31-12-101, et seq. to annex property in to the City Limits of Lamar, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the City received a Petition for Annexation for the property known as Valco Subdivision Lot 1 ("Property"), described below and Annexation Plat Attached hereto as Exhibit A, requesting the Property be annexed into the City limits of Lamar, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has previously adopted Resolution 26-08-01, finding substantial compliance and initiating annexation proceedings for the Valco Subdivision Lot 1 Annexation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing, published in accordance with C.R.S. 31-12-108(2), to consider the eligibility of Property to be annexed; and

WHEREAS, the owners have requested that the property be initially zoned C-3 Commercial District upon annexation; and

WHEREAS, the initial zoning of the property will be considered through a separate zoning ordinance in accordance with Chapter 30 of the Lamar Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the City Council does hereby find and determine that the provisions of the Lamar Municipal Code Part II, Chapter 2, Article II annexation procedures have been complied with and it is in the best interests of the City to annex said area to the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO:

Section 1. That the City Council hereby incorporates the findings of Resolution 26-08-01 and the recitals contained above, and further finds that it is in the best interests of the City to annex the Property to the City.

Section 2. That the Property, known as Valco Subdivision Lot 1 and more particularly described as: a portion of the NE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 30 and a portion of the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 29, Township 22 South, Range 46 West of the sixth principal meridian, Prowers County, Colorado, be and hereby is, annexed to the City of Lamar and made a part of the corporate limits of the City of Lamar, Colorado, which annexation shall become effective upon completion of the conditions contained in Section 31-12-113, C.R.S., including without limitation, all required filings for recording with the Prowers County Clerk and Recorder.

Section 3. That, in annexing the Property to the City, the City does not assume any obligation respecting the construction of water mains, sewer lines, gas mains, electric service lines, streets or any other services or utilities in connection with the Property hereby annexed except as may be provided by ordinances of the City.

Section 4. The City Council hereby directs Staff to complete all necessary procedures required for annexation of said Property to the City, including:
(1) filing for recording three certified copies of this Annexation Ordinance and the maps of the annexed Property attached to hereto as Exhibit A containing a legal description of the Property annexed hereby with the Prowers County Clerk and Recorder, and
(2) filing the original of this Annexation Ordinance together with a copy of the Annexation Maps with

the City Clerk of the City of Lamar, Colorado.

Section 5. That the City hereby consents, pursuant to Section 37-45-136 (3.6), Colorado Revised Statutes, to the inclusion of said property into the Southeastern Water Conservancy District.

Repealer. All ordinances, resolutions, bylaws and regulations of the City in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent only of such inconsistency. This repealer shall not be construed to revive any ordinance, resolution, bylaw or regulation, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

Severability. Should any one or more sections or provisions of this Ordinance be judicially determined invalid or unenforceable, such judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remaining provisions of this Ordinance, the intention being that the various sections and provisions are severable.

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect 30 days after publication following final passage and adoption.

INTRODUCED, READ IN FULL, PASSED ON FIRST READING, and ordered published this 28th day of September, 2026, in accordance with the Home Rule Charter of the City of Lamar, Article V.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

KIRK CRESPIAN, Mayor

Attest:

LINDA WILLIAMS, City Clerk

INTRODUCED, READ IN FULL, AND ADOPTED ON SECOND READING this _____ day of _____, 2026, in accordance with the Home Rule Charter of the City of Lamar, Article V.

CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO

KIRK CRESPIAN, Mayor

Attest:

LINDA WILLIAMS, City Clerk

Published October 2, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press

Summons by Publication

District Court, Kiowa County, Colorado
15th Judicial District 1305
Goff Street (PO Box 353) Eads, CO 81036

Phone: (719) 931-6010

Plaintiffs: GLENN LEE GUY A/K/A GLENN L. GUY

v.

Defendants: JACKIE LEE HALL; JUDY ANN CLARK; DOROTHY JEAN GOODALL; VERNON JANE BLACKWELL; and ALL UNKNOWN PERSONS OR ENTITIES WHO CLAIM ANY INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS ACTION.

Linda McMillan, #20437
Kwitek McMillan, P.C.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
601 N. Main, Suite 200
Pueblo, Colorado 81003
Telephone: (719) 544-5081
lmcmillan@pueblolawyers.com

**Case No. 26 CV 30003
Div.: D**

SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS:

You are hereby summoned and required to appear and defend against the claims of the Complaint filed with the Court in this action by filing with the Clerk of this Court an Answer or other response. You are required to file your Answer or other response within 35 days after the service of this Summons upon you. Service of this Summons shall be complete on the day of the last publication. A copy of the Complaint may be obtained from the Clerk of the Court.

If you fail to file your Answer or other response to the Complaint in writing within 35 days after the date of the last publication, judgment by default may be rendered against you by the Court for the relief demanded in the Complaint without further notice.

This is an action to quiet title to real properties in the County of Kiowa, State of Colorado, legally described

as follows:

County of Kiowa, State of Colorado, described as follows:

The Northwest Quarter (NW1/4) of Section Twenty-eight (28), Township Nineteen (19) South, Range Forty-seven (47) West of the Sixth (6th) Principal Meridian.

DATED: September 21, 2026

KWITEK McMILLAN, P.C.
By /s/ Linda McMillan
Linda McMillan, #20437
Attorney for Plaintiff

PUBLISHED IN THE Kiowa County Press
FIRST PUBLICATION: October 2, 2026
LAST PUBLICATION: October 30, 2026

THIS SUMMONS ISSUED PURSUANT TO RULE 4(h), CRCP

First Published October 2, 2026
Last Published October 30, 2026
In the Kiowa County Press.

SHARE YOUR Story

The Kiowa County Press invites you to share what's happening in your world with our readers. Send your stories and photos from southeast Colorado life to editor@KiowaCountyPress.net

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

Kiowa County has a part-time job opening for a Veterans Service Officer.

The County Veterans Service Officer is required to be a veteran of any branch of the military. If you are interested in this opportunity to help veterans but are not a veteran, you may be eligible to be the VSO Assistant.

• **Duties include assisting veterans with eligibility and**

benefits, claims, referrals, scheduling services, and researching legal and medical information.

• **Applicant must be people oriented and available to conduct office and home visits and organize/sponsor outreach events.**

Application and job description can be picked up at the Kiowa

County Commissioner's Office or can be printed from our website <https://kiowacounty.colorado.gov> under the Jobs tab.

Applications must be returned to:
Kiowa County Commissioner's Office - Eads Courthouse
1305 Goff Street
PO Box 100
Eads, Colorado 81036

(719) 438-5810

or may be emailed to kiowaco100@gmail.com.

• **Part-time hours are 32 per month, approximately one 8 hours per week.**

• **Wages start at \$19.82 per hour and would not include benefits.**

• **Position will remain open until it is filled.**

We reserve the right to reject any & all applications. EOE

ABOUT CLASSIFIEDS

The Press can be responsible for only one incorrect insertion. Rates: \$14.50 per week, flat fee, any number of words online. Also published online at KiowaCountyPress.net at no extra charge. Add a picture \$5.00. Classifieds can be submitted to kiowacountypress@gmail.com

MISCELLANEOUS

Your ad could reach more than 31,000 readers each week for as little as \$14.50

Employment Opportunities

Town of Eads

The Town of Eads offers the following benefits for all full time (40 hours/week) employees:
paid health Insurance for employee and family,
paid holidays, paid vacation
sick leave and retirement



TOWN CLERK

- This is a full-time 40-hour per week position
- Managing day-to-day operations of the town.
- Starting pay range is \$45,00-\$60,000 per year depending upon qualifications.
- Position requires a high school diploma, with some college preferred, computer skills, basic accounting knowledge, and the ability to work with the public.

Interested parties should send a letter of interest and a current resume to
Dennis Pearson
PO Box 345
Eads, CO 81036

or submit via email to
pearsondo1949@gmail.com

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

- This is a full-time 40-hour per week position
- Provide administrative assistance to the town clerk.
- Starting pay range is \$16-\$20 per hour depending upon qualifications. Position requires a high school diploma or GED.
- Position requires computer skills, organizational skills, and working with the public.

Interested parties should send a letter of interest and a current resume to
Dennis Pearson
PO Box 345
Eads, CO 81036

or submit via email to
pearsondo1949@gmail.com

STREET CREW WORKER

- This is a full-time 40-hour per week position
- Work with the Public Works Director maintaining town operational systems including streets, water, sewer and trash collection.
- Applicants must have high school diploma or GED.
- Starting pay range is \$18.00-\$22.00 per hour depending upon qualifications.
- Applicants must have or be willing to obtain a CDL within 6 months of employment.

Applications may be picked up at
Eads Town Hall
110W. 13th St.

Monday - Friday 8:00 am -12:00 pm

MAINTENANCE WORKER

- This position is a part-time position 10-15 hours per week.
- Starting pay range is \$16.00-\$20.00 per hour.
- Duties include cleaning Town Hall, mowing, painting, snow removal and other maintenance activities.

Interested parties may pick up applications at

Eads Town Hall
110W. 13th St.
Monday - Friday 8:00 am -12:00 pm

**APPLICATIONS AND RESUMES MUST BE RETURNED BY
5:00 PM ON OCTOBER 15, 2026.**

**ALL APPLICANTS MUST BE ABLE TO PASS
A BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG TEST**

TOWN OF EADS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

EADS LANDFILL

Wednesday - Friday - Saturday

8:00 am to 3:30 pm

RATE CHANGE

Effective 05/01/2022

Accepting Residential
organic yard waste
(grass clippings, weeds,
tree trimmings)
for **FREE** as long as the
load is

YARD WASTE ONLY!

Disposal fees

General Waste **\$0.05 / pound**

E-Waste **\$0.40 / pound**

Tires **\$3 to \$25 ea** depending on size

Effective 06/25/2022

Residential General Waste
will be discounted on the
last Saturday of each
month at

\$0.03 per pound.

(No discount on commercial loads)

Payment Methods

Credit Card or Punch Card*

*purchased at the Commissioners Office

For Billing Info 719-438-5810

To receive text message when there are
holiday or weather related closures can
text **landfill closures** and **your name**
from your cell phone to **719-691-5426**

For More Information

kiowaco100@gmail.com

We Now Rent Roll-Off Dumpsters!

Call 719-438-5810 for information

Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site CONTACT STATION

The Contact Station is located 23 miles outside of Eads - eight miles north of the town of Chivington.

More details contact park staff at 719-438-5916

Sunday: 9 AM-4 PM
Monday: 9 AM-4 PM
Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: 9 AM-4 PM
Friday: 9 AM-4 PM
Saturday: 9 AM-4 PM

<https://www.nps.gov/sand/planyourvisit/index.htm>

<https://www.facebook.com/SandCreekMassacreNHS>



~ KIOWA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE ~

Glen Marciniak, State Regional VSO - Region 2

Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs

Business Hours: By Appointment Only

Kiowa County Courthouse,

1305 Goff St, PO Box 37, Eads, CO 81036

970-617-6661 cell

kiowaco-vso@gmail.com or Glen-Marciniak@dmva-state-co-us

<https://kiowacounty.colorado.gov> or <https://vets.colorado.gov>



Send Your Non-Commercial listing to
Editor@KiowaCountyPress.net

Or dropped off at the Kiowa County Press 1208 Maine St. Eads, CO

Free listings can include:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Brief Description

Pricing or Entry Fees will not be included in free listings

Please submit 10 days in advance

OCTOBER 2-3

9:00 a.m. Lamar Library
Monthly Book Sale

OCTOBER 2-4

7:00 p.m. Holly Theater
"Practical Magic 2"

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

6:00 p.m. Eads Community
Bingo

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

5:15 p.m. Eads Kiowa County
Public Library District
Board Meeting, Upstairs
Bransgrove Building
6:00 p.m. Main Street
Lamar (LPI) Board Meeting

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

9:00 a.m. Bent County
Board of Commissioners
Work Session
2:00 p.m. Swing Dance
Lessons -Lamar Senior Ci-
zen Center
6:00 p.m. Eads Senior
Citizen Cards
7:00 p.m. Lamar Eagles
Bingo

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

1:00 p.m. Friends of the
Library Meeting-Lamar Public
Library
1:00 p.m. Haswell Senior
Citizens Lunch Meeting
6:30 p.m. Kiowa County Fair
Board Meeting
7:00 p.m. Holly Town Board
Meeting
Sage Meal

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

6:00 p.m. Springfield Board
of Trustees Meeting

6:30 p.m. Prairie Pines
Assisted Living Auxiliary
Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar Elks Bingo

OCTOBER 9-11

7:00 p.m. Holly Theater
"Heart of the Beast"

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

7:30 a.m. BCHPA Flu Clinic
-Springfield
9:30 a.m. Cheyenne County
Commissioners Meeting

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11

5:30 p.m. Haswell Commu-
nity Cards

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

5:30 p.m. Lamar Schools
Board Meeting
6:00 p.m. Lamar Chamber
of Commerce Board Meeting
6:00 p.m. Wiley City council
Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar City Council
Regular Meeting
7:00 p.m. Walsh Board of
Trustees Meeting
Bent County Offices Closed-
Columbus Day
Cheyenne County Offices
Closed- Columbus Day

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

8:00 a.m. Prowers County
Commissioners Work Session
9:00 a.m. Bent County
Board of Commissioners
Work Session
11:00 a.m. Weisbrod Auxil-
iary Meeting
1:00 p.m. Prowers County
Commissioners Meeting
5:00 p.m. Eads Board of
Trustees Meeting
6:00 p.m. Eads Senior
Citizen Cards
6:00 p.m. Haswell town
Council Meeting
6:30 p.m. Prairie Pines
Assisted Living Auxiliary
Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar Eagles
Bingo

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

8:00 a.m. Prowers County
Planning Commission
Meeting

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

9:00 a.m. Kiowa County
Commissioners Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar Elks Bingo

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

7:30 a.m. BCHPA Flu Clinic
-Springfield
9:30 a.m. Cheyenne County
Commissioners/Board of
Public Health/Board of Hu-
man Services Meeting
12:00 p.m. Lamar PEP Board
Meeting

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

8:00 a.m. Prowers County
Commissioners Work Session
8:00 a.m. Prowers County
Human Services Meeting
8:30 a.m. Prowers County
Board of Health Meeting
9:00 a.m. Bent County
Board of Commissioners
Work Session
4:00 p.m. Prowers County
Lodging Tax Panel Board
Meeting
6:00 p.m. Eads Senior
Citizens Cards
7:00 p.m. Kiowa County Fire
Protection Board Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar Eagles
Bingo

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

10:00 a.m. Bent County
Planning & Zoning Commis-

sion Meeting
12:00 p.m. Eads Senior
Citizens Dinner
5:30 p.m. Haswell Senior
Citizens Supper

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22

7:00 p.m. Lamar Elks Bingo

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

8:00 p.m. Wiley City Council
Meeting

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

7:00 p.m. Springfield Lion's
Club Bingo

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25

5:30 p.m. Haswell Commu-
nity Cards

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26

7:00 p.m. Lamar City Council
Regular Meeting

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

9:00 a.m. Bent County
Commissioners Meeting
1:00 p.m. Prowers County
Commissioners Meeting
6:00 p.m. Eads Senior
Citizen Cards
6:30 p.m. Weisbrod Health
Board Meeting
7:00 p.m. Lamar Eagles
Bingo

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

7:00 p.m. Lamar Elks Bingo

BIRTHDAYS

October 5
• Cindy McCloud
• Elly Anne Davis
• Paisyn Robins
October 6
• J.W. Ellis
• Jadlyn Keeling
• Tayran Richardson
October 7
• David Miner
• Joani Crawford
• Jura Wilson

October 8
• Benny Frey
• Brandon Briggs
• Cheyanne Reedy
• Jamee Bradley
October 9
• Lonnie Spady
• Merrik Dian Morgans
• Tiff Watts
• Tom Richards
October 10
• Bowman Ellis

• Sara Crawford
• Steve Filmore
• Trent Jones
October 11
• Brock Shalberg
• Ciara McCracken
• Easton Hofferber
• Kathy Engstrom
• Louis Brown

ANNIVERSARIES

October 5
• Kristina & Dustin Uhland
October 6
• Erica & Tanner Ellicott
October 7
• Chelsea & AJ Bolin
October 8
• Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Hopkins
October 10
• Mr. & Mrs. Borck Shalberg

Harris Pumpkin Patch

Open 2-4pm
Every Sunday In October
 October 4-Opening Day
 October 11
 October 18
 October 25-Open as Usual
 + Trunk or Treat

14229 CR 67
 Sheridan Lake, CO

Hometown Gas & Grill

809 Wansted St Hot Dogs - Sandwiches - Pizza Oven - Ice Cream
719-438-2206 Pop - Chips & Snacks - Candy - Dining Area
<https://www.facebook.com/Hometown-Gas-Grill-1827749380800315/>

COOP

Eads Consumers Supply
 We have: Propane - Batteries (Marine/Car) - Oil -
 Tires & Tubes - Feed - Bulk Fuel -We can: Fix truck tires
 Service jobs - Brakes - On-the-road tire repair

Eads, CO 719-438-2201 500 15th St

Kiowa County *Press*

KiowaCountyPress.net

October 2, 2026

Volume 139, Number 40

Subscriber EXTRA!

Exclusive section for our electronic edition subscribers.



Colorado's largest data center could rise next to homes — without a public hearing

JENNIFER OLDHAM

(Colorado Newsline)

This story was originally published by Capital & Main.

A Denver-area housing development under construction on a former 800-acre dryland farm touts its “incredible connection to nature.” Yet a Black-eyed-Susan covered vacant lot across the street could upend that connection: It’s slated to become the largest data center in Colorado.

Planning documents quietly filed with the city of Aurora show two two-story buildings on the property that would equal 861,866 square feet combined. The current design calls for 334 megawatts of planned IT capacity, with a total electrical demand to power computer banks, as well as lights and other appliances, of about 500 megawatts, said Mark Freeman, Vantage Data Center Inc.’s vice president of global marketing, in an email.

At full buildout, the energy consumed would equal about 11 times the power used by Denver International Airport, about eight miles to the north.

The 143-acre project proposal is little known to residents in Aurora, Colorado’s third-largest city. Its location in a half-built residential area in a census block disproportionately impacted by pollution highlights how the lack of rules for such developments largely leaves residents out of the planning process, an investigation by Capital & Main found.

Many cities and counties in the state currently allow staff to decide the fate of data center projects in areas zoned for commercial and industrial uses. Such proposals often aren’t required to go through a planning commission and city council process that includes public hearings.

- Majority of Coloradans dislike AI, new survey finds

The Trident Data Center, proposed by Vantage Data Centers Management Company LLC, is in “an industrial zone district, where data centers are a permitted use and can be approved administratively, so long as no major adjustments are requested,” said Jennifer Soules, a city of Aurora spokesperson, in an email. “The project does not meet the criteria for a neighborhood meeting.”

State officials suggested that Vantage Data Centers should “strongly consider” holding a community hearing before applying to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for a construction permit. Vantage’s Freeman said the company will “develop the campus responsibly and in a way that supports Aurora’s economic growth while addressing common community concerns.”

He added that the project

is in the early planning stages, and Vantage is beginning to reach out to elected officials and community leaders.

“We also will be launching a sentiment survey to better understand community needs,” Freeman said.

This review process mirrors one used by Denver city staffers and state officials to approve a data center without a public hearing in Globeville and Elyria-Swansea, which ranks among the nation’s most polluted ZIP codes. The CoreSite development ultimately calls for three buildings. Construction on the first data center, designed for an 18-megawatt capacity, is nearly complete. The other two will require a city permit. The company cannot apply for these permits during the city’s current moratorium.

The CoreSite facility will be just yards from a senior living center, an affordable housing complex and a health clinic, all of which led to a reckon-

ing about how data centers are reviewed in Colorado and shaped discussions among state legislators about how to regulate the fast-growing industry.

The community response has been overwhelming ... They do not want data centers, period.
— Amy Wiles, Aurora City Council member

Under pressure from residents, the Denver City Council in May voted to institute a moratorium on such developments for at least a year while it forms a working group to consider new rules. Other municipalities followed. Today, towns and counties statewide, representing about one third of Colorado’s population, have paused data center applications. This includes places that voted overwhelmingly for Donald Trump in the 2024

Continued on page B3

Data Center Continued from page B2

presidential election.

The trend reflects a nationwide push by municipalities and states, on the heels of a growing public outcry, to slow down the unprecedented growth of power- and water-hungry computer-filled facilities designed to further artificial intelligence. Lawmakers in 16 states have considered banning such developments. About 379 jurisdictions, from Maine to Arkansas to Utah and Washington, adopted moratoriums, or barred data centers outright. It has also become a dominant political issue on both sides of the aisle in the run-up to the November midterms.

COMMUNITY OPPOSITION

At least 4,000 data centers currently exist across the United States. Tax incentives in 38 states furthered their development — although officials in some states are starting to unwind them, citing budget deficits. President Trump said in August that data centers are “tremendously important” for the economy and could become a bigger industry than oil.

The market is growing so quickly that forecasters are revising their projections in real time. Data center capacity in America grew to 118 gigawatts in July, an upwards revision of 52% compared to the December forecast, BloombergNEF found. For comparison, that’s enough energy to power 65% of homes in the United States each year.

- Colorado Springs leaders delay decision on Project Taurus data center

Analysts expect facilities hosting about 194 gigawatts to be online by 2035, an 83% revision upward. The industry used about 4.4% of the country’s electricity in 2023, but that percentage could triple by 2028.

Technology companies said the “boom is spreading jobs and prosperity nationwide,” resulting in “an estimated \$27 billion in potential state and local tax revenue over the next decade.”

Yet such growth is also ac-

companied by unparalleled community opposition due to concerns about emissions, land and water use, and rising electricity rates resulting from hooking up such facilities to already strained power grids. Seven in 10 Americans do not want data centers in their communities, according to a May Gallup poll.

60 IN COLORADO

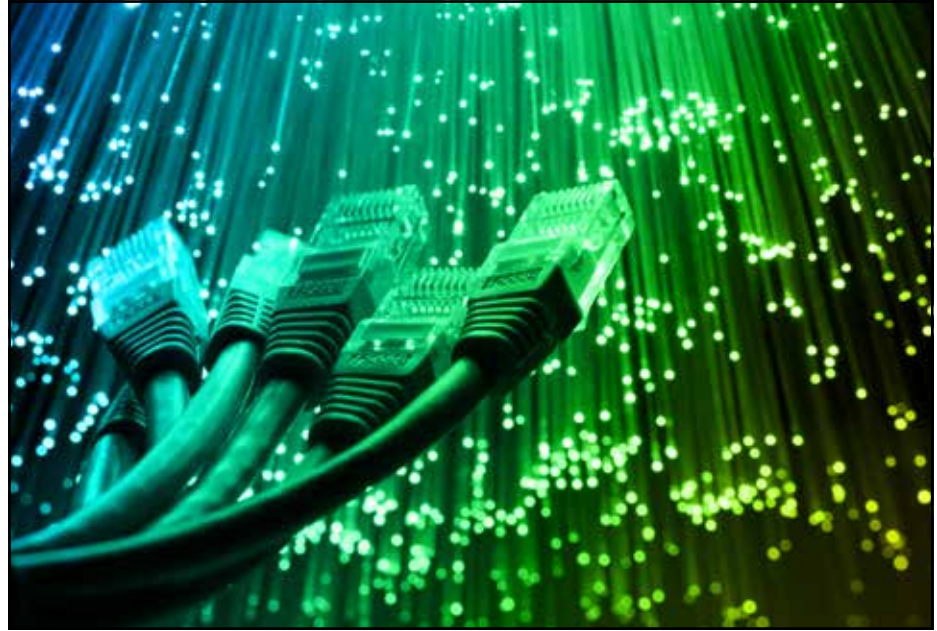
A national review of such facilities found nearly half are, as with Denver and Aurora, in census tracts with greater pollution burdens as measured by the Center for Disease Control’s Environmental Justice Index. Residents, state lawmakers and conservationists are also concerned that pollution from data centers’ electricity demands will unravel progress toward greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Despite the bipartisan pushback, state legislators in Colorado have struggled to devise bills to either incentivize, or regulate, such facilities.

Two measures introduced in the spring legislative session, one that would have provided incentives to data center developers to locate in the state and a second that would have required companies to use renewable energy, hold public hearings and forge community benefit agreements, died in committee.

The state is home to about 60 such facilities, ranging from smaller centers that have been around for decades to the largest, a 160-megawatt, three building facility now under construction by QTS, also in Aurora. The campus is rising about four miles south of the proposed Trident facility, also in a census block disproportionately impacted by pollution.

Aurora City Council member Amy Wiles watches cranes erecting the second of QTS’ three buildings across a farmer’s field every day when she walks her golden retrievers. Since her election to the 11-member council in November, Wiles has researched how her city, among the nation’s most diverse, can write rules to curb data center effects on the community.



She held a town hall meeting and invited QTS representatives and officials from Xcel Energy, the state’s largest electric utility, to speak. She represents the ward with the most undeveloped land in the city, including affordable housing developments under construction near the Trident project.

“The community response has been overwhelming,” Wiles said. “They do not want data centers, period.”

The council voted against a six-month data center moratorium Wiles introduced in August. It instead approved a resolution giving the city manager 30 days to bring back measures to regulate water use and establish buffer zones for data centers near neighborhoods.

Council members agreed the city should ban cooling technologies that require tens of thousands of gallons of water each day. Instead, companies will be required to use closed-loop chillers to cool computer systems. The Trident facility will use such a technology, Vantage spokesman Freeman said. Planning documents the company filed with the city show one building would require 800,000 gallons initially.

A VULNERABLE COMMUNITY

The Trident proposal also calls for 28 emergency diesel backup generators across the two planned buildings, Freeman said. The compa-

ny is asking to install the semi-truck-sized engines in a region where residents are exposed to more toxic air pollutants than 98% of the state’s census tracts and with greater hospitalization rates for asthma than 96% of such geographic regions, state records show. About two thirds of residents here struggle to pay for housing and are people of color.

Due to the community’s socioeconomic vulnerability, state officials suggested that Vantage engage with residents before applying for a construction permit.

“At a minimum,” regulators wrote in an Environmental Justice Summary, “the Air Pollution Control Division expects Vantage Data Centers Management Company, LLC to hold at least one community meeting before submitting the permit application to explain the project to the community and receive feedback.”

The vacant lot Vantage wants to build on is in the Denver-Aurora-Greeley metropolitan area, a region ranked eighth worst out of 226 such areas nationwide by the American Lung Association for high ozone days. Poisonous gases that contribute to the formation of ozone cause the state to violate federal air pollution standards each year.

The air was so polluted for more than two-thirds of this year’s “ozone season,” the period between May 31 and

August 31, that state officials issued warnings for residents with respiratory issues, young children and older adults to stay inside.

Residents voiced concern about pollution from diesel generators, as well as the data center industry’s power demands, at an August hearing of the state’s Public Utilities Commission on new rates for large load electricity customers.

Xcel Energy put forward the plan in April, saying it ensures “existing customers do not subsidize new large customers.” The company expects two-thirds of its demand growth to come from facilities like data centers.

Under the proposal, customers that need 20 megawatts or more must sign long-term contracts and cover costs to upgrade the grid. Residents told the PUC that the plan does not go far enough to require data center operators to use renewable energy.

“This year, an exceptional drought put Littleton under water restrictions in March — the earliest in state history,” testified Laura Rosenbaum, sustainability coordinator for Littleton, a Denver suburb. “We need to work as a region to drive meaningful change. We can’t let new large load customers like data centers stop us from moving our grid to renewable energy.”

Copyright 2026 Capital & Main

At-home drug disposal products can play an important role in keeping rural Coloradans safe



SUNNY LINNEBUR

(Colorado Newsline)

This commentary was originally published by The Conversation.

Some Coloradans have a drug problem: old prescription medications clogging their medicine cabinets.

Disposing of unused prescription and over-the-counter drugs is important to protect children and teens from accidental or unintentional exposure. Eliminating medications properly is also important to prevent contamination of vegetation, aquatic life and water supplies.

The Food and Drug Administration recommends disposing of drugs by dropping them off at a take-back location or by mailing them using a prepaid envelope that is delivered to a facility where the drugs are incinerated. These envelopes are available at some pharmacies and online.

In Colorado, the state-funded Medication and Sharps Takeback program has collected over 400,000 pounds – roughly 181 metric tons – of drugs since its inception in 2016. Medications can be dropped off at over

300 state-funded or independent drop-off sites across the state.

National take-back events in April and October each year are another way to properly dispose of medications. The drugs collected are incinerated and become irretrievable, helping keep the public and environment safe.

I am a professor of pharmacy with a focus on older adults and medication safety. For over a decade, I have co-chaired the Safe Disposal work group for the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention.

Although these national and statewide programs make an important difference, there are still gaps – especially for Coloradans who live in rural communities. Let's look at the different options these consumers have:

YOU'RE AT HOME – WHAT CAN YOU DO?

This should be a last resort reserved for dangerous medications, like fentanyl patches, that need to be disposed of quickly to prevent them from accidentally coming into contact with other humans or pets.

Putting medications down a sink or toilet deposits them directly into wastewater, where they will likely not be filtered out.

Depositing medications into household trash also carries risks, like making them accessible to animals and other people. Drugs can leach into soil and ground water groundwater at the landfill.

At-home disposal products are a useful alternative, especially in rural areas where drug take-back programs are not readily accessible.

These products dissolve and degrade, bind up or neutralize medications so they can safely be thrown away. Disposal products come in a variety of different sizes and offer different features, so I worked with staff at University of Colorado Anschutz to test some of the popular brands to see how they worked.

PILL TERMINATOR TEST

The Pill Terminator is a one-time use bottle filled with a powder that turns into a gelatinous substance once medications and water are added. All pills need to be

added at the same time.

We attempted adding around 30 pills to the bottle – much less than the stated 300 medium-sized pills that it could accommodate.

We observed several shortcomings. When warm water was used and the bottle was shaken, the powder was fully converted to gelatin and dissolved most of the pills. But there were still some intact pills remaining. When cold water was used, even extensive shaking did not completely dissolve the powder at the bottom of the container. Intact capsules also remained trapped within the gelatin, meaning some medications could still be identified and potentially retrieved.

DETERRA DRUG DEACTIVATION SYSTEM TEST

The Detera Drug Deactivation System is a biodegradable pouch that uses activated charcoal to adsorb medications after warm water is added.

According to the manufacturer, the system is designed to deactivate organic medications including opioids, most illicit drugs and vape fluid in different forms like pills, liquid and patches.

Detera cannot adsorb biologic drugs, such as vaccines and injectable immunotherapies, nor can it adsorb inorganic medications, like iron, calcium, aluminum, magnesium and lithium. Leaf marijuana is also excluded.

Although the product label says to “gently shake,” we needed to shake the Detera pouch more vigorously to effectively break down the medication. Most medications began to degrade relatively quickly, and the majority of pills were broken down by the water-charcoal mixture. Like with the Pill Terminator, the instruction to use warm water significantly improved the product's performance compared with cold water.

Despite these favorable results, we observed some limitations: After several hours, extended-release capsule beads were still visible within the charcoal water,

standard capsules were only partially degraded, and some sustained-release tablets remained intact.

The manufacturer states that the average time to deactivate 89% of the medication is eight hours; two days for 96%; and two weeks for 99%-100%. The pouch is not designed to be reopened, so after our initial testing, we were unable to verify these claims.

NARCX+ TEST

The NarCX+ disposal system is a biodegradable liquid in a plastic bottle, which can be opened and used multiple times until the bottle is full. It is the only product marketed for at-home disposal of illicit and controlled substances such as fentanyl, cocaine, heroin and cannabis, in addition to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Initial observations after several minutes showed limited medication breakdown. However, substantial changes occurred with longer exposure. The manufacturer of NarCX+ states that medications become irretrievable in less than two hours, and consuming any of the NarCX+ liquid will cause vomiting.

We filled the NarCX+ bottle almost three-quarters full, and after four hours almost all of the pills were dissolved. At five days, the liquid in the bottle looked virtually the same, with several white sustained-release tablets still floating at the top of the liquid. After a week, they finally disappeared in the dark liquid.

NarCX+ required a little more time than the other products for the tablets to be fully destroyed, but it proved to be effective at destroying a large number of pills – more than the recommended capacity. It is uniquely designed so you can reopen the bottle to continue adding medications to the fill line. NarCX+ is validated for the widest spectrum of medications.

This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article.

Colorado groups say Homeland Security skirted environmental analysis for new ICE facility

SARA WILSON

(Colorado Newsline)

Two advocacy organizations sued the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on Monday over allegations that the agency violated environmental protection laws by not completing an impact review for a planned immigration detention facility in Hudson.

DHS has a legal obligation under the National Environmental Policy Act to complete an assessment of how the facility could impact variables like infectious disease spread, water availability and air quality in the small town northeast of Denver, they argue.

"Big Horn would almost double the population of Hudson, but Hudson and the surrounding area lack the infrastructure and environmental capacity to safely and effectively handle this rapid expansion," the complaint says. The proposed site is known as Big Horn Correctional Facility.

The lawsuit comes from GreenLatinos and the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition. It names DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin, acting U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement head David Ventuella, and their agencies as defendants. It was filed in the U.S. District Court of Colorado.

DHS tapped The GEO Group, the private company that runs ICE's detention center in Aurora, to reopen a shuttered 1,250-bed prison in Hudson as Colorado's second immigration detention facility. The company announced a five-year contract with the federal government over the summer. Activists have protested against the plan since it was first rumored in 2025, and the formal announcement fueled more demonstrations at various town council meetings.

A separate lawsuit alleges that the facility is not zoned properly for an immigration detention site.

DHS spokesperson Chandler Rebel wrote in an email that the NEPA case is about "trying to stop President

Trump from making America safe again."

"The left didn't care about the mountains of litter that illegal aliens dropped on ranches and riverbeds during Biden's border crisis," Rebel wrote. "They're feigning concern now because they want those same illegal aliens to stay forever and vote here."

Experts say there is little to no evidence of voter fraud from immigrants who are ineligible to vote.

AIR POLLUTION

"By illegally failing to conduct a NEPA analysis, ICE has denied itself, members of the public, and Colorado elected officials, including its U.S. Senators and a member of Congress, critical information about the consequences of ICE's choices and actions, opportunities to mitigate adverse impacts, and the opportunity to submit comments to obtain better outcomes," the complaint says.

Under NEPA, agencies must complete an environmental analysis or environmental impact statement before undertaking a "major federal action," according to the lawsuit. Plaintiffs' lawyers point



out that DHS and ICE did such an analysis before opening similar sites in Texas in 2016 and 2021. They want a judge to force a stop to pre-construction activities and prohibit the opening of the Hudson facility until the federal government fulfills the NEPA requirement.

CIRC and GreenLatinos suggested the facility could worsen air pollution, especially as the Denver metro area already exceeds federal ozone limits. Diesel-burning generators and increased vehicle traffic from staff, visitors

and suppliers will add emissions to the air. The groups also worry about increased demands on Hudson's water supply and wastewater treatment system.

Our commitment to environmental justice extends to the people living near this facility as well as to those who would be confined inside it.

- Mark Magaña, GreenLatinos CEO

"Our commitment to environmental justice extends

to the people living near this facility as well as to those who would be confined inside it," GreenLatinos CEO Mark Magaña said in a statement. "We oppose any expansion that threatens the health and human dignity of those held, and the basic environmental protections of the surrounding community."

Additionally, the lawsuit expresses doubt about GEO's ability to control infectious diseases that could spread from the facility into the surrounding community. GEO is the subject of multiple public health orders and a lawsuit from the state over its non-compliance with a legally-required investigation into a summer tuberculosis case at the Aurora facility.

"Without a NEPA analysis, there is no public information available to demonstrate that ICE has done anything to prepare Big Horn to address and mitigate this risk. Rather, the opposite is true. ICE's contractor for Big Horn, GEO Group, has pursued a dangerous, noncooperative approach to dealing with infectious diseases," the complaint says.

Colorado's first state fair opened in 1876 with displays of produce and a pigeon shooting match

CHASE WOODRUFF

(Colorado Newsline)

Colorado's first-ever state fair opened in Denver on the afternoon of September 26, 1876, and "every means of transportation in the city was pressed into service" to ferry passengers to the 40-acre fairgrounds on its eastern outskirts, according to the Rocky Mountain News.

All week, wagons and railroad cars had transported goods from all across the state to be put on display at the fair — technically, the annual exposition of the Colorado Industrial Association, which had been held in Denver since the 1860s and would later move to Pueblo, where it was officially incorporated in 1886.

"Of course every person feels a certain pride in having the first fair since Colorado

became a state especially successful," reported the News. "And then there is the national pride engendered of the Centennial year which spurs men on in their liberality."

The central attraction inside the fair's main exhibition hall, courtesy of Denver's Bellevue Gardens, was "a circular stand covered with pots and vases of flowers, among which were many rare exotics, exhaling delicate odors and adding materially by their brilliancy of color to the attractiveness of the scene," said the News.

Other booths showed off "every variety of fancy needlework"; oil paintings and engravings; tanned animal hides and furs; luxury furniture and "some excellent articles in the plumbing line"; and a cornucopia of agricultural products.

"The Clear Creek Valley Grange has on exhibition a large amount of all varieties of produce, among which are mammoth squashes, beets, potatoes and melons, besides some freshly cut grass measuring over six feet in height," the News continued. "The El Paso County Cheese Company shows enough of that article to surfeit the whole state."

At Ford's Park, adjacent to the fairgrounds, 40 entrants contested a pigeon shooting match, with prizes ranging from \$100 in cash to a sack of flour. But the fair's biggest draw was five straight days of horse racing. The trotting and running races on September 26 were won by "Tempest" and "Bay Billy," respectively, with each winning a \$150 top prize.

At the request of 50 petitioners representing the "bankers and business men

of the city," Denver Mayor R.G. Buckingham declared Friday, September 29, an official holiday, "with a view to the encouragement of a project which, if properly furthered, will inure to the benefit of the entire community."

"To a stranger within the gates, it seemed as if the whole state of Colorado had turned out and was upon the grounds," the News reported the following day. "The grand stand was filled so that it was impossible to find sitting room and almost impossible to find standing space, before one o'clock in the afternoon, although the races were not announced to begin until two o'clock."

SELECTED SOURCES

- The Rocky Mountain News, September 27–30, 1876

Taxing California's rich just got more complicated. Prop 40's fate is still uncertain

DAN WALTERS

(CalMatters)

Proposition 40, which would impose a 5% tax on the wealth of California's billionaires, is arguably the most important measure placed before voters in this century.

It is also probably the most confounding.

While it's sponsored by a healthcare union, it's opposed by several other major unions, who are in an odd bedfellows alliance with the billionaires it targets. Meanwhile, the leader of the sponsoring union faces allegations of personal misconduct.

And even if Prop. 40 passes, two other measures on the ballot could nullify it. Finally, the measure contains complex language, raising questions that would probably generate extended legal battles even if it does pass.

Given all that, it's not surprising that, with mail voting beginning in just a couple of weeks, a new poll indicates Prop. 40 could go either way.

A Public Policy Institute of California survey found that 52% of likely voters favor the measure and 46% are opposed, which in the real world of campaigning means it's too close to call.



Meanwhile, the two measures placed on the ballot by Prop. 40's wealthy opponents are doing fairly well. Proposition 41, which would indirectly nullify Prop. 40 by prohibiting levying any new taxes outside of the state's spending limit, and Proposition 42, which would prohibit taxes on personal property, each have narrow leads in the PPIC poll.

Were all three measures to

gain approval, the one with the most votes would prevail — meaning that if Props. 41 or 42 outdoes Prop. 40, the billionaire tax would be void.

None of that intertwining complexity was explained to the people PPIC polled. They were just given the official summary of each proposition before being asked their preferences.

Prop. 40 is sponsored by the Service Employees In-

ternational Union-United Healthcare Workers West. If it becomes law, a 5% tax would be levied on the assets of about 200 California billionaires, with almost all of the proceeds being spent on healthcare.

However, Dave Regan, the union's fiery leader, is facing allegations by leaders of other unions under the Service Employees International umbrella of having "a pat-

tern and history of bullying, threats, harassment, physical violence and attempted extortion." They said an independent investigation has confirmed the allegations, and they called on him to step down.

"Our first responsibility as an organization is to lead with our values," the other union officials said in a statement. "We stand with all those who are bullied, harassed, or targeted at work, and we stand by our charges. Our national union must now act swiftly to carry out our internal due process and ensure accountability to our values. Every leader is responsible for their role in protecting and promoting respect, workplace justice, gender equity, racial justice, and nonviolence in our union and beyond."

Regan denies the allegations.

But they give Prop. 40's opponents potentially potent campaign ammunition. The split within Service Employees International and in the larger union movement reflects both long-standing feuds and resentment that the measure's revenues would be largely confined to services that Regan's members provide.

As the multifaceted campaigning over Prop. 40 picks up steam, one figure is noticeably absent: Governor Gavin Newsom.

Prior to the measure's qualification for the ballot, Newsom was publicly attempting to derail it, worrying aloud that if passed, it would encourage wealthy Californians to leave the state and discourage new investment. High-income Californians pay most of the state's income taxes, the state's most important source of revenue.

However, Newsom is also a likely candidate for president after his governorship ends. Opposing taxes on the rich could alienate voters in the ultra-progressive wing of the Democratic Party.

Thus, he now says taxing wealth should be a national matter, not confined to one state.

Feds target funding for first-generation Colorado college students

ERIC GALATAS

(Colorado News Connection)

The Trump administration wants to eliminate a series of programs helping disadvantaged students complete degrees beyond high school, a move critics warned could lead to a shortage of skilled workers in Colorado and across the U.S.

Within the next decade, **72% of jobs** are expected to require a college degree or professional credential.

Dan Sullivan, executive site director of **College Track Denver**, a program helping equip students for college and future careers, said cutting federal **TRIO programs** would disproportionately affect students who are the first in their families to attend

college.

"These are students that have drive, talent, persistence, commitment. Taking this away is going to take away an incredible resource for our country, our workforce," Sullivan contended.

First-generation students clear hurdles many of their classmates never see, working out applications and financial aid without a family playbook, often while holding down jobs and responsibilities at home.

The administration's **2027 budget** cuts more than \$1 billion in programs serving nearly 800,000 first-generation and low-income students, including 17,000 in Colorado. Officials said the cuts will help return control of education to states and restore

fiscal discipline to federal education spending.

Alexis Coria-Navarrete became a College Track scholar as a high school freshman and is now a sophomore at Colorado School of Mines. He said the program helped him apply for schools and find scholarships to cover tuition. He added the program's mentors, reminding him the timeline for completing a degree does not have to be set in stone, have helped him stay on course.

"It's so intimidating, especially to first-generation students, because they're expected to be on time with everybody else. But the thing about college is that you have to take it at your own pace. It doesn't have to be four years. It could be five, six, whatever,"

Coria-Navarrete observed.

Sullivan said College Track's 10-year commitment to students starts in high school by helping them become more academically competitive to get into college, for example, by enrolling in Advanced Placement classes and extracurricular programs. And as students enter college, the support pivots to helping them take first steps toward a career.

"Finding and applying for internships or externships where they can get some of that both on-the-job experience but also start to build their own network," Sullivan outlined. "Because they're not inheriting a network from friends and family nearly as much when they're first generation."

DOJ uses case of Utah letter carrier to highlight allegations of voting fraud

JACOB FISCHLER

(Utah News Dispatch)

Federal officials charged a Utah letter carrier Tuesday with throwing 300 primary ballots in a church parking lot dumpster, an incident that a top U.S. Justice Department official said made the case for stricter regulations of voting.

The prosecution of Damon Matai Seei, of Payson, Utah, showed "voting fraud is real," acting Deputy Attorney General Trent McCotter said at a press conference at DOJ headquarters in Washington.

The Justice Department gave the arrest an unusually high profile, spotlighting the administration's efforts to combat voter fraud after the U.S. Supreme Court this month blocked a new U.S. Postal Service rule limiting mail voting from going into effect for this year's elections.

The regulation was meant to "address the chronically abused mail-in ballot system," McCotter said. He criticized the trial judge who initially blocked the rule, which would have required special tracking and design features, among other things such as creating a national database of eligible voters.

"Election integrity should not be a political or partisan issue," McCotter said. "Who could be against properly tracking mail-in ballots? Unfortunately, but entirely predictably, that regulation was blocked by a judge in Massachusetts. ... The Trump administration, however, will continue taking aggressive actions to protect our elections."

POSTAL SERVICE RULE

U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani's order blocking the rule is only in effect for the November 3 elections, a provision meant to preserve the status quo because the rule was finalized mere months before the midterms. The merits of the case are still being argued. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Talwani's decision.

The prosecution of Seei, and the attention the administration sought to give it,



undercut a key argument the administration made in the case: The rule included only "modest" technical specifications for a category of mail and should not be interpreted as an election regulation.

The U.S. Constitution grants states the authority to administer elections, with policy oversight from Congress.

In siding with the Democratic states and voting rights groups who filed suit, Talwani and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit said the rule was clearly an attempt to affect election policy and was not restricted to a modest mail regulation.

TRUMP AND MAIL-IN VOTING

President Donald Trump has railed against mail-in voting and claimed, without evidence, that it is a major source of election fraud and contributed to his 2020 loss to President Joe Biden.

Since Trump retook office in January 2025, the department has charged 70 immigrants with illegally voting, compared with only 13 in the four years of Biden's term, McCotter said Tuesday.

"And we intend to bring many more," he added.

Homeland Security Inves-

tigations, a Homeland Security Department agency, has made 160 recent arrests, from 1,600 open voter fraud cases, HSI acting Deputy Executive Associate Director Matthew Millhollin said.

A reporter in the room noted that 70 prosecutions

amounted to a bare fraction of the 150 million votes cast in the 2024 election.

McCotter responded that the Utah case involved 300 ballots, and that law enforcement had only scratched the surface of possible incidents. "Thousands more" cases were being investigated, he said.

"The folks on the other side, the opponents of the president, insist this has never happened, that there is no voting fraud," he said. "And so when we have dozens of cases ... I think that discourages and defeats their characterization."

NO PARTISAN MOTIVE ALLEGED

Seei, who is no longer a postal worker, intentionally threw out about 300 mail ballots, according to charging documents.

Just weeks ago, **Utah's chief election officer learned she had been under DOJ investigation since 2025**, adding more context to the department's scrutiny of voting administration in that state.

In an interview with law enforcement, he indicated he did not have a political motive but said he threw away

the mail, which also included advertisements, "because he wanted to 'lighten his workload' so he could presumably go home earlier," prosecutors said.

Melissa Holyoak, the top federal prosecutor for Utah, traveled to Washington, D.C., for Tuesday's press conference. She noted that 95% of the state's voters cast their ballots by mail.

Many people in Seei's delivery area in Eagle Mountain, Utah, complained to the Utah County Clerk that they hadn't received ballots, Holyoak said. Using county databases, the clerk found that voter participation was "remarkably low" in the area where complaints originated.

"As American citizens, we have certain freedoms and rights," Holyoak said. "And one of those fundamental rights is the right to vote. But when defendant allegedly tossed the mail-in ballots into a parking lot dumpster, those citizens' right to vote were also thrown away."

The federal public defender representing Seei did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Data: Colorado housing out of reach for low-income workers

ERIC GALATAS

(Colorado News Connection)

Rising rents and a lack of affordable housing units are putting more of Colorado's lowest-paid workers at risk of entering the cycle of homelessness, according to key indicators released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

The annual "Out of Reach" report calculates each state's Housing Wage, the hourly pay workers need to rent a fair market rate apartment without spending more than 30% of their income on housing.

Cathy Alderman, chief communications and public policy officer at the Homeless, said the wage is now \$36.44 an hour in the Centennial State.

"What that means is that people still would have to work about two and a half

full-time jobs at minimum wage in order to afford a modest two-bedroom home in Colorado," Alderman explained.

Colorado's 2026 minimum wage of \$15.16 is 82% higher than it was a decade ago but it has not been able to keep up with rising housing costs. The report ranked Colorado the 12th least affordable state in the country. The most expensive areas include Summit, Eagle and Pitkin counties, Boulder and the Denver metro area.

Alderman pointed to a separate report released this spring showing 76% of the state's lowest-paid workers are forced to spend **more than half their income** on housing. She argued Colorado needs to add more than 136,000 affordable housing units to meet current demand.

"For the lowest-income

households, for every 100 units of housing needed, there are only 27 available. So that leaves three quarters of that population without an available and affordable unit," Alderman pointed out.

Nationally, the shortage of affordable rental homes has reached 7.2 million units. Congress recently **passed legislation** to encourage more housing construction. Alderman acknowledged it is a step in the right direction and can make development easier in some spaces and open the door for different kinds of housing options but it will not solve the problem.

"Because what we need more than anything is financial investments in the development of housing that is affordable to the lowest-income households and people living on fixed incomes," Alderman urged.

Immigrant rights group launches \$10M plan to mobilize Latino and independent voters

GLORIA REBECCA GOMEZ

(Arizona Mirror)

An immigrant rights group will spend millions and knock on tens of thousands of doors to fire up Latino voters ahead of the November midterms, in the hopes of electing progressive candidates who will push back against President Donald Trump.

Living United for Change in Arizona, which frequently campaigns on behalf of Democrats, is planning to invest as much as \$9.9 million over the next six weeks on voter outreach efforts in both federal and statewide races. Control of Arizona's government is on the ballot this year as the statewide offices are all up for grabs, along with two U.S. House seats that could help decide which party controls Congress.

And local progressive groups, including LUCHA, are once again aiming to flip the state legislature, which Republicans have controlled for all but two terms since 1966.

The funding is an impressive sum from an organization that made just under \$9 million in revenue in 2024, the last year its tax records are



available, and demonstrates the energy behind progressive campaigning efforts in this year's election cycle. César Fierros, a spokesman for LUCHA, said the money comes from a mix of member support, individual and philanthropic contributions and the group's political action committee.

Stephanie Maldonado, LUCHA's political director, said the goal is as much to erect a bulwark against the Trump administration as it is to create a legislative environment

that results in Arizona-centered policies. The group has long called for worker and renter focused policies at the state level, including mandatory paid family and medical leave and affordable housing solutions that have been mostly rebuffed by Republicans, who decide which proposals are considered.

"We need candidates that are going to fight back," she said. "(Who) are going to hold the line for everyday, hard-working Arizonans and not just protect private interests,

like those of corporations, data centers, electric companies and corporate landlords."

The campaign strategy is to connect with at least 400,000 voters through door-knocking, phone calls, mailers and digital outreach. And that's more of a minimum for the group, which has years of experience canvassing and has outperformed that number in past elections.

In both the 2022 and 2024 cycles, LUCHA made contact with more than half a million voters; in 2024 alone, activists knocked on over 630,000 doors.

Maldonado said the focus will be on Latino voters and voters who aren't registered with either major political party, noting that both are electoral blocs with the potential to swing close races. In 2022, Democrat Katie Hobbs defeated her opponent, Republican Kari Lake, and captured the governor's seat with just a little over a percentage point. And Kris Mayes

was elected state attorney general with a razor-thin 280-vote margin.

About 34% of voters in Arizona aren't registered with a party, according to a July report from the Arizona Secretary of State's Office, placing the group closely behind registered Republicans, who make up the state's largest group of voters, at 35%.

And about 25% of Arizona's voters, or 1.3 million, are Latino. That demographic, Maldonado said, deserves representation and LUCHA is committed to ensuring their voices are heard at the ballot box.

"Latinos are the second highest population in the state," she said. "They're a very important electorate bloc that makes decisions in statewide races."

Part of the impetus behind motivating Latino voters is the Trump administration's vitriol against the immigrants. Trump's mass deportation campaign has led to the violent arrests and mistreatment of hundreds of people, many with American family members, and racial profiling tactics that have ensnared citizens. Maldonado pointed out that Arizona, as a border state, is at the center of the White House's anti-immigrant agenda, and noted that how much state officials get involved with federal deportation efforts is likely to be decided in November.

Hobbs has so far refused to wade into immigration enforcement but her opponent, Republican Andy Biggs, has been a vocal proponent of Trump's deportation campaign. And in the attorney general's race, Republican Warren Petersen has vowed to aid federal agents in deporting immigrants, including those who came to the country as children and are currently shielded from removal under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

"Every election is the most important election, however I do believe that what happens in this election will really decide what happens in the next two to four years," Maldonado said.

Montana's Tracks Trail gives kids hands-on lesson in wildlife habitat

LAURA HATCH

(Big Sky Connection)

A new exhibit at one of the newest parks in Helena, Montana, is teaching kids about wildlife habitat, one track at a time.

The Tracks Trail at **Prickly Pear Park** in East Helena features seven sets of tracks in concrete slabs, with hints about which animal left the tracks. Kids flip the sign to get the answer and learn about the animal and its environment.

Konner Goetsch, a Big Sky Watershed Corps member and education program assistant for the Prickly Pear Land Trust, developed the trail and wants it to help kids think more scientifically.

"This is a way to get kids to understand why having open spaces is very important. It's

not just a place for people to recreate or hike, it's also a place where animals find food, shelter, water, and just a place for them to move throughout the landscape," Goetsch outlined.

The signage debuted in late August in the newly created park, which opened in May. It is a remediation project on the former site of a smelting company, which operated there for more than 100 years and closed in 2001.

Prickly Pear Land Trust helped establish two parks on the land — Prickly Pear Park and The Grove — and uses them in its education program for hands-on learning. In 2025, the education team spent nearly 4,500 hours in the field, reaching nearly 4,000 students.

Christa Schoenfeld, a science teacher at East Hele-

na High School, said for the past five years or so, her students have visited both parks for five-week units on wildlife habitat and biology. They study stream health and water quality, check out beaver habitats and identify insects and fish in the creek. They have also seen wildlife corridors and nesting migratory birds. She stressed the experiences let students see firsthand the difference environmental preservation can make.

"What could have been a really terrible thing with environmental impacts in the area and what was here before has turned into something really positive. And I see not just our students using the trails, but the general public in the area as well," Schoenfeld pointed out.

Goetsch joined Prickly Pear

Land Trust through the **Montana Conservation Corps**, a nonprofit offering young people jobs in environmental education and conservation. He likes how the trust's interactive lessons get kids outdoors, teaching them much more than they could learn in the classroom, and helping them become good stewards of the land.

"It's not them just learning about these environmental philosophies in class. They're actually coming out to our parks and getting to learn firsthand what goes into environmental conservation and protecting our landscapes," Goetsch added.

Prickly Pear Land Trust was founded in 1995 to protect forests and trails in Helena. It created its education program in 2020 and launched it in 2021.

South Dakota's top election official, a Republican, endorses a Democrat to succeed her

SETH TUPPER

(South Dakota Searchlight)

Four years after refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of a Democratic president's electoral victory, the Republican who serves as South Dakota's top election official has endorsed a Democratic candidate to succeed her.

Election officials across the West have faced political scrutiny this year, as **Utah's chief election officer was reportedly investigated by the DOJ beginning in 2025**, according to reporting from a few weeks ago.

"I understand that this decision will disappoint some people in my party and anger others," Secretary of State Monae Johnson said Saturday in a written statement.

The announcement was the culmination of a shift that Johnson had been signaling for several years.

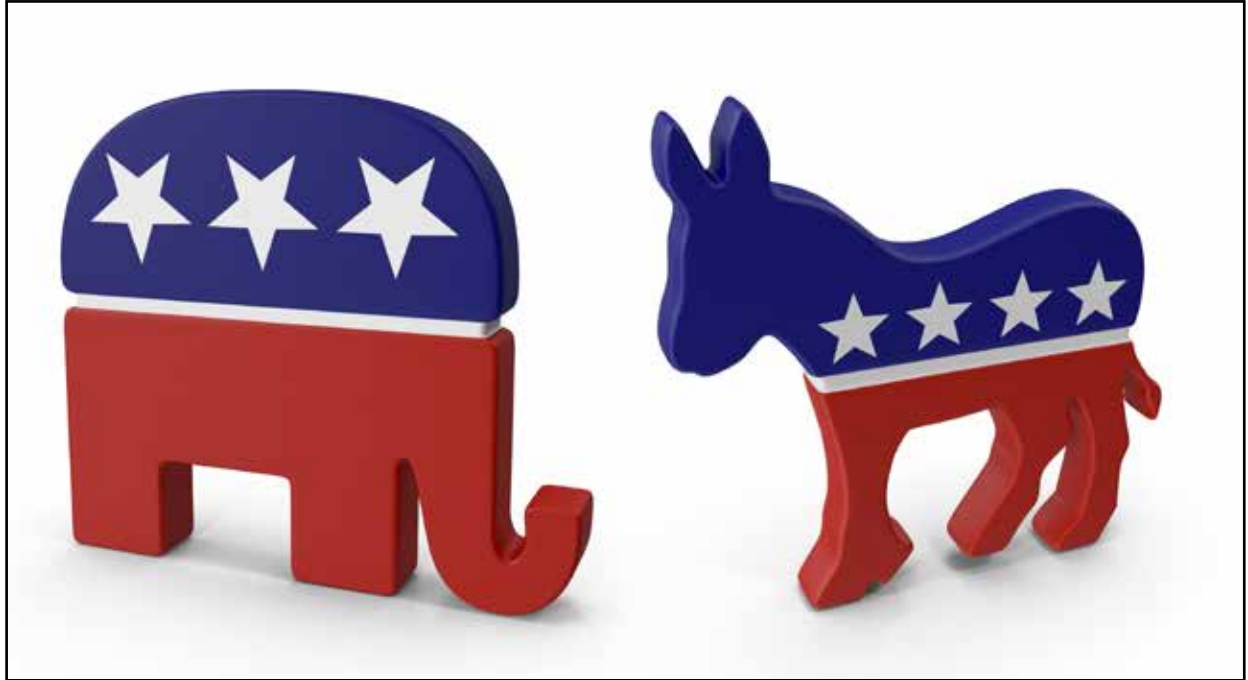
She won her office in 2022 with the support of activists calling for changes such as hand-counting instead of machine-counting votes, due to allegations that vote-counting machines — which are not connected to the internet in South Dakota — could be hacked.

The candidates, the ballot measures, and the tools you need to cast your vote.

Some of the activists who supported Johnson were motivated by Republican President Donald Trump's claims of fraud in his 2020 election loss to Democratic President Joe Biden. When South Dakota Searchlight interviewed Johnson before her election four years ago, she said "I don't know" in response to a question about whether she believed those claims.

After she got the job, Johnson helped usher in changes including the implementation of post-election audits in all South Dakota counties, the results of which helped prove the accuracy of vote-counting machines. She did not pursue some other changes, such as shifting from machine-counting to hand-counting all results, and she lost some support.

Four years after delegates



at the Republican state convention backed Johnson as their nominee over an incumbent who was perceived as insufficiently devoted to changing election laws, delegates at this year's convention chose Heather Baxter, a challenger who supports some of those changes, as their nominee over Johnson.

During the June convention, Johnson made it clear she had moved away from some of the positions of her former supporters. She referenced vote-counting machines when she said in a speech, "I fully support the use of secure, tested ballot tabulators."

Then, on Saturday, Johnson endorsed Democratic nominee Terrence Davis to succeed her. Johnson made the endorsement in a written statement published by the South Dakota War College political blog. It's operated by Pat Powers, a Republican who worked for a previous secretary of state.

Johnson wrote that after serving as an employee in the office and then in the elected post, "I know the difference between campaigning for this office and carrying the responsibility of leading it."

"I cannot remain silent when I believe the integrity, stability, and professional-

ism of this office is at stake," Johnson wrote.

She said her time in office taught her that in response to calls for overhauling election systems, the secretary of state "must consider the law, the information available, the effect on county officials, the security of statewide systems, the rights of voters, the cost and workload created by a change, and whether the proposal can be implemented within the deadlines the law requires. It also requires a willingness to review new information and change course when the evidence supports doing so."

Johnson did not mention Baxter by name or identify specific concerns about Baxter's positions but said "South Dakota deserves a Secretary of State who will strengthen confidence through performance rather than provocation; who will support election officials rather than burden them for political effect; who will protect voter access and election security without pretending those goals are enemies; and who will treat the office's employees, voters, candidates, and business owners with dignity."

Davis responded by writing on social media that he is "deeply grateful" for John-

son's support.

"Monae and I come from different political parties. We will not agree on every issue," Davis wrote. "That is exactly why her confidence in me means so much."

Davis, a former state trooper, would be the first Democratic secretary of state in South Dakota since the late Lorna Herseth, whose last year in office was 47 years ago in 1979. Davis would also be the first Black person to win a statewide elected office in South Dakota. He advocates policies to make voting easier, including automatically registering all South Dakotans to vote on their 18th birthday.

Baxter is a Republican state representative from Rapid City who lost her reelection bid for that office in the June primary election before winning the party's nomination for secretary of state. She responded on social media Saturday, writing that her win over Johnson at the Republican convention was not the result of "confusion."

"The letter beside a name is not decoration," Baxter wrote. "It tells voters what governing philosophy they will carry into the office that runs our elections and business services."

Baxter also pledged sup-

port in her post for "election integrity" measures including voter identification, paper ballots and proof of citizenship — all things that South Dakota already requires. She did not call for hand-counting of votes in her response to Johnson. At the time of her nomination by the Republican state convention in June, Johnson's campaign website said she wanted to "ensure every vote is counted accurately via paper ballots that are hand counted." Her website now has modified language, saying she supports "improved hand counting methods."

The race for secretary of state also includes a Libertarian nominee, Tamara Lesnar.

Besides overseeing elections, the secretary of state's responsibilities include the management of campaign finance reporting, lobbyist registrations, business corporate filings and concealed pistol permits.

Advance voting for the November 3 general election is underway, and the voter registration deadline is October 19.

Don't miss campaign news: Sign up for our free newsletter.

Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Washington show key strategies for effective wildfire funding

EMILY STRASBURG

(Idaho Capital Sun)

Wildfire is no longer a seasonal surprise across the Mountain West. It is a recurring fiscal challenge that threatens communities, public lands, infrastructure, air quality, and state budgets.

As Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Washington confront increasingly costly fire seasons, policymakers should rethink not only how much they spend on wildfire, but how those dollars are structured.

The central challenge is that wildfire costs are unpredictable. A state may experience a relatively mild season one year and face extraordinary suppression expenses the next. Yet preparedness, forest management, equipment and community resilience require steady investment long before smoke fills the skies.

A more resilient wildfire funding system should therefore have two distinct components: predictable baseline funding for preparedness and mitigation, paired with flexible reserves and emergency authorities for suppression and recovery.

States in our region offer useful examples of how to build such a system.

Montana has taken important steps through its Wildfire Suppression State Special Revenue Account. Established in 2008, the account can support suppression, preparedness, equipment and mitigation. In 2023, House Bill 883 provided a \$152 million one-time General Fund appropriation, increased the amount available for mitigation and preparedness, and established a balance target tied to General Fund revenues.

In 2024, Montana's suppression costs were approximately \$391 million, while the account was projected to hold roughly \$145 million at the end of fiscal year 2025. That reserve provides stability, but the state should continue evaluating whether its funding structure encourages the most effective long-term investments.



Idaho has emphasized a combination of dedicated funding and partnerships. Its Fire Suppression-Deficiency Warrants Fund helps address unexpected suppression costs, while programs such as Shared Stewardship and the Good Neighbor Authority support work across ownership boundaries. That approach recognizes a basic reality of Western wildfire: Fires do not stop at property lines, and neither should prevention efforts.

Wyoming provides another model through its Emergency Fire Suppression Account, Fire Protection Revolving Account, legislative appropriations, federal grants, and emergency authorities. The state authorized approximately \$176.9 million for wildfire suppression and recovery during the 2025–26 biennium. Wyoming's approach illustrates the importance of maintaining access to emergency resources while using the regular budget process to provide oversight and accountability.

Washington has pursued a more comprehensive strategy. Its Wildfire Response, Forest Restoration, and Community Resilience Account commits \$125 million per biennium for eight years, or \$500 million total, to connect response, restoration and community resilience. A pub-

lic dashboard also helps track how funds are being used. That kind of transparency can improve public confidence and help policymakers determine which investments are producing results.

These approaches differ, but they point toward a common lesson: Wildfire funding should not be treated as a single line item. Suppression is essential, but it is often the most expensive and least predictable part of the system. Preparedness and mitigation can reduce the severity of future fires, protect communities, and lower pressure on emergency budgets. Recovery funding is also necessary, because the costs of a fire continue after the flames are extinguished.

A 2023 report charting a course for mitigating wildfire risk in the western United States laid out foundational strategies that align closely with the state-level approaches described here.

Still, mitigation spending should not become a blank check. A recent analysis from the Property and Environment Research Center found that fuel treatments can generate substantial benefits, including reduced federal firefighting costs and avoided smoke and property damages. But returns vary by project. Larger, strategically

selected projects produced stronger estimated benefit-cost ratios than smaller projects. The implication is clear: states should prioritize targeted treatments where they are most likely to reduce risk, rather than measuring success simply by dollars spent or acres treated.

The same principle should apply to the way wildfire funds are budgeted and spent. The National Taxpayers Union Foundation's analysis of "use it or lose it" federal spending raises concerns that agencies may accelerate spending at the end of the fiscal year simply to preserve future appropriations. Although not specific to wildfire funding, the analysis reinforces the need for wildfire dollars to be tied to measurable outcomes and long-term risk reduction rather than incentives to spend funds before they expire.

The Mountain West also needs to recognize the limits of state-only solutions. Wyoming, Idaho, Montana and Washington all contain significant federal land, meaning state investments can be undermined when federal, state, tribal, and private landowners pursue disconnected strategies. Better coordination, shared data, and cross-boundary projects can stretch scarce dollars further.

A smarter funding system

would establish a reliable preparedness and mitigation baseline, maintain reserves for severe suppression seasons, preserve legislative oversight, and require clear performance measures. Policymakers should ask not only how much money was spent, but whether communities were better protected, response costs were reduced, and forest conditions improved.

Wildfire will remain part of life in the Mountain West. The question is whether states will continue paying primarily after disaster strikes or invest more deliberately before the next fire begins.

A 2024 study found that wildfire burn areas experience faster snowpack melts, disrupting water resources — a downstream cost that funding systems must account for beyond suppression alone.

Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Washington are experimenting with different answers. Their experiences suggest that fiscal responsibility and wildfire resilience are not competing goals. With predictable funding, targeted mitigation, transparent reporting and regional cooperation, they can reinforce one another.

Uber ordered to pay \$40 million after stranded passenger killed on highway

LEVI SUMAGAYSAY

(CalMatters)

Uber must pay \$40 million to the parents of a woman who was struck and killed after an Uber driver left her on an Orange County freeway in 2023, an arbitrator has ruled.

The arbitrator rejected Uber's arguments that California's Proposition 22 — a voter-approved law written by Uber and other gig companies that cemented drivers' status as independent contractors, not employees — shields it from liability for a driver's actions.

"Prop. 22 does not immunize Uber from vicarious liability" for the wrongdoing of its drivers, Richard Stone, a retired judge who served as the arbitrator, wrote in his July arbitration award. Vicarious liability is indirect liability for the actions of another, such as in instances where the parties have a legal relationship.

In his earlier ruling in March, Stone wrote that when California voters passed Prop. 22 in 2020, they could not have intended to do away with Uber's liability for its drivers' actions. He noted that the language in the ballot proposition urging voters to approve it referred to classifying drivers as independent contractors, meaning they would not get standard benefits and protections like employees would.

"There is no reference in key voter materials to the liability of app-based transportation companies," Stone wrote. "Not a word."

On August 12, 2023, Uber driver Vu Tran picked up Emily Normandin-Parker and her friend, Luna Moore, from a bar. When Moore started throwing up in the car, Tran stopped at a gore point — the small, triangular area at the off-ramp — on State Route 73. As Tran and Moore argued, Normandin-Parker, 23, was struck and killed after wandering into traffic because she was inebriated, according to the ruling. Stone wrote that it was hard to determine exactly what happened because the testimony of both Moore

and Tran were not entirely credible.

Normandin-Parker's parents and Moore sued Tran and Uber in Orange County Superior Court in September 2023, and the parties agreed to arbitration. Stone awarded Normandin-Parker's parents, Carol Normandin and Ken Parker, \$20 million each, and Moore \$300,000.

Uber reported revenue of more than \$14 billion and net income of more than \$2 billion in its second quarter that ended in June.

Uber spokesperson Gabriela Condarco-Quesada told CalMatters that the company disagrees with the decision.

"We believe the arbitrator was wrong in holding Uber legally responsible for the tragic events of that night," she said, citing Prop. 22. Uber, along with companies such as DoorDash, Lyft and Instacart, spent more than \$200 million on the ballot initiative.

She also said the company's "thoughts continue to be with the Normandin-Parker family."

Parker pushed back on what he called a spin campaign by Uber, noting that the company tried to keep them from talking about the arbitrator's award.

"Their thoughts have never been with us," he told CalMatters on Thursday, the day he



and Normandin appeared on Good Morning America to discuss the case and the death of their daughter, a UCLA graduate.

Parker said Uber has never apologized or acknowledged responsibility, and that throughout the arbitration process the company was "at best aloof and at worst distastefully crass."

In a November filing, the company argued the incident "was the result of Moore and Normandin-Parker's extreme intoxication, which was existent because of Moore's and Normandin-Parker's intentional conduct — not Tran's driving."

The award will help fund the Emily Normandin-Parker Foundation, which her par-

ents created last year. Part of the foundation's mission will be to hold corporations accountable, particularly in the ride-hailing industry, Parker said. He said that might come through advocacy in legislation, regulations or the "court of public opinion."

The arbitrator also rejected Uber's argument that it is not a common carrier that transports people or goods, but a transportation network company because it's licensed as such by the Public Utilities Code. Stone wrote that Uber could be subject to both public utility rules and a non-transferable legal duty for safety as a common carrier at the same time, citing other cases in which the company was deemed to be a common

carrier. Further, he said another California law, Proposition 51, does not apply in this case. Prop. 51 limits liability for non-economic damages to a defendant's proportionate share of fault. Stone said Uber is 100% responsible for the driver's actions.

Lawyers for Normandin-Parker's parents said evidence presented during the arbitration showed Uber had received previous complaints about Tran's driving.

Uber said in a filing that Tran had a valid driver's license and passed its background check, and that the company had no duty to train Tran beyond that because he was an independent contractor. The company spokesperson said this week that Tran, who can no longer drive for Uber, had completed thousands of trips without any unsafe drop-offs, freeway stops or rider injury.

CalMatters contacted the law firm that represented Tran but did not immediately receive a response.

Stone wrote that he hopes Uber "will learn from this tragic incident... and change the pertinent policies and procedures accordingly. Should it fail to do so, it no doubt engages in that approach at its own substantial risk."

Idaho congressional candidate pleads guilty to possession of child sex abuse material

LAURA GUIDO

(Idaho Capital Sun)

The Constitution Party candidate in Idaho's 1st Congressional District election has pleaded guilty to possessing "child sexually exploitative material." He is still eligible for office under the U.S. Constitution.

Brendan Gomez, 27, was arrested in early July by Ada County Sheriff's Office detectives at a home in Boise, Channel 2 Idaho News reported. He was booked into the Ada County jail and held on \$500,000 bail, according to the jail roster.

He was charged with 10 counts of willfully possessing child sex abuse material, ac-

cording to state court records.

He entered a plea deal Monday, pleading guilty to two counts of possession of sexually exploitative materials. His sentencing hearing is scheduled for November 16, according to court records. The state recommended Gomez serve a fixed term of three years in prison, with 12 years indeterminate.

A similar case in the region involved **a former Bureau of Indian Affairs officer who pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a teenager and lying to the FBI**, in a case resolved about six months ago.

Gomez's attorney could not be immediately reached for this story.

Gomez also ran for Con-

gress in 2024, earning about 1.5% of the vote in the general election. In 2022, he ran unsuccessfully against incumbent state Senator Lori Den Hartog to represent District 22 in the Idaho Legislature.

Gomez's name will still appear on the ballot for the November 3 general election. He is running against incumbent Republican U.S. House Representative Russ Fulcher, Democrat Kaylee Peterson, and independent Sarah Zabel.

The deadline to withdraw from the ballot was September 4.

Under the Idaho Constitution, convicted felons are ineligible for state or local office until they fulfill their sentence, but there are no

such restrictions for federal elected officials.

Members of the U.S. House must be at least 25 years old, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and an inhabitant of the state they represent. The U.S. Constitution does not otherwise limit eligibility.

Under U.S. House rules, members who are convicted of a crime with a sentence of two or more years of imprisonment "should refrain" from participating in votes and "should resign" from any committee.

Idaho Capital Sun reporter Kyle Pfannenstiel contributed to this reporting.

Oregon policy driving low rates of childhood vaccinations

MEG OLSON

(Oregon Capital Chronicle)

In honor of Immunization Awareness Month, the federal government used a new presidential executive order to continue its assault on childhood immunizations. It was surprising and dangerous to hear the same claims used to scare and confuse parents for years now being used to justify changes to national vaccine policy.

And it could not come at a worse time.

New data released earlier this year shows Oregon's schoolchildren have some of the lowest

rates of immunization in the nation, and that state policies are driving that reality.

Immunizations are our central defense against the spread of communicable diseases, including the current outbreaks of measles and whooping cough. In a time when misinformation is being spread at the highest level in



an effort to confuse parents and complicate vaccine access, we need state policies that stand firm on the safety and importance of widespread vaccination.

Yet Oregon allows unvaccinated children to attend schools and daycare if parents choose to simply exempt a child from vaccination requirements. Legislators should change that policy to protect our kids.

The Oregon Health Authority recently reported that the

share of parents claiming a non-medical exemption from school vaccination requirements hit a record high in the 2025-2026 school year, over one in 10 students.

Use of these exemptions, distinct from those obtained for medical necessity, has grown dramatically over the last decade and is a primary contributor to why we have some of the lowest youth immunization rates in the country. Currently, our percentage of kindergarteners up to date

on vaccinations is 85.6%.

Despite the dangers that come with measles and polio returning to our communities, Oregon's school vaccine laws continue to be some of the most permissive in the nation; our non-medical exemption rate is the third highest in the nation, behind only Idaho and Utah.

A big reason why we have such high rates of non-medical exemption is that in Oregon, it is easier and faster to get a non-medical exemption to school vaccine requirements than it is to get your child

vaccinated. It takes watching one 30-minute presentation online, and after you complete it once, your child is exempt for their whole school career.

As a community, we need to have a 95% vaccination rate for vaccines to do their jobs effectively and provide collective immunity. As our non-medical exemptions increase, our vaccination rates drop well below 95%, which exponentially increases our risk of dangerous diseases spreading throughout our communities and hitting our most vulnerable populations, like newborn babies, elderly grandparents, and cancer patients.

If you look at pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination rates for Oregon's kindergartners between 2011 and 2025 next to the rates of reported pertussis cases during that time period, you can see that once we dropped below collective immunity thresholds in 2022, our pertussis cases skyrocketed.

The data is clear: personal or philosophical exemptions that allow unvaccinated children to attend school have led to rising measles, whooping cough, or pertussis cases. Infants and young children, the most vulnerable to these diseases, have been especially hard hit by these outbreaks.

The Center for Outbreak Response Innovation published a map that confirms that places like Oregon with lower vaccination rates have higher cases of measles. The

CDC's own study from last year found that 82% of measles cases occurred in communities with lower vaccination rates.

In states like Florida and South Carolina, where school vaccine laws are weak and immunization rates are low, measles cases are exploding, with 670 cases in South Carolina alone.

As U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. continues to threaten vaccine access and spread dangerous misinformation, vaccination rates are dropping across the country — except in states that don't allow non-medical exemptions.

As a mom, I see measles cases as not only a threat to my newborn niece or my at-risk mother, but as a disruption of our community. When measles outbreaks happen, schools and childcare centers close. Many of us do not have backup childcare or the ability to take indefinite time off work.

Parents lose their jobs, and our state has to fund a public health response we can't afford. The CDC study of the 2019 measles outbreak in Clark County, Washington, estimated \$2.3 million in public health response costs, \$76,000 in direct medical costs, and \$1 million in productivity losses.

We have a clear, scientifically proven solution to this problem: close the loophole and remove non-medical exemptions in Oregon.

A recent poll found that 73% of Oregon voters support school vaccination requirements and 60% oppose non-medical exemptions.

When Maine implemented legislation to remove non-medical exemptions, the state reached collective immunity levels and avoided a widespread outbreak this year when an individual brought measles into the state after traveling. Strong policies send a strong message to parents, which we need desperately as the federal government works to dismantle trust in vaccines.

North Dakota veterans targeted as scams get smarter

JUDITH RUIZ-BRANCH

(Prairie News Service)

Fraud experts are hosting events in North Dakota this month to help veterans and military families spot scams.

Roughly 80% of veterans and military personnel are targeted by scammers and about 40% lose money, according to AARP.

Juanita Jimenez Soto, national veterans and military families manager for AARP North Dakota, said fraudsters are after their hard-earned benefits. She noted the latest scam includes postcards or mailers appearing to be from Veterans Affairs or other government agencies.

"Scammers are exploiting trust and the complexity of military and VA benefits and repeated contact through channels that kind of look familiar and official to our veterans and military families," Jimenez Soto explained.

AARP is hosting "Lunch and Learn" events on September

29 and 30 in **Grand Forks** and **Minot**. Jimenez Soto pointed out attendance is free but registration is required.

Jimenez Soto explained scammers may target veterans because of benefits and income earned through military service. She identified frequent relocations as a vulnerability for active-duty personnel and families. As technology advances, Jimenez Soto warned newer scams use voices generated by artificial intelligence, deepfake videos and phishing texts to bait people. She added even though tactics might change, the motive remains the same.

"They're aimed at the same goal, which is changing direct deposit, altering benefits and harvesting Social Security and bank details so that they can have easy access to our veterans' and military families' money," Jimenez Soto emphasized.

The AARP **Fraud Watch Network** has a scam-tracking map, providing fraud

alerts to help people stay informed about emerging threats. Jimenez Soto encouraged people to pause and verify before responding to unexpected messages. She stressed military personnel should be especially leery of correspondence promising additional benefits or savings programs while seeking personal information.

"If there's a sense of urgency, that might be a scam, so you need to verify that. Never send money or banking information," Jimenez Soto outlined. "If you feel like someone's trying to get money from your account, call your bank. Have your accounts frozen temporarily while you sort everything out."

Veterans and military families who suspect they have been targeted can call the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline for guidance and support. People can also access additional free resources through the **AARP Vets Fraud Center**.

Administrative judge sides with teacher punished for Charlie Kirk Facebook post

JAY WAAGMEESTER

(Florida Phoenix)

The state should drop charges, including an allegation of gross immorality, against a Duval County, Florida, teacher who posted about Charlie Kirk after he was killed, an administrative law judge has recommended.

The decision came last week, addressing charges against Hope McMath, who was an advanced placement art history teacher at Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, a magnet high school in Jacksonville, when Kirk was killed in Utah in September 2025.

Her Facebook post positioned the shooting as “Karma,” referring to Kirk’s comment, “I think it’s worth to have a cost of, unfortunately, some gun deaths every single year so that we can have the Second Amendment to protect our other God-given rights. That is a prudent deal. It is rational. Nobody talks like this. They live in a complete alternate universe.”

A few weeks ago, a Utah judge ordered the man charged with the killing to stand trial, as covered in **the criminal case against Charlie Kirk’s accused shooter**.

Additionally, according to the state, she “posted or reposted an artist’s rendition of an individual holding the screaming severed head of what clearly is intended to represent the President of the United States, Donald Trump.”

Even so, Administrative Law Judge Garnett Chisenhall wrote that the state provided “no competent, substantial evidence that the social media postings at issue impaired Ms. McMath’s service in the community.”

“The social media postings did not reflect any use, attempted use, or threatened use of violence by Ms. McMath,” the judge wrote, adding that the state “has not argued that Ms. McMath’s post was a legitimate threat to sever President Trump’s head.”

Chisenhall recommended the Education Practices Commission dismiss the charges against McMath, which in-



clude gross immorality, personal conduct that seriously reduces effectiveness of an employee, violating the principles of professional conduct required by the Florida Board of Education, reasonably protecting students from conditions harmful to learning, and taking responsible precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of the institution.

Also in September 2025, the school board adopted a policy establishing that an employee’s “inappropriate or unbecoming Material on publicly accessible websites” “has the potential to disrupt the educational process, damage the reputations of the District, it’s [sic] teachers and staff, damages the District’s reputation and stature, and subject the District, its teachers and employees to ridicule.”

McMath’s post did none of that, Chisenhall concluded.

“In short, there is no evidence indicating that anyone could reasonably conclude that Ms. McMath’s sentiments were shared by her employers,” he wrote.

‘I WAS NOT CELEBRATING’

The district issued McMath “a verbal warning” with “coaching/counseling,” and “a temporary reassignment to the School District’s Art Resource Center with no teaching duties.”

“I was not celebrating, and

the language in that post and the intention behind that post was not celebratory,” McMath said during the proceedings, per the court record. She didn’t post the comments while on the clock at school.

A district investigation did not determine McMath had disrupted district operations. Furthermore, the evidence shows no teacher, adminis-

trator, or student complained, and no student viewed the social media posts.

According to the principal at the school, “The content of the posts never came up at the school. Students weren’t talking about it. Teachers weren’t talking about it. Parents weren’t talking about it. They were aware because it was in the news, but nobody ever brought it up as far as a concern of her being in front of their children.”

Shortly after Kirk’s killing, then-Education Commissioner Anastasios Kamoutsas wrote a letter to school superintendents statewide, reminding them that he has the power to discipline educators and sanction their certificates for probable cause, including “personal conduct that seriously reduces that person’s effectiveness as an employee of the district school board.”

McMath, according to the court record, has not been in the classroom since the incident.

“Content that trivializes a homicide and that generally depicts the decapitation of a national figure is a condition

harmful to learning and to the mental health of the adolescent students who encounter it,” the state argued.

Chisenhall said he has seen no “persuasive explanation for why” McMath was reassigned away from students.

FEDERAL LAWSUIT

McMath is plaintiff in a federal lawsuit against the Duval County school district, Florida Department of Education, and **Moms for Liberty and its Duval chapter**. “While not state entities, they are in some way managed, run or have significant influence on the individual Defendants herein,” that complaint says of the organization.

In that suit, she alleges retaliation, content and viewpoint discrimination, malicious prosecution, defamation, and tortious interference.

In May, the state settled with a state-employed biologist fired after posting about Charlie Kirk after his killing. The state owes half-a-million dollars to the now-former state employee.

Affordability crisis changing voters’ views on ‘women’s issues’

KATHRYN CARLEY

(NewsService Stories)

Matters related to childcare, elder care and equal pay have long been considered “women’s issues” but a **new poll** found a majority of voters now see them as solutions to today’s affordability crisis.

The Equal Rights Access Fund surveyed 1,000 likely midterm voters nationwide and nearly 60% said today’s economy is not working for them. More than 80% reported making difficult financial choices like reducing purchases, dipping into savings or carrying a credit card balance to cover rising costs.

Noreen Farrell, president and CEO of the fund, said voters increasingly see women’s economic security as key to their own family’s financial well-being.

“It’s not just about the cost of living, it’s about what puts

money in your pocket and that’s resonating across genders and parties in this poll,” Farrell reported.

The poll showed more than 70% of voters want state and federal leaders to not just make America more affordable but to make progress within the next two years on specific policies like ensuring up to 12 weeks of **paid family and medical leave**.

Farrell stressed lawmakers have available solutions to people’s economic pain and it is clear voters will hold them accountable. The poll showed voters — by a 3-to-1 margin — are more likely to back a candidate who works to lower healthcare prices or increase wages.

Valerie Holman, a single mother and caregiver living in Farmington Hills, Michigan, cares for her own mother, a retired teacher, who deals with Parkinson’s disease. She said it is unfair that in order

for her mother to receive home healthcare through Medicaid, she cannot have more than \$2,000 in the bank and must first sell her home and other assets.

“Why should we take all of that from her and all of her hard work just because she got old? It isn’t right. I would love to see that on someone’s platform, because living it day-to-day, it is completely overwhelming,” Holman emphasized.

Holman added she pays double the cost of groceries compared to a year ago and drives further from home each week to fuel up on Costco’s cheaper gas.

She explained caregiving duties place the heaviest responsibility on women and add the most financial pressure, and it is a conversation she would like more political candidates to have.

Trump administration's Washington voter roll lawsuit dismissed

JAKE GOLDSTEIN-STREET

(Washington State Standard)

A federal judge in Seattle on Tuesday tossed the Trump administration's lawsuit against Washington seeking the state's voter rolls, in line with many rulings across the country.

This marks the 25th case that the U.S. Department of Justice has lost in its push to access sensitive voter information. The Justice Department has sued many states for voter rolls, and has yet to have a judge rule in its favor. An appeals court has also ruled against it in a lawsuit against Michigan. The federal government has appealed many of its other losses, as well.

Both sides had been waiting for weeks for a decision from U.S. District Court Judge Kimberly Evanson after an early August hearing in federal court in Seattle.

In her order Tuesday, Evanson, who was appointed by former President Joe Biden, said the Trump administration's argument is "not persuasive as a matter of statutory interpretation, nor is it consistent with the purpose" of federal law.

Washington Attorney General Nick Brown called the decision "the likeliest of vic-



tories for democracy."

"Trump's DOJ is now 0 for 25 nationwide in efforts to plunder the private information of states' voters," he continued in a statement. "We should not have to spend election season defending voters from their president, but victory after victory reminds us there is hope for the rule of law."

Secretary of State Steve Hobbs said the decision "reaffirms that my office has every right to protect voter's private data."

"These baseless demands for state voter rolls are part of a broader pattern of fed-

eral overreach in states' elections," he added. "The DOJ does not have the authority or any reason to interfere with state election administration."

Since that hearing, the Justice Department has threatened Hobbs over election records, directing him early this month to preserve documents from the 2024 election. Failing to do so "may constitute spoliation of evidence, which may subject you to civil and criminal sanctions," according to the letter to Hobbs.

The conflict here began last September when Hobbs

refused to provide the Trump administration with the personal information contained in the state's voter rolls.

Hobbs reported he'd be willing to provide voter names, addresses, genders, years of birth, voting records, registration dates and registration numbers. But he wouldn't give dates of birth, driver license numbers and the last four digits of social security numbers, since that information is protected under Washington law.

In the hearing last month, Tera Heintz, of the Washington state attorney general's office, called the demand "unprecedented and dangerous."

"There is simply no authority for DOJ's claim that they should be able to superintend on a line-by-line, individual-by-individual basis who is allowed to register and vote in state and federal elections," she said. "That is not DOJ's authority. It usurps the constitutional authority."

Hobbs, a Democrat, feared the information would be shared with immigration authorities to fuel President Donald Trump's crackdown, or that it could be used as pretext to remove voters from the rolls. Trump has repeatedly claimed massive voter fraud without evidence. Fed-

eral officials insisted the request was to ensure the state was properly updating its voter list under federal law.

The federal government filed the litigation in December, but the case was delayed for months as the Justice Department's attorneys failed to serve Washington state officials with the suit.

The Trump administration alleges the records are needed to ensure states are complying with National Voter Registration Act requirements to remove voters who are ineligible from their voter rolls and the Help America Vote Act prohibition on processing voter registration applications without verifying the applicants' identity. Also the Civil Rights Act of 1960, which federal attorneys claim forces election officials to provide this voter information to the U.S. attorney general if it is demanded.

The state counters that this argument is wrong, that these federal laws don't authorize the voter roll demand. The Civil Rights Act provision was meant to help prevent racial discrimination in elections in the segregated South.

In the hearing, Evanson noted many other courts have decided similar cases across the country.

"Is there any meaningful basis on which to distinguish this case?" Evanson asked Justice Department attorney Raymond Yang.

He responded that the cases are mostly identical, but other judges have "misconstrued" federal law.

The Department of Justice didn't immediately respond to a request for comment on the ruling.

At least 16 states led by Republicans have provided or said they would provide their full voter registration lists, according to the Brennan Center for Justice.

This is just one of the state's flashpoints with the Trump administration over elections. Washington has also been at odds with the president over his unsuccessful efforts to restrict mail-in voting.

Oil leases on Wyoming big game migration corridors headed to court

ERIC GALATAS

(Wyoming News Service)

Conservation groups are taking the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to court for leasing 179 square miles in Wyoming for oil and gas development.

They claim the agency broke the law when it approved leases in June in areas identified as key migration routes for struggling mule deer and pronghorn populations.

Julia Stuble, Wyoming state director for The Wilderness Society, said the lawsuit is an effort to defend Wyoming's migrating big game and the hunters who rely on them.

"Mule deer, elk, antelope,

they require undisturbed stopover sites in these corridors for foraging during the long-distance journeys that they take between winter and summer range," Stuble explained. "The agency violated its own regulations that require giving preference to leasing away from these crucial habitats."

Pronghorn herd numbers in the leased parcels are between 37% and 66% below targets, according to the lawsuit. Mule deer numbers are 25% to 62% below targets.

The Petroleum Association of Wyoming disputed the lawsuit's claims and said further environmental reviews would take place before drilling actually began. The BLM has not

yet responded to a request for comment but the Trump administration has long argued opening public lands for fossil fuel extraction is necessary to achieve energy dominance.

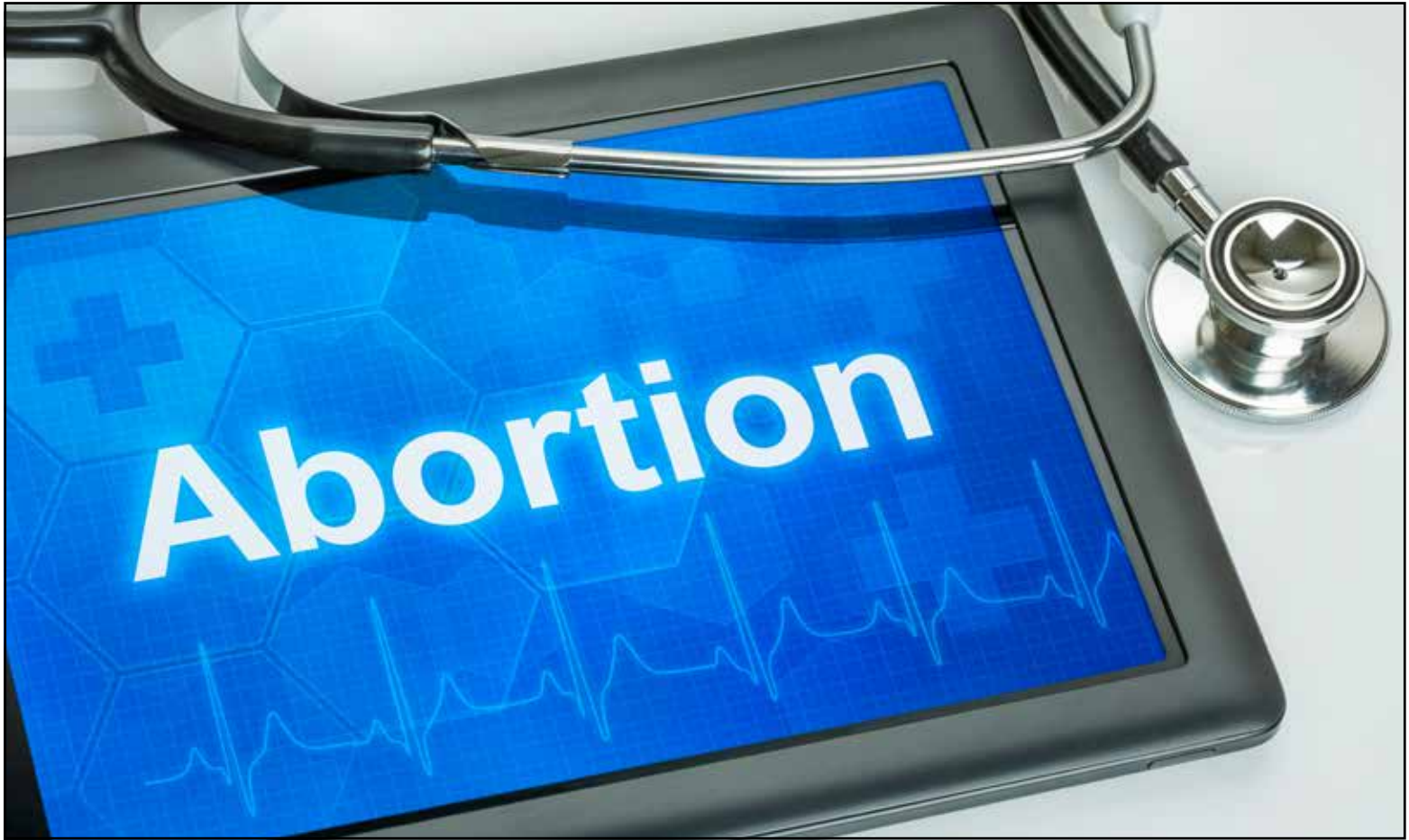
Stuble noted more than 81% of BLM-managed lands across the West are already open for oil and gas leasing. She argued the agency has prioritized drilling over all other uses, which goes against the BLM's legal obligation to balance multiple uses of public lands. She believes balance is what most people in Wyoming want to see.

"They want to be able to get out on these lands, enjoy undeveloped landscapes,

see healthy populations of big game, be able to hunt the mule deer in the places that they've always hunted them," Stuble stressed. "And be able to pass these lands down to future generations instead of over to industry."

The leased lands include migration routes used by Baggs mule deer and Sublette pronghorn, and other big game migrations near Rawlins.

Stuble warned if the leases remain on the books now, they will constitute an irreversible commitment of land and resources, making it impossible to ensure the routes will be accessible to big game herds down the road.



Federal appeals court weighs lawsuit seeking to expand Idaho's abortion ban exemptions

LAURA GUIDO

(Idaho Capital Sun)

A panel of federal appeals judges will soon decide whether to continue to allow full enforcement of Idaho's abortion bans, or to allow a lower court's previous ruling that provided more exemptions to the law.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Judges Kim McLane Wardlaw, Marsha Berzon and Consuelo Callahan heard oral arguments in a virtual hearing Tuesday afternoon.

The state of Idaho, represented by an attorney from the conservative Christian legal advocacy group Alliance Defending Freedom, argued that the laws should be fully enforced as written.

Idaho's laws prohibit most abortions, except in cases to prevent the death of the mother or in cases of rape and incest in the first trimester with a police report. Doctors face felony penalties and civil lawsuits of a minimum of

\$20,000 if they perform the procedure outside those exemptions.

ADF attorney Mathew Hoffmann argued that a lower court's previous ruling that would've expanded exemptions to apply to serious health and mental health risks to the mother, was not grounded in historical precedent. He said there is no right to "therapeutic" abortions.

Attorneys representing Boise maternal-fetal medicine specialist Dr. Stacy Seyb argued that an earlier court decision from U.S. District of Idaho Judge B. Lynn Winmill should go back into effect. The ruling would've prevented the Ada County prosecutor and Idaho attorney general from enforcing Idaho's abortion ban in cases where the mother's health faced serious risk or her life was at risk due to self harm.

Winmill later narrowed this block on enforcement to only protect abortions performed by Seyb.

After Attorney General Raúl

Labrador appealed, a Ninth Circuit panel placed a hold on Winmill's order, and the law went back into effect.

Hoffmann said Winmill's decision expanding the exemptions created "an abortion-on-demand regime."

"They leave it up to the subjective judgment of doctors to determine a risk sufficient to justify abortion," he said.

Stephanie Toti, executive director of the Lawyering Project, argued on behalf of Seyb that the expanded exemptions to the law were necessary.

"The injunction entered by the district court in this case is narrow. It would enable only a small number of patients each year to obtain an abortion," Toti said. "But for those patients, access to that care is vitally important, as the district court found."

JUDGES' QUESTION DOBBS INTERPRETATION, ABORTION RIGHTS INITIATIVE, LEGAL

GUIDANCE

Judges questioned the attorneys on whether the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 Dobbs decision, which overturned Roe v. Wade and sent regulation of abortion to the states, would allow a court to expand a state's exemptions.

Hoffmann argued that it would not, because the Constitution does not explicitly provide a right to abortions.

Toti argued that the 2022 decision did not mention rights to life and health, which she said are violated by the Idaho ban's limited exemptions.

Callahan questioned Toti over whether the request to allow abortions for serious risk of self harm was "weaker" than the other arguments.

"We have a right to life, but you don't have a right to kill yourself, right?" Callahan asked.

Toti responded that patients seeking an abortion to prevent death by self-harm, "don't want to kill themselves."

"They want to remain alive. That's why they want the abortion care to avoid serious relapse of psychiatric illness," Toti said.

Wardlaw asked if Labrador planned to issue guidelines for doctors for following the law, which he has not done. Hoffmann said there's "sufficient guidance out there for doctors."

Callahan asked whether the potential passage of Proposition 1 — a ballot initiative voters will decide on in the November 3 general election that would repeal Idaho's abortion bans as well as enumerate other rights related to reproductive health-care — would "moot the challenge."

Hoffmann said it wouldn't.

"It wouldn't go into effect until January, and so there would be ongoing injury if the injunctions continue against Idaho's current law," he said. "We don't know if the initiative is going to pass, so it certainly doesn't moot this motion."

Federal judge says AI deepfake election law violates First Amendment

JORDAN HANSEN

(Daily Montanan)

A federal judge ruled in favor of a political action committee accused of breaking a new election law regulating the use of AI deepfakes this week. U.S. District Judge Susan Watters said that the new Montana law violates the First Amendment and infringes on the most protected speech of all – political speech.

However, the ruling was narrow and only impacted the plaintiffs in the case.

The case centers on mailers that were sent out in Montana before the June primary that used AI to alter images of candidates, and several lawmakers targeted by the political action committee filed complaints with the Commissioner of Political Practices.

Artificial-intelligence assisted programs can create realistic-looking images, video and audio of a person, something lawmakers across the country have looked to address.

Colorado faced its own version of this debate in 2024, when a **Colorado law requir-**



ing disclosure of AI-generated political ads drew free-speech concerns from critics and legal observers.

Representative Eric Albus, a Hi-Line Republican; former legislator Jennifer Carlson, running for a state House seat in the Bozeman area; and Representative Llew Jones, running for state senate, filed the complaints earlier this

year.

The committee, which lists Dan Bartel, a former Republican legislator, as its treasurer, ran mailers depicting some of those candidates with Pride flags and buttons.

Watters ruled in favor of Bartel and the PAC, saying that because the law treats “identically deceptive media differently based solely

on whether its message is weaponized or deployed to elevate a candidate” that the plaintiffs are likely to succeed in establishing that it constitutes “viewpoint-based” discrimination.

She went on to write that it was “presumptively unconstitutional.”

Yet, the ruling only applies to Dan Bartel and his PAC, and

does not impact the law for the rest of the state. The decision, and its limited reach, Watters said is part of recent Supreme Court case law, calling on federal court judges to limit or curtail the use of broad preliminary injunctions to strike down laws.

INJUNCTION, OR NOT?

A recent Supreme Court case, *Trump v. CASA*, which dealt with a presidential executive order regarding immigration, drastically changed how injunctions are handled in the country's highest court.

In that case, the conservative majority said that a district court should have decided the case in favor of only the organizations that were party to the case, not to the general public. The court held that the Judiciary Act of 1789 doesn't give federal courts the right to impose universal injunctions.

Watters mentioned both *Trump v. CASA* and the Supreme Court's ruling on injunctions in her decision.

The state, which defended the bipartisan AI law passed by the Legislature, argued that a preliminary injunction “be no more burdensome than necessary,” and asked Watters to limit the scope of the ruling, pointing to *Trump v. CASA*. The Plaintiffs in the case had asked for an injunction which would have made the new law moot.

Watters wrote the court lacked authority under the Judiciary Act of 1789 to issue a “universal injunction” and, “to comply with the mandate that equitable relief be no more burdensome than necessary, relief must be limited to the named plaintiffs.”

Plaintiffs in the case were represented by the Hamilton Lincoln Law Institute and Montana attorney Matthew Monforton.

“This is an important victory for political speech and the First Amendment,” said Adam Schulman, a senior attorney at the law institute. “The government cannot censor speech just because that speech uses AI technology.”

North Dakota Tribal colleges fill jobs gaps as funding falters

JUDITH RUIZ-BRANCH

(Prairie News Service)

A **new report** from the American Indian College Fund and the Brookings Institution finds tribal colleges and universities are delivering strong returns for their communities but inconsistent federal and philanthropic funding makes it harder for the schools to plan for long-term success.

The report said federal funding for tribal campuses fell more than 7% over the past decade, while philanthropic giving remains limited and unpredictable.

Cheryl Crazy Bull, president and CEO of the American Indian College Fund, said in general, the findings showed significant evidence of chronic underfunding by the federal government, despite trust and treaty obligations. She noted there are lost opportunities for Native communities

to work past historical inequities.

“You can't really have this self-determination in the Native community without being a culturally grounded, well-educated person,” Crazy Bull explained.

The report showed investment into Indian Country can benefit both Native and non-Native Americans, with every dollar toward tribal colleges and universities returning \$1.60 in tax revenue and public sector savings.

The findings come as confidence in higher education is declining nationally. A 2026 Gallup-Lumina survey found just **38% of Americans** have a great deal of confidence in higher education, down from 42% last year.

Leander McDonald, president of United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, said postsecondary opportunities at campuses near American

Indian reservations remain essential pathways to workforce stability.

“There's only so many jobs within a small tribal community,” McDonald pointed out. “With our training programs, we've saturated those markets for the most part, so students are going to have to go off the reservation in order to obtain those jobs. So the workforce needs of North Dakota are being addressed from the work that we're doing.”

McDonald added the school contributes to the local economy through its roughly 200 employees and is part of a broader network of tribal colleges working directly with employers and tribal leaders to identify skills communities need.

Rob Maxim, tribal economics fellow at The Brookings Institution and co-author of the report, said the federal

government does not provide enough detailed information about how much money is actually reaching tribal communities, making it harder for Native-serving institutions to determine where the biggest unmet needs remain.

“It is really hard for tribal leaders themselves, for Native-serving institutions to make decisions based on the lack of data that's out there,” Maxim explained.

Both Maxim and McDonald said improving data access is paramount to better tracking community contributions and federal investment over time, and to develop a more robust estimate of existing gaps in Indian Country.

They stressed greater use of mandatory federal funding is needed to help campus leaders adequately support their communities and plan with more certainty.

Trump likes data centers. Congress seems stuck. The midterms could deliver a verdict.

DAVID LIGHTMAN

(Kansas Reflector)

The rare 2026 issue that draws huge support from Republicans and Democrats in Congress is the same one that's mobilized many Americans: restrictions on giant data centers.

The House has overwhelmingly passed legislation forcing state regulators to consider requirements that data centers absorb the cost of the electricity they use.

But there's more to be done, say data center critics, and they're finding there is no easy or even obvious answer about what to do next.

Leave it to state and local governments to decide whether and how the centers should function? Should their size be restricted? Should they be banned altogether?

The future of data centers has become a flashpoint in this year's congressional races. It's woven into the debate about affordability, artificial intelligence and corporate influence on government.

"People see big energy cost increases and say data centers must be the reason," said Daniel Birdsong, senior lecturer in political science at the University of Dayton.

Before leaving Washington for an extended recess not due to end until after the election, the House voted Wednesday 417-3 on a bill that requires states to consider having data centers using large amounts of electricity pay the full additional cost of that generation, as well as transmission and distribution upgrades that are needed.

OBSTACLES TO ACTION

The vote was only a prologue for action. There's no clear next chapter, as skepticism is coming from critics at the White House and among progressives.

The biggest obstacle appears to be President Donald Trump.

"The people that say AI is going to destroy the World, and that Data Centers are bad for your neighborhood, are the same people that said, just a short time ago, that the

World would be extinguished by 'Climate Change,'" he said on his Truth Social site Monday.

"That HOAX never worked out for them, and now they're on to the next one. These people are Revolutionaries, but Revolutionaries for a Bad and Evil Cause. Soon you'll find out they're working for people that do not have the best interests of the United States in mind!"

Senate leaders have not said how or if they'll take up the House bill, or any other data center legislation.

Senator Richard Durbin, D-Ill., the Senate's second-ranking Democrat, was not optimistic.

"There aren't many alternatives to a president who thinks this is a wonderful asset and communities who think just the opposite," he said.

The lawmakers know this much: Their constituents don't like data centers.

"I've never seen people come together across the political spectrum like I have the last few months on concerns about big tech, concerns around AI, concerns around data center development," said Representative Chris Pappas, D-N.H.

A national University of Massachusetts Amherst Poll released this week showed just 11% said they backed the construction of the data centers in their local area. Sixty-five percent were opposed, and about half said they were strongly opposed.

"Opposition to AI data centers has emerged as one of these rare areas of consensus," said poll director Tatishe Nteta.

THE POLITICAL DIVIDE

Solutions tend to fall along three very general lines: A complete ban or moratorium; giving state and local governments more tools to regulate the centers; and withdrawing federal support.

Putting pressure on utility companies appears to have the most legislative traction. Representative Rob Latta, R-Ohio, chairman of the House Energy Subcommittee,

found the House-passed legislation would protect consumers from runaway center-inspired utility rates.

The bill, he said, "protects American ratepayers from being forced to cover the cost of energy infrastructure upgrades needed to support data centers."

Representative Kathy Castor, D-Fla., one of the bill's lead sponsors, saw the measure as help for constituents facing affordability issues. "Data centers cannot come at a cost to neighbors who are already facing high grocery, gas, utility, health care and housing costs," she said.

At the Edison Electric Institute, which represents the nation's investor-owned electric companies, Drew Maloney, president and CEO, said in a statement that he appreciated Congress' work and that EEI's members "will continue working in lockstep to ensure large customers cover the costs of the energy infrastructure they use, and communities have a strong voice from the beginning of the planning process."

But some environmental activists saw big flaws in the bill.

"With only a weak directive to states to voluntarily consider adopting cost protections against the energy costs of data centers for ratepayers, state regulators could ultimately choose to ignore this bill," said Sara Chieffo, senior vice president for government affairs at the League of Conservation Voters.

A report last year from the Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found that in 2023, data centers used roughly 4.4% of total electricity in this country. It forecast that the figure could double or triple by 2028 to meet the needs of more data, notably from artificial intelligence.

Consumers' costs are generally figured by how much it costs to generate and deliver electricity. State and local regulators usually set those rates.

LOOKING AHEAD

While the House bill had strong Democratic support, many in the party wanted to go further.

"It's a step forward," House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-New York, told reporters when asked about the House bill. "But more needs to be done."

That could include some sort of ban, or at least a moratorium, on building more centers, an approach favored by many Democratic progressives.

"Communities should have the right to say 'no' to a data center being shoved down their throats," Representative Ro Khanna, D-Calif., told colleagues in a floor speech.

In the Senate, some Democrats sent a strong signal that they wanted to do more than the House bill provided.

The bill "does nothing to meaningfully address the rising costs of AI data center development. Instead, it relies on a voluntary framework that does not require AI data centers to pay the full cost of the energy they consume or the strain they place on the grid," said Senator Martin Heinrich of New Mexico, top Democrat on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

"We need legislation that makes AI data centers pay their fair share and actually protects families," he said.

Among this week's efforts was new legislation from a group of House Democrats to end certain currently available federal tax incentives available to data centers.

"Tax cuts need to go to families, not data centers. We absolutely should not cut healthcare and food assistance for children and seniors to pay for tax giveaways to corporations," said Representative Kristen McDonald Rivet, D-Mich., one of the bill's lead sponsors, at a Capitol Hill press conference.

"Why incentivize this right now?" asked Representative Don Davis, D-N.C., another top sponsor.

POLITICAL FALLOUT

Find a close House or Senate race and chances are good there's a brawl between candidates over who can best deal with the data center issue.

In Ohio, Senator Jon Husted, a Republican, is in a close battle with former Senator Sherrod Brown, a Democrat.

Husted is the lead sponsor of the Senate ratepayer protection bill. Husted tried to get the Senate to consider the measure Thursday but it was blocked by Heinrich.

Asked why he doesn't support a ban, Husted said, "Whether you want a data center should be a local decision. What we should do is protect the ratepayers from bearing the burden of the cost of building the electricity those data centers use."

Husted is in a difficult position, Birdsong said, because his call for limits on data centers "puts him at odds with Trump."

Close House races have similar fights. In Michigan, Representative Tom Barrett, a Republican, is campaigning as the voice of the consumer.

One way to deal with data centers, he said, is by "stopping federal overreach and preventing the secrecy pledges that have plagued Michigan and undermined the power of local residents."

The House, though, left Washington and won't be back voting until a lame-duck session starting November 8, sparking outrage from Democrats.

"That means ZERO votes on lowering costs, ending corruption, addressing AI, or responding to the Iran war before Election Day," tweeted Representative Johnny Olszewski Jr., D-Md.

The Senate's scheduled to be around through September, but there's no sign it will take a close look at the data center issue. The big hope is that it will continue to be discussed back home and lawmakers will return ready to act or at least debate.

"We have to understand, 'What's the real implication here?'" Davis said.

Flock surveillance cameras raise constitutional questions, bipartisan US senators say

ARIANA FIGUEROA

(Colorado Newsline)

A vast and growing network of artificial intelligence-driven Flock cameras could violate constitutional privacy rights, U.S. senators on a Judiciary Committee subcommittee said during a Wednesday hearing.

GOP Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri, the chair of the Crime and Counterterrorism Subcommittee, said the point of the hearing was to find out "what is going on with the expanding surveillance network that appears to be going coast to coast in this country."

Hawley said he invited the CEO of Flock Safety to testify, but he did not appear.

Senators heard from a woman wrongly arrested over a fatal car crash after a Flock camera captured a photo of her vehicle three miles from the crash site.

They speculated that more people could be falsely accused based on inaccurate information gathered by the devices. They also said Fourth Amendment violations were likely because the law enforcement agencies that use the service are able to use the data to track movements without a warrant.

"If you haven't heard of Flock, all I have to say is



Flock's probably heard of you," Hawley said. "I'm sure we're all in the database."

Flock did not respond to States Newsroom's request for comment.

WHAT IS FLOCK?

Flock cameras track and record every motor vehicle that comes into view, including its license plate number, make, model, bumper stickers and color. They can also capture images of people.

The information is then uploaded to a database that any law enforcement agency that contracts with the company can access without a warrant.

There are more than 120,000 Flock cameras installed across the country from highways to outside grocery stores, according to the American Civil Liberties Union. The only U.S. state that

does not have a Flock camera is Hawaii.

Media outlets such as The Washington Post have documented abuses of the service, including law enforcement officers using the devices to stalk ex-girlfriends.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has also tapped into Flock data through local law enforcement officials to read license plates for immigration-related searches, even though Flock denies having a contract with ICE.

The backlash to the possibility of mass surveillance has been strong, with NPR reporting vandalization of Flock cameras.

ARIZONA SHERIFF BRUSHED OFF, HE SAYS

One of the witnesses at Wednesday's hearing, Ross

Teeple, the sheriff of Pinal County, Arizona, said he ultimately decided to end a contract with Flock because he had raised privacy concerns the company did not adequately address.

Some of his constituents said they were worried that people could be identified in images taken by Flock cameras. He said when he asked the company about how people could be clearly seen in the images, he felt the company brushed aside his concerns and told him the image resolution was not good enough to recognize a person.

"I'm looking at camera pictures where I could recognize the person on the camera, but that was their claim ... and there was just too much disinformation from them and dishonesty," he said. "I was trying to get answers from them, and they would not give me answers... and there were too many concerns. So we just decided not to continue our contract."

FALSE ACCUSATION

Hawley said his main worries were personal privacy and that people have the right to be treated as innocent until proven guilty.

He pointed to one of the witnesses, Lindsey Isaacs of Florida, who was wrongly accused of being involved in a car accident that killed three people because a Flock automated license plate recognition camera saw her vehicle about three miles west of the crash scene.

The car involved in the crash was a Dodge Durango, the same make and model as Isaacs'. But hers was black, while the car in the crash was maroon, as described by a witness.

Law enforcement still arrested her at her home.

She spent three days in solitary confinement and then moved to another maximum-security unit for 10 days before she was released and state prosecutors dropped charges, she told the panel.

"In my case, a Flock camera captured my vehicle a few miles from the scene of a terrible crash," she said. "That

piece of information became part of an investigation that ultimately led to my arrest on three counts of vehicular homicide and 13 days in jail for a crash I had nothing to do with."

Hawley said what he finds "so troubling" is that many drivers or people walking by are being surveilled and they've done nothing wrong.

"It sounds as if, based on the reports we've heard, it's treating every citizen in America, I mean, by now, surely almost all of us have been scanned and logged as if we are criminals, yet without any due process, without any reasonable suspicion, without any articulable suspicion whatsoever," he said. "This just seems very, very strange, to put it mildly, and something I think this committee really needs to hear about."

ABORTION TRACKING

New Jersey Democratic Senator Cory Booker asked if Flock cameras could be used to track women in states with strict abortion laws.

ACLU's Chad Marlow, senior policy counsel, said that it would be easy to track people searching for those services.

Hawley agreed with Booker and also questioned how easy it would be to create a database of certain people, such as those who attend gun shows.

"When you have this amount of data available, the temptations to use it are going to be absolutely incredible, if not irresistible," he said.

Marlow said the scenarios that Booker and Hawley cited are closer than they think.

"If you build it, they will come," he said. "I so much appreciate that you're bringing (up) abortion care seekers and gun owners because they are part of the same community when it comes to the threat of mass surveillance. This is something we need to be worried about because when you create the temptation, when you create the option for population control, at some point someone's going to use it."

Will Texans select another woman governor?

FREDA ROSS

(Texas News Service)

It's been more than 100 years since Texas saw a woman first hold the governor's seat, and another first is possible this fall.

In 1924, Miriam "Ma" Ferguson replaced her husband after he was impeached. **Ann Richards won the seat in 1990** to become the state's second woman governor.

Wendy Davis ran and lost in 2013, and when Texans go to the polls in November, they'll have the option to cast their vote for another woman.

State Representative Gina Hinojosa, the first Hispanic to run for governor, is challenging incumbent Greg Abbott.

Southern Methodist University political science professor Matthew Wilson said this election could change Texas history.

"The governorship is a prize that has heretofore been reserved for Anglo candidates. And so a breakthrough at that level could serve as a real watershed for the Hispanic community," Wilson said.

There are 61 women serving in the Texas Legislature.

Meanwhile, a record high 14 women are serving as governors across the country. Twenty-seven women, including six incumbents, are on the ballot this year.

During Ann Richards' tenure, more women and minorities were appointed to

administrative positions than in previous years.

Richards broke the gender barrier, and Wilson said if Hinojosa is successful, it will be a sign of the changing demographics of the state.

"That would bring representation at the highest level of government to a very large constituency in the Texas population that feels like it has been underrepresented politically in the past," Wilson said.

Hinojosa is serving her first term as a Texas lawmaker.

She and Abbott are close in the polls and remain within the margin of error. Democrats in Texas have not won a statewide race since 1994.



EarthTalk

EarthTalk – What is a Miyawaki forest?

RODDY SCHEER & DOUG MOSS

Dear EarthTalk:
What is a Miyawaki forest?

Paul Perl, Cheyenne, WY

A Miyawaki forest is a tiny, densely planted forest designed to establish itself much faster than a conventionally planted one. The technique was pioneered in the 1970s by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, who sought to recreate a site's "potential natural vegetation"—the plant community that would naturally occupy an area with minimal human disturbance.

Instead of planting a few evenly spaced trees, practi-

tioners prepare the soil and pack many locally native trees and shrubs close together, representing different layers of a mature forest. Competition for sunlight encourages rapid growth, while mulch, watering and weeding help seedlings through their first few years. The method is chiefly attractive in cities because forests can be squeezed into small, degraded parcels.

The concept has already taken root across the U.S. Cambridge, Massachusetts, planted a 4,000-square-foot Miyawaki forest at Danehy Park in 2021, containing some 1,400 trees representing 32 native species. West-

ern Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, is using the method to transform land dominated by non-native plants into forest characteristic of the region's Coastal Western Hemlock zone.

But can you plant one anywhere in America? Not exactly. The underlying idea is to reconstruct native forest vegetation, so species selection must reflect local soils, rainfall and ecology. Miyawaki planting makes the most ecological sense on degraded land in regions that naturally support forests. Converting native prairie, shrubland or desert into dense woodland could instead destroy valuable existing habitat.

There's another caveat: Some spectacular claims

surrounding Miyawaki forests have outrun the science. A 2026 *Journal of Applied Ecology* review examined 51 publications and found only 21 containing quantitative assessments; just seven included a control and three included replications. Overall, the researchers found weak or no evidence supporting many claims about accelerated growth, biodiversity, carbon sequestration and cost efficiency. "We are not against the Miyawaki method," study co-author and ecologist Ignacio Fernández told environmental news outlet Mongabay. "But we are worried that a method that was designed for specific conditions is being applied everywhere."

Miyawaki forests are better viewed not as a universal reforestation hack but as

one tool in the restoration toolbox. In the right setting, with carefully selected native species, they can create valuable pockets of greenery and habitat. But the fundamental rule remains: Restore the ecosystem that actually belongs there.

CONTACTS

- *Journal of Applied Ecology*, "Tiny forests, huge claims", besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.70242.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit **EarthTalk**. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earth-talk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

Kansas State agricultural economist predicts diesel prices remain high through 2027

TIM CARPENTER

(Kansas Reflector)

Diesel costs are likely to remain elevated through next year to the detriment of farmers struggling to turn a profit and consumers grappling with food inflation, a Kansas State University agricultural economist says.

Gregg Ibendahl, farm management specialist with KSU's Extension Service, said the diesel market was influenced by soaring crude prices, limited refining capacity and supply system interruptions. Consequences of international conflict may sustain those conditions and hold prices at \$6 to \$7 per gallon into 2027 or beyond, he said.

Shipping in the Gulf region and the Strait of Hormuz has been undermined since Feb-

ruary by the United States' war with Iran. In addition, diesel exports by Russia weakened since its full-scale military assault of Ukraine began in 2022. The only means of addressing pump prices would be to resolve global tensions and resume the regular international flow of fuel, Ibendahl said.

"Even in a best-case scenario, where the war in Ukraine winds down quickly and shipments through the Gulf normalize, it could easily take six months for the market to adjust," Ibendahl said. "To see prices return to what we had earlier this year could take up to two years, even if everything goes right."

Ibendahl said diesel costs in Kansas climbed approximately \$2.25 per gallon during 2026. In Lawrence on

Tuesday, the pump price of diesel stood at \$6.29 per gallon. The national average for diesel climbed to \$6.51 a gallon, according to AAA.

About one-third of escalation in domestic price was associated with crude oil costs, Ibendahl said.

"The price of oil has gone from the low to mid-\$70s to more than \$100 a barrel, and that probably explains about 70 cents of the increase per gallon," he said. "The rest is really because there just isn't enough diesel fuel in the world right now."

The bulk of the ballooning cost should be attributed to supply disruptions at the refinery level and transit issues, he said.

"Russia is still producing oil but can't get it refined easily because of damage to

its refineries," Ibendahl said. "They've essentially shut off diesel exports to Europe, and there's not much moving through the Gulf, either. That's created a very real shortage."

U.S. refineries have operated at about 98% capacity, Ibendahl said, but overseas demand has drawn U.S. supplies offshore. An estimated 30% of diesel produced in the United States was destined for export and the tighter domestic supply was reflected in pricing, he said.

Ibendahl said many Midwest farmers returned to fields in the fall on tractors fueled by diesel. A north-central Kansas farmer might use four gallons of diesel to grow one acre of corn, he said. Assuming diesel remained \$2.25 above normal, which previously was below \$4 per gal-

lon, that extra cost per gallon would add \$10 for each acre seeded. So, Ibendahl said, a corn farmer working 2,000 acres would see an instant input cost increase of \$20,000.

"For many operations, that can be the difference between having a profitable year and not making anything at all," Ibendahl said.

Higher diesel prices hit the bottom line of transportation companies, and those costs eventually must be passed to consumers, he said.

"We move practically everything in this country by truck, and almost all of those trucks run on diesel," he said. "They can't eat those costs forever. Over time, consumers are going to feel higher diesel prices, even if they're not buying diesel themselves."

Home Country

SLIM RANGLES



He said his name was Norman Vaughan and he had some questions, and we talked for more than an hour. Oh, I explained to this obvious city guy all about how the dogs were hooked up, and how far we could go each day, depending on weather. He was a good student, too. When he rose to go, he said, "Slim, I think we'll be seeing a lot of each other and become good friends."

Okay ...

I'd never thought of dog mushing as something an elderly gentleman in a suit and tie from Boston would be interested in, but I've been fooled before. As a newspaperman, I've interviewed all kinds of fascinating folks over the years.

But there was something about Norman that I genuinely admired, even if I couldn't have said exactly what it was.

Pam and I discussed how this race had captured the attention of the world after just its inaugural run. For the record, it has begun (for 50 years now) on the first Saturday in March in Anchorage, then crosses Alaska to end up on Front Street in Nome in front of the Board of Trade Saloon, where Wyatt Earp was once the bartender, back when Nome was a boom town. This gives a guy a long, cold camping trip before he gets to Front Street. Many aren't able to complete the race for various reasons, and I was one of those. Four days in, I crushed an ankle. I crawled in the sled and the team took me 20 miles to the next checkpoint, where I was ignominiously airlifted to a hospital in Anchorage by Army helicopter.

So I guess it's only natural that a Boston gentleman would be interested in seeing how something like this could happen. And that's what Pam and I were discussing for the next half hour after Norman left.

Pam mentioned how nice it was of me to fill our visitor in on the wonderful world of dog driving. Hey, our cabin was 12 miles from the nearest road, and we had to drive the dogs to get to the car, right? Experienced dog mushers, both of us.

So about a half hour after Norman left, we were discussing him and sipping coffee when the news guy on the radio said, "The special guest at the musher's banquet tonight will be Colonel Norman Vaughan, who drove a dog team to the South Pole in support of the Byrd Expedition in 1930."

I didn't have to say anything because Pam was laughing so hard she couldn't have heard me anyway. Much to my regret, the floor in the Roosevelt Hotel didn't open up and swallow embarrassed dog mushers. I've had to live with the memory all this time.

Norman Vaughan drove his dog team to the South Pole as a possible rescuer in case Richard Byrd's plane was

forced down. During World War II, Norman was in charge of dog team rescue in Greenland, where they could rescue any air crews forced down on the ice cap. More than 100 fliers were rescued by his dog teams.

Byrd named a peak in Antarctica after Norman and Norman went down there and climbed it with some friends just before his 89th birthday. He and I were friends for the rest of his life, and when Norman Vaughan finally was able to finish the Iditarod Race in Nome, one of my dogs was his leader.

But after giving this polar explorer the benefit of my vast experience in that hotel room for more than an hour, about all I could do is grin and shrug and say, "Well, at least now he knows how to do it the right way."

Brought to you by "Strange Tales of Alaska" now available online.