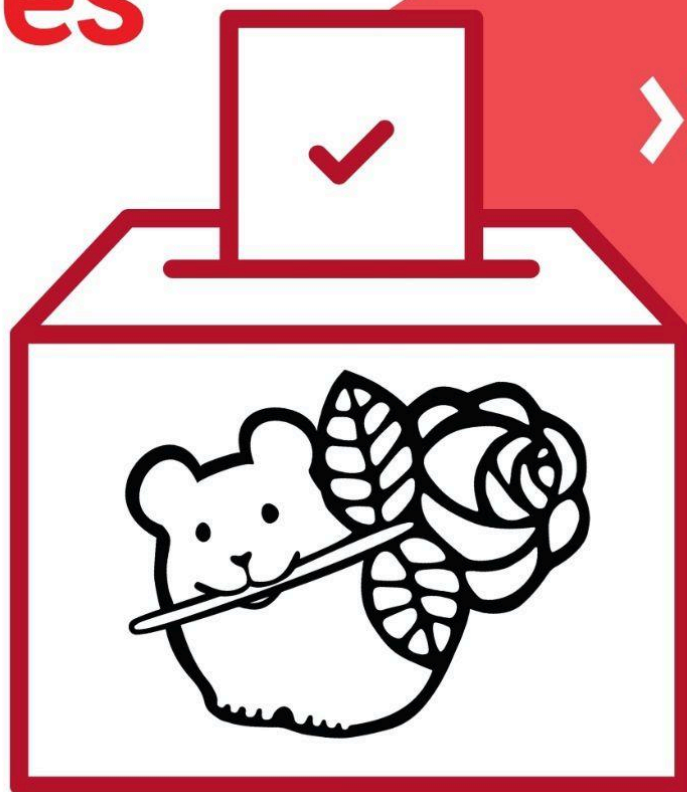


Denver DSA's Democratic Socialist Guide to the 2026 Ballot Measures



Another world is possible.

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Part 1: STATEWIDE BALLOT MEASURES

The Billionaire-Backed Takeover of Colorado's Ballot

Colorado's ballot initiative process gives ordinary people the power to make laws directly when elected officials fail to act. The problem is when people with billions of dollars and political infrastructure exploit that system at an industrial scale. They don't need to build a mass movement of Coloradans willing to knock doors and collect signatures; they can hire professional political firms with paid signature gatherers to qualify measure after measure, and spend millions selling those measures to voters.

In 2026, Colorado voters will face 14 statewide ballot measures. The sheer number places a heavy burden on voters, who are asked to research complicated changes to state law and the Constitution across a wide range of issues.

Advance Colorado, a powerful conservative dark-money organization backed by billionaires like the Coors family, the Walton family, and Colorado's richest man, Phil Anschutz, sponsors over half of those citizen initiatives. Anschutz has built and financed a broader political influence machine that combines dark money, media ownership, "think tanks," and ballot initiative campaigns to advance a far-right agenda with limited public transparency. (See: [WhoIsAdvanceColorado.org](https://www.whoisanadvancecolorado.org).)

Protect Kids Colorado is using the same strategy to advance the priorities of the Christian Nationalist right, including two measures targeting transgender youth (Props 134 & 135) and a third (Prop 133) designed to drive their base to the polls.

Both organizations come from the same political universe, with leaders trained through the Leadership Program of the Rockies, a conservative network that trains emerging leaders "with the skills to impact public policy." Steve Moore of the Heritage Foundation calls LPR a political "boot camp" needed "not just in Colorado, but in every state in the union." Taken together, the initiatives backed by Advance Colorado and Protect Kids Colorado seek to entrench a far-right agenda in Colorado law that would be impossible to pass in the legislature and difficult for future legislatures and voters to undo.

Denver DSA believes Colorado's ballot initiative process should empower ordinary people, not billionaire-funded political organizations, to propose and enact public policy.

Denver DSA stands in solidarity with transgender people, immigrants, workers, and all communities targeted by the initiatives backed by Advance Colorado and Protect Kids Colorado, and rejects the use of concentrated wealth to fundamentally reshape Colorado's laws and Constitution in service of a right-wing ideological agenda

The Propositions

Denver DSA's Priority Measures: Props 134 & 135

Opposing these two ballot measures that target transgender youth is Denver DSA's priority this election.



 **Prop 134: Male and Female Participation in School Sports**

 **Prop 135: Prohibit Certain Surgeries on Minors**

Props 134 & 135, backed by the anti-LGBTQ+ Christian nationalist organization Protect Kids Colorado, would use the power of the state to single out transgender children and restrict their participation in everyday life.

Trans people's humanity, dignity, and equal place in our communities are not up for debate. Denver DSA rejects the idea that their freedom and ability to live ordinary lives should be treated as a political problem for everyone else to solve.

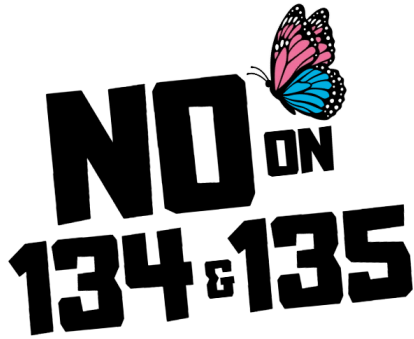
Trans people are an incredibly small minority with little political power, and trans children have no political power at all. Yet some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in the country are spending hundreds of millions to turn their lives into a major political issue. As socialists, we ask the questions at the heart of any class and power analysis: Who is weaponizing fear and bigotry against people with the least political power? And to what end?

Billionaires, fascist politicians, oil companies, and the Christian Nationalist right all love funding one thing: anti-trans campaigns like Props 134 & 135. In the last presidential election, more money was spent on anti-trans attack ads than ads on immigration or the economy. In September 2026, Elon Musk's America PAC launched a multi-million-dollar anti-trans advertising campaign. All in an effort to drive right-wing voters to the polls and direct the fear and anger of working-class people away from the billionaires and corporations that actually hold power over their lives.

The fact that Props 134 & 135 are part of a manufactured wedge issue does not make the harm they cause transgender people any less real. Anti-trans hatred is one of the most well-funded political causes in the country, and it is killing kids.

A large peer-reviewed study found that suicide attempts among trans and nonbinary youth ages 13 to 17 increased by as much as 72% in the second year after states passed anti-trans laws. Trans kids already face extraordinarily high levels of bullying,

discrimination, and mental health distress. More than half of trans kids already live in states where laws restrict their rights, further stigmatizing and isolating them. Props 134 & 135 would add Colorado to that list.



Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Propositions 134 & 135, and has prioritized defeating these measures. We call on all Denver DSA members and endorsed electeds to stand in staunch and active solidarity with trans youths and their families by joining us. **Follow the [@VoteNo134135](#) campaign on Instagram and turn out for local canvassing and phone banking efforts.**



Prop NN: State Public K-12 Education Funding

Without raising taxes, Proposition NN would raise the TABOR revenue cap by the amount currently being spent on K-12 education (\$4.6 billion). This would allow the state to retain any additional revenue that is collected above the current cap but below the new Prop. NN cap and use the increased revenue for K-12 education and programs that support education (such as childcare and preschool funding). This proposal would increase education funding by an estimated \$520 million next year, and significantly more in future years if the Colorado economy continues to expand. This additional funding is crucial for Colorado's underfunded education system, which is estimated to be facing a shortfall of \$3.5 billion, or about \$4,000 per pupil. However, the lifted cap will eventually be met, and Colorado will be back in a structural deficit. **Denver DSA recommends a yes vote on Proposition NN to fund Colorado's education system, while recognizing this is a short-term band-aid on the long-term problem that is TABOR and Colorado's regressive tax system.**



Prop 132: Fentanyl Penalty Crimes

Prop 132 is backed by the conservative dark money organization [Advance Colorado](#). It takes one of Colorado's most serious public health crises (overdose deaths) and offers the same failed carceral "solution": more felonies, harsher prison sentences, and precious state dollars funneled away from what actually works. We actually know what works to prevent overdose: accessible, low-barrier addiction services including counseling, medications, long-term treatment, recovery housing, evidence-based drug education, and harm reduction interventions like making naloxone and drug checking tools widely available. Yet Prop 132 offers none of this. **If passed, it would be one of the most extreme drug laws in the nation, rolling back 30 years of work to reverse mass incarceration and unwind the harmful effects of the War on Drugs.** It would make possession of any amount of fentanyl a felony, including first-time cases. It would treat an 18-year-old sharing a single pill at a party like a high-level trafficker selling hundreds of thousands of pills: with a mandatory 8-to-32-year prison sentence, even for a first offense, when no money changed hands, or when the person didn't know fentanyl was present. Judges would have no discretion to offer a lesser sentence..

Despite paying lip service to treatment (mandating it for first-time possession cases of very small amounts), it provides \$0 in new funding for treatment. [An expert analysis](#) projects that Prop 132 would **significantly increase overdose deaths in Colorado**, resulting in 1,718 additional overdose deaths over five years (a 41.3% increase).

The private prison company CoreCivic directly funds Advance Colorado and stands to profit greatly if Prop 132 passes. The measure would send 900 additional people to prison each year and cost taxpayers at least \$433 million in prison expansion over its first five years – all while Colorado's prisons are already full, the state is facing deep budget cuts, and treatment is badly underfunded (thanks, TABOR!). **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Proposition 132, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Prop 133: Penalties for Human Trafficking of a Minor

Proposition 133 is a "solution" in search of a problem. It would increase the penalty for child sex trafficking from a class 2 to a class 1 felony and require a sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole. Sex trafficking is already a serious felony in Colorado, carrying lengthy prison sentences. Legislative Council Staff projects that this measure will not result in any additional child sex trafficking convictions, but it could harm trafficking victims themselves, who are often coerced by their traffickers into recruiting or managing other victims. If charged, they would face life in prison without parole under the measure – judges would have no discretion to look at the individual circumstances that may have compelled another victim to commit this crime. But as policy goes, Prop 133 may not be the point. It comes from Protect Kids Colorado, the same anti-LGBTQ+ Christian nationalist organization behind Prop 134 and 135, the two ballot measures targeting transgender youth. It fits a political strategy its allies have openly discussed: use emotionally charged issues involving children to drive conservative voters to the polls. Child sex trafficking is a compelling rallying cry for a political movement obsessed with trafficking conspiracies (not the Epstein files, though).

The headlines write themselves: "Denver DSA supports child sex trafficking!" but no one should support anything bigots Erin Lee or "Prophet" Lance Wallnau get behind. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Proposition 133.**



Prop 136: Income Tax Rate Cap

Backed by the deep-pocketed conservative political organization [Advance Colorado](#), Prop 136 would cap Colorado's individual and corporate income tax rates at 4.4%—the same rate they are today. This comes as Colorado faces [a third year of major budget shortfalls](#) and further cuts to essential services statewide. The measure is designed in part to put competing Amendment 87 (the Graduated Income Tax measure) into legal jeopardy if both

measures pass. But the real boon for Advance Colorado's billionaire backers is the corporate tax cap. California's corporate tax rate is 8.84%, and New York's is 7.25%. Locking Colorado's rate at 4.4% shields corporations from future tax increases and means less state revenue for education, transportation, health care, and other public services. Colorado already has a regressive tax system, with the wealthiest Coloradans paying the smallest share of their income in state and local taxes. As the economy worsens and more Coloradans recognize the choice between more austerity and asking corporations and the wealthy to pay their fair share, Prop 136 acts as a firewall protecting corporations and the wealthiest Coloradans from paying more. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Prop 136, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Prop 137: Designate Sporting Good Sales Tax Revenue for Conservation

Prop 137 would exempt existing sales tax on sporting goods from the TABOR revenue cap and direct it towards wilderness conservation, wildfire mitigation, watershed restoration, and outdoor recreation. This is estimated to be about \$175 million. In fiscal years that the State is above the TABOR cap, these funds would not impact existing programs. In years when the State is below the TABOR cap, Prop 137 would reduce the amount of General Fund dollars available for existing programs by \$175 million.

If Prop NN (the State Public K-12 Education Funding measure) passes, Colorado will be below the cap for the foreseeable future, meaning that if both measures pass, then Prop 137 would reduce available General Fund dollars. **Denver DSA recommends a no vote on Prop 137, as it would likely tie the legislature's hands on the budget by directing \$175 million to a narrow set of purposes.**



 Ballot Issue 7A: Front Range Passenger Rail District

Referred to the voters by the Front Range Passenger Rail District Board, this measure will appear on ballots in the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, El Paso, Huerfano, Jefferson, Larimer, Las Animas, Pueblo, and Weld.

Ballot Issue 7A proposes a 0.333% sales tax increase for residents of the Front Range Passenger Rail District to fund the construction and ongoing operations of the 'Colorado Connector' intercity train service. This service will start with 3 trains per day between Denver and Fort Collins in 2029, and eventually expand to 10 trains per day north and 8 trains per day south to Pueblo. The Colorado Connector will be a cheaper, safer, and much more environmentally friendly way to travel up and down the Front Range than driving, while still remaining time-competitive.

This measure will also fund the 'local return' program, where municipalities with stations will receive a fixed amount of money from the Colorado Connector each year to build out additional improvements in and around their rail station. Additional low-carbon, low-cost travel options are necessary to combat the cost-of-living and climate crises. Although the measure is being funded by a regressive sales tax, the benefits easily outweigh the negatives. **Denver DSA recommends a YES vote to approve this sales tax to fund the Colorado Connector and bring intercity rail to the Front Range.**

The Amendments

Proposed changes to Colorado's constitution require 55% of the vote to pass.



Amendment 81: Law Enforcement Reporting Requirements to Federal Authorities

Amendment 81 would dramatically expand ICE's power in Colorado and override current state laws that limit ICE involvement. Brought to the ballot by the billionaire-funded conservative dark-money group [Advance Colorado](#), it would require state and local law enforcement to report people to ICE based on criminal charges alone, before they have been convicted of anything. It risks putting Coloradans in the hands of ICE simply because they can't prove their citizenship or lawful status within 72 hours. It also opens the door to racial profiling, with judgments about immigration status potentially based on subjective factors like appearance or accent.

This amendment threatens to separate more Colorado families and could make immigrant communities less likely to report crimes or cooperate with law enforcement out of fear of detention or deportation. Worse, Amendment 81 would bake ICE cooperation into the Colorado Constitution for decades, making it harder for Colorado to set its own limits on immigration enforcement in the future. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 81, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 82: Right to Natural Gas

Amendment 82 looks like a benign "consumer choice" protection, but it's a gift to the fossil fuel industry. Brought to the ballot by the conservative dark-money group [Advance Colorado](#), this measure would make it a constitutional right for consumers to purchase natural gas for cooking or heating, and for distributors and utilities to sell it for use in

homes and businesses. Natural gas emits greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. Because Colorado is already dealing with increasingly severe impacts of climate change, this measure would restrict state and local efforts to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and transition to cleaner energy. It would also make it easier for fossil fuel companies to sue to block clean-energy policies or protections for public health and safety from corporate polluters. Colorado's wealthiest man and one of Advance Colorado's major funders, billionaire Phil Anschutz, is heavily invested in natural gas. No other industry gets a constitutional guarantee that Coloradans be able to buy and sell its product. The fossil fuel industry shouldn't either. Our state constitution should protect fundamental rights, not guarantee profits for fossil fuel companies and their investors. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 82, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 83: Constitutional Right to Hunt and Fish

Amendment 83 was brought to the ballot by the billionaire-backed right-wing political organization [Advance Colorado](#). It would force the state to prioritize hunting and fishing over other approaches to wildlife management, limiting the state's ability to respond to changing science, protect habitat, or consider other species. It would shift authority away from the scientists and wildlife experts at Colorado Parks and Wildlife by limiting their ability to implement science-based conservation. Similar measures in other states have made new wildlife protections harder to adopt: in Florida, a right-to-hunt law was used to stop new protections for endangered sea turtles, while Wisconsin has faced lengthy and expensive legal battles over conflicts between hunting rights and wildlife management.

The amendment's undefined "traditional methods" language could open the door to allowing baiting and steel-jawed leghold traps, practices that Colorado voters have previously banned. Ultimately, with climate change making the future of Colorado's wildlife and habitats increasingly unpredictable, the state needs more flexibility to respond to changing conditions, not less. The Constitution should protect fundamental rights, not lock one approach to wildlife management into place for generations. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 83, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 84: Mail Ballot Voter Identification

Colorado is known for its gold-standard, secure elections. Yet this proposed Constitutional amendment from the billionaire-funded conservative dark-money group [Advance Colorado](#) would require voters to provide government-issued identification information with their mail ballots. If that information is missing or cannot be matched with the voter database, their ballot will not be counted unless they take additional steps within a very limited time.

Voter ID laws have nothing to do with election security and everything to do with voter suppression. A 2024 study of states with strict voter ID laws found that nearly 50% of transgender people did not have an ID that matched their name and/or gender identity. 15%-25% of older voters, Black & Latino voters, and lower-income voters don't possess the accepted forms of identification required by this measure. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 84, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 85: Plain Language Ballot Titles

On the surface, Amendment 85 seems to be a helpful way to ensure voters understand the policies they're voting on. But this measure would actually do the opposite by eliminating important information from ballot titles. The Bell Policy Center calls the initiative a "wolf in sheep's clothing" designed to enshrine in our state Constitution a system that leaves voters with less information about how proposed tax changes will affect them. It would overturn existing laws that require ballot titles to explain their real-world impacts, such as Proposition GG, passed by Colorado voters in 2022, which requires ballot questions changing state income taxes to include a table showing how the change would affect taxpayers at different income levels. Another current law (HB21-1321) requires measures

that increase or reduce taxes to explain how those changes would affect state and local budgets.

This measure is one of the many (eight!) proposals brought to Colorado's 2026 ballot by the dark-money group [Advance Colorado](#), which hopes to continue to leverage Colorado's citizen-initiated ballot measure process to push a right-wing policy agenda unencumbered by those pesky facts. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 85, and all other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 86: Congressional Redistricting

Backed by the right-wing dark money group [Advance Colorado](#), Amendment 86 would make it harder for Colorado to redraw its congressional districts between censuses. Congressional maps are normally redrawn every ten years after the U.S. Census. Under this measure, any attempt to redraw them sooner would have to go through Colorado's independent redistricting commission and be approved by the Colorado Supreme Court. The measure would also prohibit maps intentionally drawn to favor one political party.

Amendment 86 comes amid a wave of mid-decade redistricting efforts across the country, led by Republicans anxious to keep their 3-seat majority in the House. California is the only state to successfully redraw its map to benefit Democrats in 2026. The national redistricting battles have advantaged Republicans in about 10 additional congressional districts. In Colorado, a Democratic group proposed a measure to draw a temporary new map that could have given Democrats a 7–1 advantage in the state's congressional delegation. Republicans filed competing proposals. The Colorado Supreme Court blocked all of them in June for violating the state Constitution's single-subject rule.

Amendment 86 would add another constitutional barrier to Colorado changing its maps in response to national gerrymandering efforts. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Amendment 86, and the seven other statewide ballot measures backed by Advance Colorado.**



Amendment 87: Graduated Income Tax

Due to Federal Republican tax cuts for the rich and defunding of medicare reimbursements to the states, we in Colorado are facing a major budget shortfall. To address this, the Graduated Income Tax (GIT) measure seeks to raise revenue and avoid damaging cuts to state programs by raising state income taxes on the same segments of society receiving tax cuts at the federal level. This initiative simultaneously cuts income taxes for the bulk of Colorado residents who make under a million dollars to help working families make ends meet. *To see how your taxes would be impacted, [see the Colorado Sun's GIT Calculator](#).*

Denver DSA and indeed practically all left-aligned groups view progressive taxes (higher rates on higher incomes) as inherently more fair than flat rates due to the fact that the first dollars earned go to satisfy the most basic needs—food, shelter, clothing, etc. while each additional dollar is increasingly more likely to go to luxury consumption, and thus the taxation of those dollars at a higher rate to help society is just as important, as the health and welfare of all takes priority over the lifestyle of the most affluent. This is why Federal income tax has been progressive from its inception, as are most state income taxes; Colorado's flat tax is out of line with the nation.

All new revenue raised by this measure would be earmarked for the state's health, childcare, and education spending, which ensures the money is spent on high-priority needs, while giving the state legislature flexibility within these categories that has been denied under the disastrous TABOR system. **Denver DSA recommends a YES vote on Amendment 87.**



Statewide Ballot Measures at-a-Glance



Denver DSA Priority campaign!



NO PROPS 134 & 135

Targeting trans youth



YES PROP NN

Public K-12 education funding



NO PROP 132

Private prison cash grab; expands mass incarceration



NO PROP 133

Red meat for the MAGA base



NO PROP 136

Firewall for the wealthy



NO PROP 137

Ties legislators hands



YES Issue 7A

Passenger rail



NO Amendment 81

Cops cooperating with ICE



NO Amendment 82

Fossil fuel industry gift



NO Amendment 83

Undermines science-based wildlife management



NO Amendment 84

Voter suppression



NO Amendment 85

Hides crucial info from voters



NO Amendment 86

Restricts redistricting



YES Amendment 87

Graduated income tax

Part 2: LOCAL BALLOT MEASURES

DENVER



Initiated Ordinance 311: Prohibit Force-Feeding Birds and Sale of Foie Gras and Other Fattened Bird Liver Products Initiative

Foie gras is a food product created by the practice of force-feeding birds such as ducks or geese by the insertion of a foot-long tube down the bird's esophagus two to three times a day. This method of overfeeding is intended to create a pathologically inflamed liver that is approximately ten times the size of a normal liver. The birds experience significant pain and respiratory distress frequently and are also subject to high rates of bacterial and fungal infection due to punctures and abrasions caused by the process. Additionally, the birds are confined to very small quarters to make "feeding" easier.

Foie gras production also carries significant risks. There are environmental impacts due to the high nitrogen and phosphorus contents of "discharge runoff". This wastewater can help fuel algal blooms in local water sources that can degrade the environment by depleting the oxygen in the water, leading to fish "die-offs" and negative impacts to the local ecology.

Taken as a whole, foie gras is not suited to Denver morally or ecologically, and **Denver DSA encourages all voters to vote YES to ban its production and sale.**



 Referred Question 2H: Amend City Charter to Enshrine Wage/Workers' Rights Enforcement in the Auditor's Office

Since 1950, the Denver Auditor's Office has enforced wage laws. In the last 5 years, the Auditor has collected more than \$9 million dollars and vindicated the rights of more than 15,000 workers across thousands of investigations. Denver has earned a reputation for strong laws and effective enforcement, which creates fair workplaces, a level playing field, and ensures Denver workers get paid minimum wage and overtime, aren't misclassified as independent contractors, and can take time off when they are sick.

This Charter amendment clarifies that the Auditor's Office may continue to defend workers from wage theft and retaliation and assert the values of a city that opposes workers' rights violations. It does not expand the Auditor's Office's authority, but expressly aligns the language of the City Charter with existing law and practice, creates stability, and ensures this work will continue for years to come. **Denver DSA recommends a YES vote on Referred Question 2H.**



 Referred Question 2K: Xcel Energy Franchise Renewal

The City of Denver has a franchise agreement and accompanying partnership agreement with the Xcel Corporation to maintain service through an energy monopoly. This agreement allows Xcel to continue as a monopoly in exchange for some services and allows Xcel the right-of-way access to service utility infrastructure. This agreement will last 20 years.

Given the state of a volatile and collapsing climate, rate hikes and unsatisfactory service for Denver ratepayers, and Xcel's unjust existence as a monopoly, the City of Denver should force Xcel back to the bargaining table to secure an agreement with a shorter time frame and with more benefits to Denverites, all while the city explores owning and running its own public utility. **Denver DSA recommends a NO vote on Referred Question 2K.**



Denver Public Schools Ballot Issue 4A: Mill Levy Override

Denver Public Schools is asking voters to approve a \$44 million annual Mill Levy Override this November, a direct investment in public school workers and students that passed unanimously by the school board and is backed by the Denver Classroom Teachers Union (DCTA). The biggest chunk (\$25.8 million) will go towards a \$1,750 raise for every full-time DPS employee, with additional incentives for educators in high-poverty schools and hard-to-fill roles like bilingual teachers and school psychologists. This includes Education Support Professionals, who are typically the lowest-paid workers in the district. The rest will fund student mental health services, special education, and career/technical education programs.

For Denver's median-priced home (~\$625 thousand), this costs about \$72/year in property taxes, which is an excessively reasonable ask. Although we are recommending YES in solidarity with our DCTA members and public school students, we want to note that we are extremely opposed to Colorado law that requires a share (~\$9.3 million) be distributed to charter schools. Nonetheless, this has a real and meaningful impact on public school workers and students who need it now. **Denver DSA recommends voting YES on DPS Ballot Issue 4A in solidarity with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association.**



Ballot Issue 3A: Dedicated Sales Tax for Community Facilities

This ballot issue would implement a small 0.129% sales tax to collect up to \$12.64 million to construct new libraries, parks, and recreation centers, and to renovate/improve existing facilities. We believe this is an investment in our community and would benefit residents of Aurora and nearby neighborhoods, as these amenities are for everyone. A great library system supports the education of the populace, and it is an important part of the socialist project. **We recommend a YES vote on Ballot Issue 3A.**



Ballot Issue 3B: Dedicated Sales Tax for Public Safety Infrastructure and Facilities

In short, this ballot issue would implement a small increase in the sales tax by 0.064% to raise \$6.27 million to upgrade police facilities and fire stations. We are opposed to giving the murderous and racist Aurora Police Department (that is still under a consent decree!) a single dollar more, especially fresh on the heels of the Aurora City Council giving officers roughly a 41% raise. **We recommend a NO vote on Ballot Issue 3B.**



 Ballot Issue 3C: Dedicated Sales Tax for Transportation Infrastructure and Facilities

This ballot issue would increase the sales tax by 0.132% to raise \$12.94 million to provide for transportation and infrastructure needs, namely traffic intersection and pedestrian safety improvements, major bridge replacements and roadway improvements and expansion. While this measure is missing an earmark for public transportation and expansion, which is an important part of the socialist project, we believe the pedestrian safety improvements are sorely needed, and the bridge replacements are a safety issue, making this a ballot issue worth voting for. **We recommend a YES vote on Ballot Issue 3C.**



 Ballot Question 3D: Direction to move the City of Aurora's regular municipal elections to even-numbered years

This ballot question is the most consequential of the Aurora ballot measures. If passed, it would move the City of Aurora's municipal elections to even-numbered years, which historically have far higher voter turnout. Higher participation in the democratic process is a core tenet of democratic socialism, and higher voter turnout historically favors progressive and leftist candidates. This could change the complexion of the city council and impact who is elected mayor in the future. This change could potentially also save the City of Aurora money by reducing the number of separate elections. **We recommend a YES vote for Ballot Question 3D.**

LAKEWOOD



Ballot Question 2G: Increasing Lakewood sales tax by 0.5%

This sales tax increase is intended to fund homelessness programs, bike lanes, sidewalks, and more. Compared to peer cities, Lakewood residents currently pay one of the lowest city and overall effective sales tax rates, and after a 0.5% increase, Lakewood will remain below average. Municipalities in Colorado are incredibly restricted in how they can generate revenue because of TABOR. Progressive or wealth-based taxes are virtually impossible, and a sales tax is often the only option cities have to fund important work. That is deeply unfortunate because a flat sales tax is regressive: lower-income people bear a larger share of the tax than higher-income people. In Lakewood, food is exempt from sales tax, which improves the situation somewhat. Importantly, some of the funds will go to programs supporting the most marginalized and struggling people in the city, which makes the overall effect partly progressive in nature.

The wording of the measure includes “public safety” and “crime prevention” (presumably to garner broader appeal) but it should be noted that policing and enforcement are intentionally and explicitly not included, to allow for modern response alternatives. Overall, despite the shortcomings of a sales tax, a YES vote is recommended in order to support desperately needed services and programs in Lakewood.



Ballot Issue 5: Jefferson County Mill Levy Override and Special Purpose Mill

Jeffco Public Schools is seeking a \$73 million mill levy override and a \$60 million special purpose mill in Jefferson and Broomfield counties. The \$73 million mill levy would fund teacher and education support professional (ESP) salaries, academic programming, and other educational needs, while the \$60 million special purpose mill would fund building maintenance, capital improvements, and technology. If passed by voters, the estimated monthly impact for a homeowner in Jefferson and Broomfield counties is \$3.50 for every \$100,000 of actual home value (for example, if a home is worth \$650,000, the median home value in Jefferson County, this means a monthly increase of approximately \$22.75 or about \$273 annually). The Jefferson County Education Association (JCEA, the teachers' union) and the Jeffco Education Support Professionals Association (JESPA, the education support professionals' union) are preparing measures to bargain over these funds to ensure they go towards fully funding student-facing staff and programs. **Denver DSA recommends voting YES in solidarity with JCEA and JESPA.** We want to note that we are extremely opposed to Colorado law that requires a share be distributed to charter schools.



Local Ballot Measures at-a-Glance

DENVER

☒ **YES Ordinance 311**
Foie Gras ban

☒ **YES Question 2H**
Keeps Auditor as workers' defender

☒ **NO Question 2K**
20 year Xcel franchise agreement

☒ **YES DPS Issue 4A**
Fund Denver public schools

AURORA

☒ **YES Issue 3A**
Fund community amenities

AURORA cont.

☒ **NO Issue 3B**
Fund police facilities

☒ **YES Issue 3C**
Fund transit facilities

☒ **YES Issue 3D**
Move municipal elections

LAKEWOOD

☒ **YES Question 2G**
0.5% sales tax increase for programs & services

JEFFCO

☒ **YES Issue 5**
Fund Jeffco public schools



Denver DSA is the local chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, the largest socialist organization in the United States. We believe that working people should run both the economy and society democratically.

We're a member-led, volunteer organization building working-class power through labor and tenant organizing, electoral and legislative campaigns, political education, direct action, and more. Our members come from communities across the Denver metro area, and we're growing!

Only an organized movement of millions of working-class people can create a society that works for all of us. [Join Denver DSA](#) and help us build it.

Thank you to the member volunteers of the Electoral Committee who researched, analyzed, and wrote this guide.