



2022 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP



Bills we supported

Total:

Passed: 10

Did Not Pass: 1

Fiscal impacts

\$20 million to raise the basic cash assistance floor through Colorado Works and improve the program

\$6 million to fund the Colorado Homeless Contribution Income Tax Credit

\$814,000 to create the Colorado International Medical Graduate Assistance Program

\$775,000 to automatically seal eligible criminal records

\$175,000 to add support to the Mobile Home Park Dispute Resolution & Enforcement Program

\$60,000 to oversee Health Care Sharing Plan reporting requirements

Figures are for fiscal year 22-23 except when noted

Making gains and building consensus

The Colorado General Assembly returned on January 12, 2022 and after 120 days completed its first continuous and uninterrupted legislative session in three years. Many lawmakers were facing either re-election campaigns, a record-high seven lawmakers were actively running for Congress, and still others were facing their last session before term limits would force them to be done. Even so, the legislature found time to pass bills related to everything from housing, cash assistance, criminal records sealing, workforce development, health care, tax credits, and more.

We took action on eleven priority bills this year. The overall aim of our advocacy agenda has remained evergreen, in that we seek bipartisan and non-partisan solutions to meet the needs of our neighbors experiencing poverty and hunger. We are excited to see that ten of the bills for which we advocated passed this year. This writeup offers a summary of the legislation for which we advocated in the 2022 session. Every step of the way, your voice and your advocacy mattered!

Ending Hunger

We look forward to working on a ballot measure campaign this summer & fall related to the passage of **House Bill 1414** (Reps. Gonzalez-Gutierrez & Michaelson Jenet). The bill refers a measure to Colorado voters, asking them to adjust the amount of taxable income in order to fund school meals for public school students. During the COVID-19 pandemic, federal assistance made paying for public school meals possible, but that assistance is ending soon. **Senate Bill 87** (Sens. Pettersen & Fields) attempted to do this legislatively, but a referred measure ended up being lawmakers' preference.

Poverty Reduction

The passage of **House Bill 1259** (Reps. Duran & Jodeh) will make significant modifications to the Colorado Works program, which is our state's basic cash assistance provider. Modernizing the program, updating cash assistance amounts to reflect actual costs of living, and ensuring that benefit amounts keep up with inflation will help our state's neediest families stay on their feet. It ensures that plans will offer extensions to those in particularly difficult circumstances and removes the ban on eligibility for those convicted of certain drug offenses.

Criminal Justice Reform

The most significant criminal justice reform we achieved this session was **Senate Bill 99** (Sens. Hisey & Rodriguez), also known as Clean Slate. This bill automatically seals eligible criminal records for qualifying individuals, saving people from the time, hassle & expense and removing barriers to employment and housing.

In other criminal justice legislation, **House Bill 1131** (Reps. Gonzalez-Gutierrez & Bacon) will establish a task force to look at reducing justice system involvement for young children (under age 13). And **Senate Bill 19** (Sen. Winter) makes small changes to ensure continued good implementation of the eviction court records bill we supported in 2019.

Access to Housing

The Colorado Homeless Contribution Tax Credit will be established by **House Bill 1083** (Reps. Tipper & Rich), which directs the Division of Housing to administer a statewide credit. People can make contributions to entities administering "enterprise zones" to promote temporary, emergency, or transitional housing programs.

Mobile home park residents will experience additional protections from **House Bill 1287** (Reps. Boesenecker & Hooton), a bill to improve landlord-tenant relations in mobile home parks and to provide more recourse for resolving

disputes. The legislation also carries provisions to strengthen the bargaining position of residents in the event that they want to offer to purchase a park, and clarifies the obligations of landlords towards tenants.

Public Health

The new reporting requirements of **House Bill 1269** (Rep. Lontine) will ensure that people who participate in health care cost-sharing plans - which are not the same as health insurance - will receive accurate information about the financial arrangements and status of those plans. The state's commissioner of insurance will receive information annually about fees paid to such plans, and how much is paid out to providers, among other key plan information.

Migrants & Refugees

We look forward to the positive impact **House Bill 1050** (Rep. Ricks) will have for International Medical Graduates, and for communities in Colorado suffering from the shortage of qualified medical care providers. The bill is a win-win for workforce development and for people who come to Colorado with credentials earned in other countries, offering them quicker pathways to be certified to practice in Colorado.

Civil Society

The Vote Without Fear Act, **House Bill 1086** (Reps. Sullivan & Bacon), will prohibit the open carrying of firearms within any polling location or counting facility, and within 100 feet of a ballot drop box or any building with polling activity during an election. This will help protect the safety & integrity of our election processes and reduce the likelihood of intimidation of voters.

God of justice and mercy, help us to see your faithfulness in all the opportunities you give us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen!

Thank you for your support and for joining us in advocacy!