

POLITICS > COLORADO POLITICS

101 bills that passed and failed: A digest of what you missed in the 2018 Colorado legislative session, from taxes to crime to transportation

Colorado lawmakers introduced more than 700 bills. Most offering minor tweaks, but some were major.



Joe Amon, The Denver Post

View from the well of the Colorado House of Representatives making ready for the second session of the 71st General Assembly at the Colorado State Capitol January 3, 2018 in Denver, Colorado.

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Colorado lawmakers introduced more than 700 bills in [the 2018 legislative session](#) covering a wide range of topics – from transportation to taxes and school safety to health care.

There were even measures considered by the Democrat-controlled House and the Republican-led Senate that covered [the business of selling body parts](#), protections for [police horses](#) and the [delivery of marijuana](#).

The majority of the legislation was not controversial and offered minor tweaks to current law, but the debate on dozens of bills [came down to the final hours](#) before the General Assembly adjourned Wednesday.

If you're wondering what you missed, here's a look at a sample – 101 bills that passed or failed in the [120-day term](#). Gov. John Hickenlooper still needs to act on many of them.



KC Becker ✓
@kcbecker



Some stats from the 2018 legislative session that just ended: 721 total bills introduced. 432 passed (60%). None vetoed yet (that could change). 100 exhausted legislators.
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(To find out more about a bill, visit <http://leg.colorado.gov/bills> and search for the bill number.)

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Education

PASSED



In their final year of training, teachers-to-be could receive a \$10,000 stipend as part of a fellowship program that seeks to recruit them to rural school districts experiencing educator shortages. [[HB18-1002](#)]

Community colleges can seek approval to offer a [four-year bachelor's degree in nursing](#). [[HB18-1086](#)]

Foster children who move could remain in their school and receive transportation. [[HB18-1306](#)]



Aaron Ontiveroz, The Denver Post

Thousands show up in red during a teachers rally for more educational funding at the Colorado State Capitol on Friday, April 27, 2018. Thousands of Colorado teachers showed up at the capitol to demonstrate the need for increased funding. The Colorado Education Association said the walkouts are necessary to alert residents and lawmakers about the status of school funding in Colorado.

The average per-pupil spending would increase by \$475, to \$8,137, and lawmakers would put an additional \$150 million into schools to reduce the so-called negative factor to \$672 million. [[HB18-1379](#)]

A \$500,000 pot of money would provide grants to school personnel and first responders for research and training in how to respond to school shootings and other emergencies. [[HB18-1413](#)]

Teachers could apply for a stipend of up to \$6,000 to pursue professional development, so long as they commit to spending three years at a rural school. [[SB18-085](#)]

The state Department of Education will be required to research and develop a model for bullying prevention. [[SB18-151](#)]

A \$29.5 million program would provide grants to schools for security upgrades, possibly including metal detectors, and training in threat assessments. [[SB18-269](#)]

FAILED

A bipartisan effort to rewrite the 1994 law that delineates how the state distributes money to school districts proved too tough of an assignment despite support from most superintendents. [[HB18-1232](#)]

A \$400,000 grant program would help schools develop suicide prevention policies and training programs. [[HB18-1416](#)]

Teachers would have been prohibited from striking, and those who did could have faced jail time or fines, under a short-lived measure that came in response to school walkouts. [[SB18-264](#)]

Transportation

PASSED

The state would spend \$645 million in the next two years on road improvements and might ask voters in 2019 for permission to issue a \$2.34 billion bond for additional transportation needs. [[SB18-001](#)]



RJ Sangosti, Denver Post file

Traffic moves along on Interstate 25 near 126th Avenue during the morning rush hour on March 20, 2014.

The passage of a bipartisan measure to streamline the renewal process and boost the eligible applicant pool for Colorado's long-hobbled immigrant [driver's license program](#) marked the end of years-long gridlock hampering efforts to improve the initiative. [[SB18-108](#)]

Local governments in Colorado will be able to adopt regulations letting bicyclists safely pass through stop signs without actually stopping under a bill passed by the legislature that also gives them a framework to put such laws into place. [[SB18-144](#)]

FAILED

House Democrats rejected legislation that would have repealed [thousands of dollars in tax credits](#) for people who purchase electric vehicles under a 1993 state law. [[SB18-047](#)]

A Republican proposal would have required the Denver-area Regional Transportation District to receive legislative approval before spending additional tax dollars on discounted tickets for bus and light rail. [[SB18-204](#)]

Taxes and fees

PASSED

A 50 percent tax credit for donations to child care facilities would continue another five years until 2025. The donations can be used to hire and pay staff, upgrade facilities or reduce tuition costs. [[HB18-1004](#)]

Boaters who enjoy Colorado's waters [will pay more under a new law](#) that increases fees by \$25 to \$50 to help pay for a program that fights invasive mussels. [[HB18-1008](#)]

The current income tax credit for child care expenses would be adjusted to allow residents with federal adjusted income of \$60,000 or less to receive a state tax break equal to 50 percent of the federal credit. [[HB18-1208](#)]

A special district, such as the Regional Transportation District, [can once again levy sales taxes](#) on retail marijuana sales. [[SB18-088](#)]

FAILED

An effort to place a 25-cent tax on purchases involving the use of at least one plastic bag would have raised money for an affordable-housing grant fund. [[HB18-1054](#)]



Joe Amon, The Denver Post

The Colorado legislature opened its 2018 session on Jan. 10 at the state Capitol.

Colorado parents would have been prohibited from using their 529 savings plans for the cost of K-12 education, as allowed under a change to federal tax law. [[HB18-1209](#)]

A Republican measure that would have reduced the individual and corporate state income tax rate by two-tenths of a percentage point died in the House. [[SB18-061](#)]

A property used by a church or religious organization would not need to own the property to qualify for a tax exemption. [[SB18-070](#)]

House Democrats killed a bipartisan bill that would have exempted the state's sales tax for the purchase of a used vehicle worth \$20,000 or less that had previously been titled in the state. [[SB18-077](#)]

Any fee increases made by a state agency would have needed legislative approval. [[SB18-128](#)]

Marijuana

PASSED

The limits on who can own marijuana businesses would be lifted to allow more out-of-state investors and give publicly traded companies the ability to operate in the state. [[HB18-1011](#)]

A [prescription drug that contains cannabidiol](#) and receives approval from the federal Food and Drug Administration would be legal if dispensed at a pharmacy. [\[HB18-1187\]](#)



Joe Amon, The Denver Post

The crowd cheering after the National Anthem to celebrate 4:20 at the Mile High 420 Festival in Civic Center Park downtown Denver. April 20, 2018 Denver, CO

A marijuana retailer could [open a “tasting room” location](#) to allow customers to consume pot, except that smoking is prohibited. [\[HB18-1258\]](#)

[Autism spectrum disorders](#) would be added to the list of conditions eligible to receive medical marijuana. [\[HB18-1263\]](#)

A school nurse or designee [could give medical marijuana](#) to a student at school if certain conditions are met. [\[HB18-1286\]](#)

The state can develop rules to allow a marijuana company to sell waste – roots, stalks or stems – to another person for use in making products, such as paper and clothing. [\[SB18-187\]](#)

The measure eases restrictions on marijuana research and designates \$3 million from pot tax revenues for health studies. [\[SB18-271\]](#)

FAILED

The creation of a pilot program that would have [allowed the delivery of marijuana](#) in certain jurisdictions. [\[HB18-1092\]](#)

The establishment of [licensing regulations for cannabis clubs](#) did not survive. [\[SB18-211\]](#)

A move to allow doctors to prescribe [medical marijuana instead of opiates](#) for patients experiencing pain failed in the Senate. [\[SB18-261\]](#)

Criminal Justice

PASSED

New Colorado truckers will have to undergo a [human trafficking awareness course](#) as part of an effort to draft them into helping law enforcement. [\[HB18-1018\]](#)

The mandatory parole period for those convicted of Class 2 and 3 felonies has been reduced from five to three years — with the exception of certain violent offenses. [\[HB18-1029\]](#)

Police horses have [special, defined protections](#) under a bill that got few “neighs” as it passed the legislature. [\[HB18-1041\]](#)

A bipartisan measure to toughen penalties for [burglaries involving gun thefts](#) by making them a Class 3 felony. [\[HB18-1077\]](#)

Under what’s called a civil rape shield law, the defendant facing a civil lawsuit for sexual assault cannot use the accuser’s sexual history against them except in limited cases, a move that mirrors criminal law. [\[HB18-1243\]](#)

A measure to strengthen the state’s [revenge-porn law](#) will add more protections to prevent explicit images from being used against someone. [\[HB18-1264\]](#)

A victim of domestic violence would have at least six years to seek damages in a civil lawsuit, an increase from the current one-year statute of limitations. [\[HB18-1398\]](#)

Making a false report that involves an imminent threat, such as a bomb scare or claim of an active shooter, would be a Class 1 misdemeanor under a bill meant to address [so-called “swatting” incidents](#). The measure also would create separate offenses, including potential felonies, if false reports prompt an evacuation, injury or death. [\[SB18-068\]](#)

Families of Colorado State Patrol troopers and other state workers who die on the job will be [able to collect benefits](#) for up to a year after a loved one’s death. [\[SB18-148\]](#)

A board with a majority of political appointees would select schools to receive part of a \$5 million grant to improve communications with first responders in the event of an emergency. [\[SB18-158\]](#)

FAILED

An attempt to allow for the concealed carry of weapons on school grounds failed in the House. [\[HB18-1037\]](#)



Aaron Ontiveroz, The Denver Post

People overflow into the hallway as they wait to enter the room where House Minority Leader Patrick Neville, R-Castle Rock, speaks to the Democratic-controlled House State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee at the Colorado State Capitol on Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018. The committee heard three Republican bills to loosen Colorado gun laws. All were rejected by Democrats.

A Republican state representative brought a bill that would have made it a [crime to not call 911](#) when someone is in need of emergency assistance. The measure quickly died, however, by an 11-0 vote in its first hearing before a House committee. [\[HB18-1059\]](#)

A House committee [killed a bill](#) seeking to [stop Colorado law enforcement from encrypting](#), or hiding, all of their emergency radio communications. [\[HB18-1061\]](#)

The Senate rejected legislation that would have barred monetary conditions from being a part of the requirements for someone arrested on suspicion of a misdemeanor or municipal offense to be released from jail, except in cases where DUI is suspected or there is a victim. [\[HB18-1089\]](#)

A [proposed ban on bump stocks](#), like the ones used by the Las Vegas gunman, was rejected in the Senate. [[SB18-051](#)]

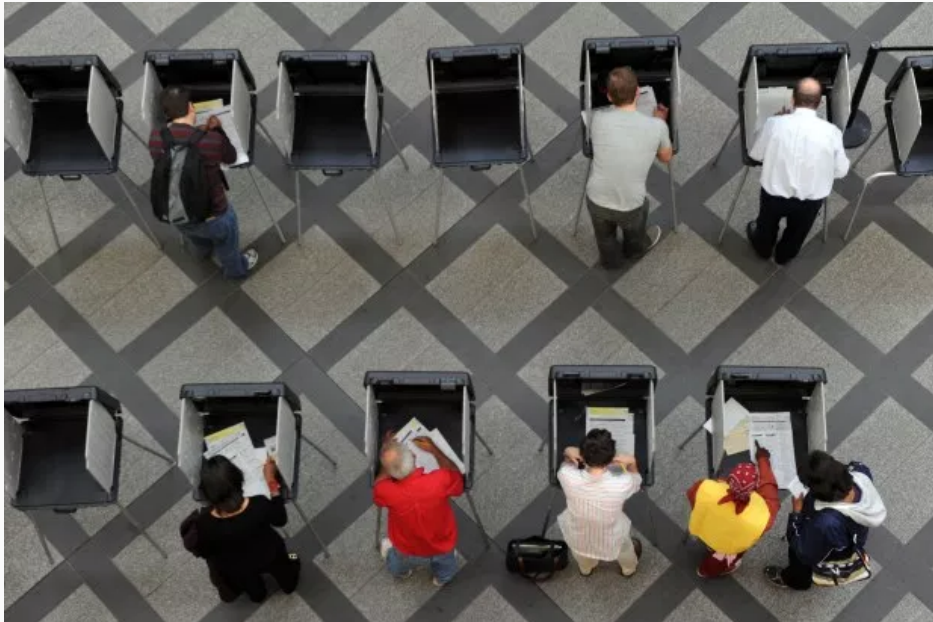
Another round of efforts to repeal a 2013 law passed by Democrat that bans magazines of more than 15 bullets fell short in the House. [[SB18-052](#), [HB18-1015](#)]

Efforts to allow business owners and employees to use deadly force against intruders, similar to the [“make my day” law](#) for homeowners, were rejected in the House. [[SB18-185](#), [HB18-1074](#)]

A measure that would have limited claims that speedy trial rights were violated when a judge orders certain delays in a case, as seen in the case of convicted child molester Michael McFadden, did not survive. [[SB18-258](#)]

Elections

PASSED



Helen H. Richardson, Denver Post file

Voters cast their ballots at the Wellington E. Webb Municipal Building in Denver on July 6, 2016.

Two measures [will go before voters](#) on the 2018 ballot to overhaul how Colorado draws state legislative and congressional districts by creating independent commissions with representation from Democrats, Republicans and unaffiliated voters, among other changes. [[SCR18-004](#) and [SCR18-005](#)]

Anyone who [facilitates a vote trade](#) — using a website or phone app, for instance — would commit a Class 2 petty offense with a fine of up to \$1,000 per each swap they helped make happen. [[SB18-076](#)]

FAILED

This bill would have allowed an employee to take leave from work to vote, register as a voter, get a ballot or obtain documents or identification needed to vote. [[HB18-1033](#)]

More political donors and organizations would have needed to disclose their ownership of political advertisements, particularly those that appear online. [[HB18-1403](#)]

Health care

PASSED

The state would spend \$2.5 million in marijuana tax dollars on programs to prevent [opioid abuse](#) and offer intervention to those addicted to prescription drugs. [[HB18-1003](#)]

Colorado will join an interstate compact that allows psychologists to practice electronically across state lines and temporarily in person to improve continuity of care and access in rural areas. [[HB18-1017](#)]

The state's Medicaid program could request federal approval to expand inpatient substance abuse treatment, boosting the spending and options available for opioid addicts. [[HB18-1136](#)]

A pharmacist is free to disclose information about a drug's cost and cheaper alternatives, and the pharmacy cannot charge a co-payment if it's more expensive than the price of the drugs. [[HB18-1284](#)]

Most new opioid prescriptions would be [restricted to a seven-day supply](#) with one refill, but would exempt patients with chronic pain, cancer or those receiving palliative or hospice care. [[SB18-022](#)]

Freestanding emergency rooms need to better inform potential patients about the steep costs of seeking treatment at the facility and more information about the cost of procedures. [[SB18-146](#)]

The state would have to provide a “transition specialist” to help ensure people released from a 72-hour emergency or involuntary mental health hospital get the tools they need to get back on their feet. [[SB18-270](#)]

FAILED

A bill that did not pass would have made workers eligible to receive up to 12 weeks of paid medical leave through an insurance pool, with wages capped at \$1,000 per week. [\[HB18-1001\]](#)



Andy Cross, The Denver Post

Care provider Brenda Lozada gets emotional after speaking against Senate Bill 214 at a rally on the west steps of the Capitol March 29, 2018. Lozada care for people on Medicaid and is also a Medicaid recipient herself. SB 214 would institute work requirements for Coloradans on Medicaid.

A measure would have required pharmaceutical companies to disclose more information about the cost of insulin. [\[HB18-1009\]](#)

Pharmaceuticals companies would have been required to provide 90 days notice when increasing the price of a drug by more than 10 percent, in a measure that also would have required more transparency from manufacturers and insurers about drug prices. [\[HB18-1260\]](#)

The effort would have sought federal approval to create a reinsurance program to help cover high-cost claims through a 2 percent fee imposed on premiums. [\[HB18-1392\]](#)

A “[red flag](#)” bill that would have allowed Colorado judges to [order the seizure of guns](#) from people considered a “significant risk” to themselves or others was rejected by Senate Republicans. [\[HB18-1436\]](#)

A pilot program would have [allowed Denver to open a facility](#) where drug users could inject under the supervision of those with medical training. [\[SB18-040\]](#)

Most recipients of Medicaid in Colorado [would have needed to find employment](#) or be in school to obtain the government-backed health insurance. [\[SB18-214\]](#)

Energy and environment

PASSED

The [Colorado Energy Office](#) would need to promote all types of energy, including solar, wind, nuclear and traditional energy sources, as well as energy storage. [\[SB18-003\]](#)

All new underground gas lines, cables and other facilities installed after 2019 would need to be electronically locatable, but the information would not be available to the public. [\[SB18-167\]](#)

An oil and gas operator seeking authorization for [force pooling of nonconsenting landowners](#) would need to make a financial offer 60 days before a hearing under a measure that also would remove the one-well limit. [\[SB18-230\]](#)

FAILED

More stringent rules for reporting oil and gas incidents and making the information available to the public were rejected. [\[HB18-1157\]](#)



Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post

A drilling operation sits near housing subdivisions in Erie on June 7, 2017.

Tougher standards were proposed for [disposal and storage of radioactive waste](#) in Colorado, which is a destination for out-of-state dumps. [\[HB18-1215\]](#)

Mining companies would have been required to [make reclamation and cleanup plans](#) before launching new digs under a measure seeking to prevent future environmental disasters. [\[HB18-1301\]](#)

The state environment division would have been required to conduct a biannual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions by private sector and make the findings public. [\[SB18-117\]](#)

Senate Republicans attempted to bar the state from participating in a climate alliance to reduce carbon emissions. [\[SB18-226\]](#)

Other issues

PASSED

Under a bipartisan measure, companies and the government would be required to delete people's gathered personal information once it's no longer needed and [protect the information](#) that is kept. Entities would also need to notify people within 30 days if their personal information has been compromised in a hack. [\[HB18-1128\]](#)

“Games of skill” arcades would be outlawed under a bill that closes a legal gap that allows such operations to surface outside of the three Colorado cities where gambling is legal. [[HB18-1234](#)]

A grant program will direct more money toward the development of broadband lines in rural areas of the state that do not have high-speed internet. [[SB18-002](#)]



Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post

Jackson Federico, a tower technician for Advanced Wireless Solutions, works to make some repairs on the dish on the Pollard cell tower high off the ground in rural Rio Blanco County on July 12, 2017 near Meeker.

A tax break for developers who build affordable housing will continue through 2024, instead of expiring at the end of 2019. [[SB18-007](#)]

Homeowners would have an easier time getting help from law enforcement to remove squatters from their property, under a bill aimed especially at protecting members of the military while they are deployed overseas. [[SB18-015](#)]

The Colorado lottery is extended through 2049, a 25-year extension of the program. [[SB18-066](#)]

Colorado would regulate companies that sell human body parts and prohibit anyone who owns more than a 10 percent stake in a funeral home or crematory from owning a body broker business. [[SB18-234](#)]

Lawmakers voted to increase the amount of money in reserve from 6.5 percent to 7.25 percent of the state budget, a move that is expected to increase the state's so-called "rainy day fund" by \$85 million to \$90 million. [\[SB18-276\]](#)

FAILED

A measure that would have [limited apartment rental application fees](#) charged by landlords to the costs of background and credit checks died in the Senate. [\[HB18-1127\]](#)

A House panel soundly rejected a bill that would have let employers and businesses offering marriage-related services turn away people [based on their sexual orientation or gender identity](#). [\[HB18-1206\]](#)

The Senate rejected a proposed state program to issue a "purple card" to people living in the U.S. unlawfully so that Colorado employers could hire those immigrants without violating federal laws. [\[HB18-1230\]](#)

A state-level net neutrality measure would have prohibited internet service providers who receive state dollars to share additional fees based on ability to access certain content at various speeds. [\[HB18-1312\]](#)

Local governments would have had the power to adjust their minimum wage levels above the statewide standard to address community cost-of-living concerns. [\[HB18-1368\]](#)

Low-income residents would have received larger grants for property taxes, rent assistance and utility bills. [\[HB18-1380\]](#)

An effort to streamline how Colorado's colleges and universities respond to and prevent campus sexual assault was rejected by a Senate committee following [debate about due process concerns](#). [\[HB18-1391\]](#)

A bill that would have prohibited landlords from turning away rental applicants based on their source of income — such as a government assistance program — was rejected by a Senate committee. [\[HB18-1432\]](#)

A Senate effort to [limit the appointment powers](#) of Colorado's governor was rejected by the House. [\[SB18-043\]](#)

Lobbyists and others who frequent the Capitol would have been able to pay \$250 or more to [bypass metal detectors and security](#). [\[SB18-116\]](#)



John Leyba, The Denver Post

Colorado State Capitol security entrance on Feb. 7, 2018. A bill is in the works to allow the public to buy a badge that would allow them to bypass security checkpoints at the north and south entrances of the Capitol. The cost is \$250.

A proposal would have [helped legal U.S. immigrants avoid deportation if they are convicted of a Class 2 misdemeanor by shortening a yearlong jail sentence by one day.](#) [[SB18-166](#)]

A measure that would have asked voters to approve a law banning Colorado's local governments from enacting so-called "sanctuary policies" that conservatives say hamper federal immigration enforcement died in the House. [[SB18-220](#)]

A bill designed to limit regulations on occupational licenses by requiring the state to justify them did not advance. [[SB18-236](#)]

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