

COLORADO 2024 ELECTION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION: My goal is to provide a condensed analysis for listeners as they prepare to vote on the various propositions and proposed amendments on the 2024 ballot. Some of the ballot language can be confusing, and often that is by design. Such as ‘Without raising taxes...’ and then inventing a way for the state legislature to keep and spend more of the private sector’s money. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out on X (Twitter) - @RyanSchuiling – or by e-mail at ryanschuiling@iheartmedia.com.

I will also be assigning a score of 1-5 to designate the importance of each candidate or issue (1 – lowest level, 5 – highest level).

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS

Donald J. Trump/J.D. Vance (5)

This vote is binary and automatic. The country suffers under four more years of Kamala Harris. The country prospers under four more years of Donald Trump. It’s that simple.

U.S. HOUSE

CO-1 – **Valdamar Archuleta** (R) – (2)

CO-2 – **Marshall Dawson** (R) – (1)

CO-3 – **Jeff Hurd** (R) – (5)

CO-4 – **Rep. Lauren Boebert** (R) – (3)

CO-5 – **Jeff Crank** (R) – (3)

CO-6 – **John Fabbriatore** (R) – (4)

CO-7 – **Sergei Matveyuk** (R) – (1)

CO-8 – **Gabe Evans** (R) – (5)

The more Republicans Colorado can send to an evenly divided U.S. House, the better. **Gabe Evans** and **Jeff Hurd** are in highly competitive districts that are winnable, making them the most important candidates for low propensity and unaffiliated voters to support. Moreover, Republican turnout in each race may well determine the outcome. **John Fabbriatore** has been Rep. Jason Crow’s most formidable opponent, by far, in three election cycles. He has gained national recognition on the Venezuelan gang issue in Aurora on Dr. Phil’s television show. His odds are long, probably at least 60-40 against, but a perfect storm on this inside straight draw may deliver one of the nation’s most stunning results. **Rep. Lauren Boebert** and **Jeff Crank** are running in the two safest districts for Republicans in the state, both should cruise to commanding victories. Like Fabbriatore, **Valdamar Arucheleta** has been the most prolific candidate to challenge Rep. Diana DeGette – perhaps ever. His ground game efforts and retail politics have been relentless, and DeGette even agreed to debate him on local television. While he faces almost an insurmountable challenge, Archuleta has made a name for himself and drawn attention to a race generally ignored by most. **Marshall Dawson** and **Sergei Matveyuk** are in very difficult districts for Republicans, with Rep. Joe Neguse and Rep. Brittany Pettersen (respectively) almost certain to win re-election in each race.

AMENDMENT G

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution concerning the expansion of eligibility for the property tax exemption for veterans with a disability to include a veteran who does not have a service-connected disability rated as a one hundred percent permanent disability but does have individual unemployability status?

VOTE: **YES** (3)

This should pass easily, and as it is a Constitutional amendment – it must receive 55 percent of the vote. It closes a loophole and fixes a technicality which inexplicably excludes unemployable veterans who do not rate as a 100 percent permanent disability. Any such veteran deserves our support, and then some.

AMENDMENT H

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution concerning judicial discipline, and, in connection therewith, establishing an independent judicial discipline adjudicative board, setting standards for judicial review of a discipline case, and clarifying when discipline proceedings become public?

VOTE: **YES** (2)

Currently, a judicial review panel consists entirely of judges and those deliberations remain private until or unless a finding is made against a judge resulting in meted out discipline. This measure would expand the investigative panel to include both attorneys and regular citizens, opening up the entire process to the public. Sunlight is the best disinfectant, even if a judge being investigated is ultimately exonerated.

AMENDMENT I

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution concerning creating an exception to the right to bail for cases of murder in the first degree when proof is evident or presumption is great?

VOTE: **YES** (4)

Based on a preponderance of the evidence at the time of arraignment, bail can be denied to a defendant accused of first degree murder at the discretion of a judge. This is just common sense for a crime of this magnitude.

AMENDMENT J

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution removing the ban on same-sex marriage?

VOTE: **YES** (2)

This is a reinforcement in the state constitution of the Obergefell decision by the Supreme Court of the United States, authored by Justice Neil Gorsuch – a Colorado native. It provides insurance against a future SCOTUS overturning that precedent in a subsequent decision. As someone who has supported gay marriage and gay adoption for over 30 years, I readily support this measure. Social conservatives will likely oppose it.

AMENDMENT K

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution concerning the modification of certain deadlines in connection with specified elections?

VOTE: **NO** (1)

The language of this amendment is extremely vague, and I believe intentionally so. It would move up the deadlines for filing to run for office, effectively shortening the timeline to collect signatures and give the Secretary of State one extra week to certify the order of candidates on the ballot and content included. Admittedly, I'm not in the mood to do Jena Griswold any favors. Reason enough for me to vote 'no.'

AMENDMENT 79

Shall there be a change to the Colorado constitution recognizing the right to abortion, and, in connection therewith, prohibiting the state and local governments from denying, impeding, or discriminating against the exercise of that right, allowing abortion to be a covered service under health insurance plans for Colorado state and local government employees and for enrollees in state and local governmental insurance programs?

VOTE: **NO** (5)

Those who reflexively support abortion rights will likely be an automatic 'yes' vote on this measure, which will make it difficult to defeat in extremely pro-abortion Colorado. Add to that the deluge of money pouring in to support it from pro-abortion groups, and the fight against it becomes even more arduous. This is simply an awful proposal, and that is coming from someone who is relatively moderate on the issue. Late-term abortion on demand, funded by taxpayers, for any reason or no reason at all, so long as a troubled woman can find a Dr. Death (like Dr. Warren Hern in Boulder), is preposterous and unacceptable to any reasonable person. This is a HARD 'no' for me, and a very important 'no' – even for those who may be pro-choice, but oppose taxpayer funding of late-term abortions.

AMENDMENT 80

Shall there be an amendment to the Colorado constitution establishing the existing statutory rights to school choice for children from kindergarten through twelfth grade in the Colorado constitution?

VOTE: **YES** (5)

The teachers unions, and all of the national money behind them, are opposing this measure. Of course they are. That, and that alone, is a viable reason to support it. Watch 'Waiting for Superman' if you haven't already. It'll break your heart and open your eyes. School choice is the key to kids trapped in failing public school districts to have a way out. It forces school districts to compete, just like virtually everyone else in the workforce. Taxpayer funding of Detroit public schools has been prolific, and yet those schools continue to fail due to corrupt and inept leadership. Students are often not the priority, job security for teachers often is – even the horrible ones who should be fired. I have very strong feelings on this issue, and I'm a product of Michigan public schools. An enthusiastic 'yes' from me.

PROPOSITION JJ

Without raising taxes, may the state keep and spend all sports betting tax revenue above voter-approved limits to fund water conservation and protection projects instead of refunding revenue to casinos?

VOTE: **NO** (2)

So many things wrong with this measure. This is more a matter of principle to me than the importance of this individual proposal. For one, any proposition which begins 'without raising taxes' immediately raises a red flag for me. It is usually a preamble to a shell game of funds taken from the private sector to be spent by the government. As a rule, 'no thanks' is my response to such a sleight of hand. Further, 'may the state keep and spend' is even worse. Again, I feel viscerally opposed to the state 'keeping and spending' ANYTHING from the private sector. Taxation is theft, as a broad concept. As to the notion of these proceeds being used 'to fund water conservation and protection projects'? This ain't my first rodeo. We all know tax dollars collected are ultimately fungible, and there is no guarantee these moneys will be spent as outlined in the bill. Forgive me for not trusting our state legislature to spend our money. At all. Refund the revenue to the casinos. They earned the profits. They'll reinvest it in their casinos. They'll create jobs and pay more for those jobs. Certainly more than if government pockets those profits. And I trust the casinos to spend that money far more than I trust those under the golden dome.

PROPOSITION KK

Shall state taxes be increased by \$39,000,000 annually to fund mental health services, including for military veterans and at-risk youth, school safety and gun violence prevention, and support services for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes by authorizing a tax on gun dealers, gun manufacturers, and ammunition vendors at the rate of 6.5% of the net taxable sales from the retail sale of any gun, gun precursor part, or ammunition, with the state keeping and spending all of the new tax revenue as a voter-approved revenue change?

VOTE: **NO** (5)

This is pure, communist garbage. More California for your Colorado, and we've endured enough of that awfulness already. A full frontal assault on, and egregious impediment to, our Second Amendment rights. They're trying to sneak this by the voters, because even in the leftist-dominated General Assembly – TABOR prevents a tax-raising initiative from going around the voters. Not surprisingly, there is no Republican support for this madness. Both the Independence Institute and National Rifle Association oppose it. The hope here is that left-leaning libertarians and unaffiliateds who value their gun rights will show up to vote against it. Forget all the promises outlined in this mess, as stated above – tax dollars are fungible, and there's no way to ensure accountability for how they are spent and that they will be exclusively earmarked for the causes listed. Vote 'no' with a vengeance.

PROPOSITION 127

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning a prohibition on the trophy hunting of mountain lions, lynx, and bobcats, and, in connection therewith, defining "trophy hunting" as the intentional killing, wounding, pursuing, entrapping, or discharging or releasing of a deadly weapon at a mountain lion, lynx, or bobcat; creating exemptions from this prohibition including for the protection of human life, property, and livestock; establishing "trophy hunting" as a class 1 misdemeanor; and increasing fines and limiting wildlife license privileges for persons convicted of this crime?

VOTE: **NO** (3)

Colorado Parks and Wildlife has this under control, and has had this under control for some time. Let's start there. There's no reason to change things now. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. And it ain't broke. This is an invented problem by far-left animal rights activists. Further, it will actually create a new problem for livestock ranchers across the state by making it more difficult to protect their animals from big cats. "Trophy hunting" is already prohibited by Colorado law. Ranchers would be restricted from using lethal force against such cats threatening their livestock. The downside far outweighs any upside on this measure. It should be voted down emphatically.

PROPOSITION 128

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning parole eligibility for an offender convicted of certain crimes, and, in connection therewith, requiring an offender who is convicted of second degree murder; first degree assault; class 2 felony kidnapping; sexual assault; first degree arson; first degree burglary; or aggravated robbery committed on or after January 1, 2025, to serve 85 percent of the sentence imposed before being eligible for parole, and requiring an offender convicted of any such crime committed on or after January 1, 2025, who was previously convicted of any two crimes of violence, not just those crimes enumerated in this measure, to serve the full sentence imposed before beginning to serve parole?

VOTE: **YES** (4)

Truth in sentencing for serious crimes should be proportional – the more serious the crime, the tighter the leash should be on a convicted felon. Not to mention, most who commit crimes of a certain magnitude are likely beyond rehabilitation or reform. We need fewer criminals on the streets to become recidivists and harm others. If you do the crime, you do the time. Or at least should. George Brauchler supports this measure, and that's good enough for me. This proposition would also be grandfathered in, so it would not be retroactively enforced.

PROPOSITION 129

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating a new veterinary professional associate profession, and, in connection therewith, establishing qualifications including a master's degree to be a veterinary professional associate; requiring registration with the state board of veterinary medicine; allowing a registered veterinary professional associate to practice veterinary medicine under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian; and making it a misdemeanor to practice as a veterinary professional associate without an active registration?

VOTE: **YES** (2)

This is a reasonable measure designed to improve access to veterinary services for outlying rural areas in the state that might have more difficulty reaching licensed veterinarians. The oversight of veterinary professional associates by licensed veterinarians, which is legal in other states with similar needs, ensures animals will receive adequate care. It's a 'win' all the way around.

PROPOSITION 130

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes concerning state funding for peace officer training and support, and, in connection therewith, directing the legislature to appropriate 350 million dollars to the peace officer training and support fund for municipal and county law enforcement agencies to hire and retain peace officers; allowing the fund to be used for pay, bonuses, initial and continuing education and training, and a death benefit for a peace officer, police, fire and first responder killed in the line of duty; and requiring the funding to supplement existing appropriations?

VOTE: **YES** (3)

You had me at ‘funding the police.’ Much-needed affirmation for our first responders and police officers after enduring so much of the ‘defund the police’ nonsense from the Left for so long. All of these measures will help ensure a better-trained and better-funded police force, which will enhance overall morale and performance.

PROPOSITION 131

Shall there be a change to the Colorado Revised Statutes creating new election processes for certain federal and state offices, and, in connection therewith, creating a new all-candidate primary election for U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, governor, attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer, CU board of regents, state board of education, and the Colorado state legislature; allowing voters to vote for any one candidate per office, regardless of the voter’s or candidate’s political party affiliation; providing that the four candidates for each office who receive the most votes advance to the general election; and in the general election, allowing voters to rank candidates for each office on their ballot, adopting a process for how the ranked votes are tallied, and determining the winner to be the candidate with the highest number of votes in the final tally?

VOTE: **NO** (5)

We save the most controversial and consequential measure for Colorado voters for last. The more I consider it, the more I hate it. No Republican I know, who wants Republicans to win, supports this. Including me. Alaska is voting on whether to repeal ranked-choice voting, just a few years after voting it in. This should tell you all you need to know. Everywhere it’s been implemented, Democrats have benefited, and Republicans have suffered. Rep. Mary Peltola (D) would not have been elected in ruby-red Alaska without this carnival game, had the Republican Party in Alaska been allowed to coalesce around a single candidate. Instead, the GOP vote was split between Sarah Palin and Nick Begich. Once Begich was eliminated from the first round of voting in the general election, enough anti-Palín sentiment elevated Peltola to victory. The problem only starts there. Throughout the post-primary campaign, Palin and Begich were basically on their own – when it comes to fundraising, advertising, staffing, earned media – while Peltola enjoyed the full support of a galvanized Democratic Party in the state. Republican leadership in Colorado is currently abysmal. But things can always be worse. I’d rather have closed primaries, going in the other direction, and make sure Republicans select Republican candidates. If they lose, that’s on me and every GOP voter. Do we want Nikki Haley voters (many of whom were thinly veiled Democrats or unattached independents) meddling in our nomination process? No. If you want to make sure Republicans never win again in Colorado, go ahead and vote ‘yes.’ If, like me, you’d like a chance to rebuild rather than blow it up, firmly vote ‘no.’