

Special District Association of Colorado

SDA NEWS

JULY 2026

Supporting Community-Based Government

2026 SDA Annual Conference
Keynote Speakers Announced!



Celebrating
250 Years
of American Independence



Since 1995, the Colorado Employer Benefit Trust (CEBT) has partnered with the Special District Association of Colorado to deliver high-quality, affordable benefit solutions for public employers. Serving over 37,000 members across 450+ groups, CEBT is known for comprehensive benefits, exceptional service, and consistently lower rate increases.

MEDICAL - DENTAL - VISION - LIFE



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

By joining CEBT's self-insured pool you can enjoy:

- Reduced administrative costs
- Shared risk & long-term stability
- Customized strategic solutions
- Positive overall claims experience

For more information contact:
or visit:  cebt.org

 **Terry Rook** +303-345-7730 or
 **Bryce Burget** +720-505-7796

Board of Directors

President
Sue Blair
Independence Metropolitan District No. 4

Vice President
Bill Simmons
Eagle River Fire Protection District

Secretary/Treasurer
Ronda Lobato
Costilla County Conservancy District

Executive Vice President
Allison Ulmer
Collins Cole Winn & Ulmer, PLLC



Ross Blackmer
Thompson Crossing Metropolitan District
Nos. 3 and 5

James Borland
Fort Collins-Loveland Water District

Kent Bosch
Upper Thompson Sanitation District

Bill Clayton
West Metro Fire Protection District

Dick Cleveland
Eagle River Water & Sanitation District

Jim Kullhem
Prospect Recreation & Park District

Fredrick Quintana
Pueblo City-County Library District

Phil Thomas
Fountain Sanitation District

Staff

Ann Terry
Chief Executive Officer

Meredith Smith Quarles
Chief Operating Officer

Michael Valdez
Chief Governmental Affairs Officer

Megan Lippard
Editor and Communications Manager

Anthony Sandoval
Senior Program Manager/Legislative &
Policy Advocate

Megan Wagner
Governmental Affairs Specialist

Karla Boughay
Membership Services Coordinator

Jamille Andres
Office and Project Manager

Evan Goulding
In Memoriam

SDA

225 East 16th Avenue
Suite 1000
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 863-1733
Toll Free (800) 886-1733
sdaco@sdaco.org
www.sdaco.org

Designed by Emmett Jordan



Supporting Community-Based Government

Dear SDA Members,

As we move into summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been an incredibly busy and productive first half of the year for SDA and Colorado's special districts.

Before anything else, I would like to recognize and thank Michael Valdez for his remarkable service to SDA as he begins his retirement and concludes his time with the Association. Since joining SDA, Michael has been a tireless advocate for special districts and local government. Whether working late into the evening at the Capitol, building relationships with legislators, or helping members navigate complex policy issues, Michael's dedication, professionalism, and passion for local government have strengthened SDA and the districts we serve.

For many of our members, Michael has been the face of SDA's advocacy efforts for years. His steady leadership, institutional knowledge, and unwavering commitment to public service have left a lasting mark on our organization and on the countless district leaders he has assisted along the way. We are deeply grateful for his service, friendship, and commitment to Colorado's special districts, and we wish him nothing but success, happiness, and adventure in his next chapter.

Michael's retirement also provides an opportunity to reflect on the strength of SDA's advocacy program and the many people who contribute to its success. As many of you know, the 2026 Legislative Session was both active and challenging.

On behalf of SDA, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the SDA legislative team, our Policy Committee members, and the many district leaders who dedicated countless hours reviewing bills, providing feedback, testifying, contacting legislators, and helping shape SDA's advocacy efforts. Your expertise and commitment ensure that the voice of Colorado's special districts is heard, respected, and effective at the Capitol. The success of our advocacy efforts is truly a team accomplishment.

I also want to thank everyone who attended one of our 2026 Regional Workshops. Over the past several weeks, SDA staff, presenters, and volunteers traveled across Colorado, meeting with district leaders at 10 locations. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces, meet new directors and staff members, and engage in thoughtful discussions about governance, legal updates, risk management, and the issues facing special districts today. These workshops are only successful because of your participation, and we appreciate the time you invest in continuing your education and strengthening your districts.

Now we are turning our attention to SDA's Annual Conference this September. Planning is well underway, and we are excited to bring together district leaders



Ann Terry

from across the state for several days of education, networking, and discussion about the future of special districts. The Conference remains one of the most valuable opportunities for directors, managers, staff, and professional partners to learn from one another, share ideas, and strengthen the special district community.

Thank you for your continued membership, engagement, and support of SDA. It is a privilege to serve Colorado's special districts, and it was wonderful to see so many of you at the Regional Workshops. We look forward to seeing even more of you at Conference this September.

Until then, enjoy your summer, stay safe, and thank you for everything you do for your communities.

Ann Terry

Ann Terry
Chief Executive Officer



Spencer Fane LLP | spencerfane.com
1700 Lincoln Street, Suite 2000 | Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303.839.3800 | Fax: 303.839.3838

Spencer Fane is the law firm where your leaders work with our leaders. With over 120 combined years of special district experience in Colorado, we can handle all of your district's legal needs. Advancing the interests of your district is our priority.



... contributing to a cleaner, safer Colorado through low-cost loans to governmental entities for all types of water infrastructure projects.

Call 303-830-1550 or e-mail info@cwrpda.com | www.cwrpda.com

Finance & Accounting | Capital Infrastructure & Facilities Maintenance | District Management & Administration



From shaping communities to building futures, we guide special districts through every stage.

Discover your custom solution with us today.

Colorado & Utah | 970.669.3611 | www.PCGI.com

MAKING A DIFFERENCE
in People's Lives & Their Environment



www.TSTInfrastructure.com
303-799-5197
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

PLANNING. ENGINEERING. CONSTRUCTION. MANAGEMENT. OPERATIONS.

Did You Know that the 2026 SDA Annual Conference is Just Two Months Away?

Now's the Time to Start Making Your Plans to Join Us!

It's hard to believe, but the 2026 SDA Annual Conference, September 15-17, will be here before we know it!

For starters, our hybrid format will once again be available, with both an in-person and livestreaming option. The entire Conference will be held in-person at the Keystone Conference Center, and just like the last few years, our keynote presentations and breakout sessions will be livestreamed to a convenient online platform that will provide access for those who would like to join us remotely.

What's more, the breakout sessions will all be recorded, and everyone who registers will have access to the virtual platform and recordings for a year, including everyone who attends in-person! This offers the chance to go back and watch sessions again, either as a refresher or to catch up on anything that was missed. We know this format provides huge benefits for all our attendees, and we are very excited to offer it again this year.

Our lineup of breakout sessions this year is stellar, and the sessions start early on Tuesday morning. All three days of Conference are jam-packed with a wide variety of universally applicable topics for all district types as well as sessions that are more technical in nature.

Altogether we have a plethora of sessions planned, which will provide attendees the opportunity to hear from a variety of experts on pertinent issues for special districts. Stay tuned for more information on all the sessions we have planned!

What's more, **our entertaining and informative keynote speakers** will offer their unique insight and perspective into big picture ideas that affect all of us (please see pages 8-11 for all the details on their presentations).

In addition, we are bringing back our Discussion Forums on Tuesday afternoon. This dedicated time for focused conversations on specific topics has proven very valuable in the past, and we are thrilled to offer these Forums again this year. We are finalizing the details of the topics as well as our discussion leaders so keep an eye out for more to come!

The outdoor event tent space will also be available again this year and will be set up on the back Conference Center patio. This additional space will be a perfect place to relax during the breaks between sessions or even as a place to **set up your laptop and headphones to tune into any sessions that might fill up.** Since we will be livestreaming the presentations to our virtual platform, if you find a meeting room that's full but you would still like to listen in, you will be able to access the livestream right on your laptop!

As you are making all your plans to join us, the following is a general outline of how each day of Conference is shaping up.

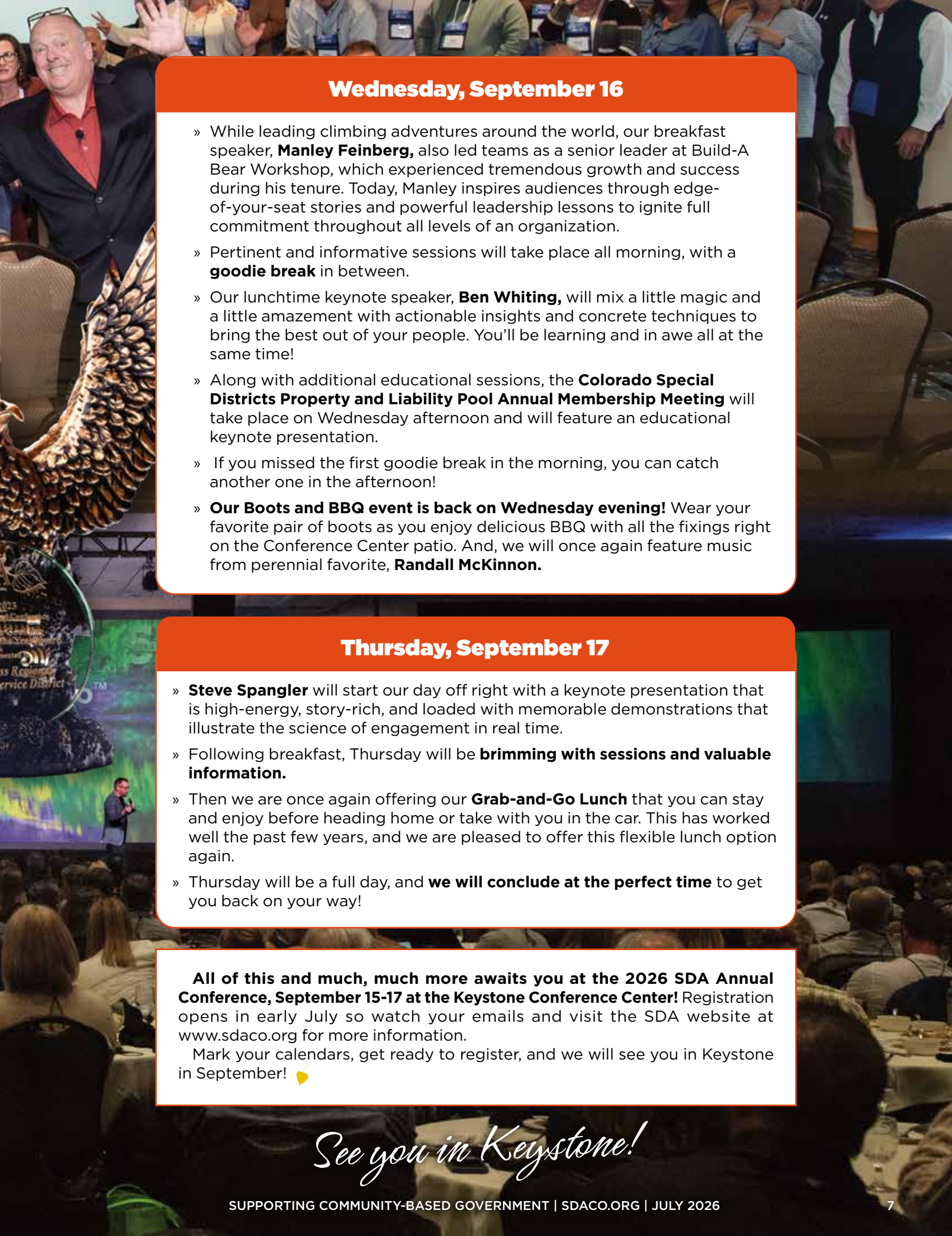
Continued on page 6

Tuesday, September 15

- » **Plan to get there early! The Conference begins at 7:15 am** with a welcome breakfast, the singing of the National Anthem, and the Presentation of the Colors.
- » Immediately following our opening activities, we are thrilled to be joined by our **breakfast keynote speaker, Cam Awesome** (yes, that's really his last name!). Cam's fascinating story, from his early struggles with bullying to his pursuit of boxing greatness, will be an engaging and dynamic way to kick off this year's Conference.
- » The day will be filled with **educational and timely sessions** for Board members, managers, and staff alike. Whether you are new to your position or have served in your role for years, there will be something for everyone.
- » Our **Awards Luncheon** will be on Tuesday so we have a chance to honor our winners on the first day! Join us as we celebrate these exceptional Board members, managers, and districts.
- » Tuesday's lunch will also feature **Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe**, who will introduce a practical, research-driven framework for moving through disruption with clarity, courage, and confidence.
- » Tuesday afternoon is when we will offer our **Discussion Forums** (see page 5 for more information). Our topics are really coming together so stay tuned for more...
- » Following the Forums, take a few minutes to relax and visit with your fellow attendees on the beautiful patio at the Conference Center as our **Opening Night Celebration** begins!
- » The casino tables and trivia have been very popular so we'll have them both available again this year! We'll of course also have lots of **amazing food and time to unwind and visit with your fellow attendees.**



SDA CEO Ann Terry shares a laugh with Danaly Howe and Jesse Flageolle from Westwind Management Group during the sponsor and exhibitor prize drawings during the 2025 SDA Annual Conference.



Wednesday, September 16

- » While leading climbing adventures around the world, our breakfast speaker, **Manley Feinberg**, also led teams as a senior leader at Build-A Bear Workshop, which experienced tremendous growth and success during his tenure. Today, Manley inspires audiences through edge-of-your-seat stories and powerful leadership lessons to ignite full commitment throughout all levels of an organization.
- » Pertinent and informative sessions will take place all morning, with a **goodie break** in between.
- » Our lunchtime keynote speaker, **Ben Whiting**, will mix a little magic and a little amazement with actionable insights and concrete techniques to bring the best out of your people. You'll be learning and in awe all at the same time!
- » Along with additional educational sessions, the **Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool Annual Membership Meeting** will take place on Wednesday afternoon and will feature an educational keynote presentation.
- » If you missed the first goodie break in the morning, you can catch another one in the afternoon!
- » **Our Boots and BBQ event is back on Wednesday evening!** Wear your favorite pair of boots as you enjoy delicious BBQ with all the fixings right on the Conference Center patio. And, we will once again feature music from perennial favorite, **Randall McKinnon**.

Thursday, September 17

- » **Steve Spangler** will start our day off right with a keynote presentation that is high-energy, story-rich, and loaded with memorable demonstrations that illustrate the science of engagement in real time.
- » Following breakfast, Thursday will be **brimming with sessions and valuable information**.
- » Then we are once again offering our **Grab-and-Go Lunch** that you can stay and enjoy before heading home or take with you in the car. This has worked well the past few years, and we are pleased to offer this flexible lunch option again.
- » Thursday will be a full day, and **we will conclude at the perfect time** to get you back on your way!

All of this and much, much more awaits you at the 2026 SDA Annual Conference, September 15-17 at the Keystone Conference Center! Registration opens in early July so watch your emails and visit the SDA website at www.sdaco.org for more information.

Mark your calendars, get ready to register, and we will see you in Keystone in September! 🍌

See you in Keystone!

Don't Miss These Keynote Speakers Who Will Be Joining Us at the 2026 SDA Annual Conference!

We have an amazing lineup of keynote speakers for this year's Annual Conference! This enlightening group of experts will provide an ideal complement to the information-packed break-out sessions we will be offering. Their keynote presentations will round out our event perfectly!

Read on to find out more...



TUESDAY KEYNOTE BREAKFAST

Cam Awesome

Becoming Awesome

Cam Awesome takes audiences on a captivating journey through his life, sharing the triumphs and tribulations that have shaped him into the resilient and determined individual he is today. From his early struggles with bullying to his pursuit of boxing greatness, Cam's story is one of unwavering perseverance and the indomitable human spirit. Through his engaging storytelling and infectious energy, Cam motivates and inspires audiences to embrace their own unique paths to success, no matter how many obstacles they may face along the way.

Cam's powerful message is centered around the idea that failure is not the opposite of success, but rather an essential part of the journey towards it. He encourages audiences to reframe their relationship with failure, seeing it not as a roadblock, but as an opportunity for growth and learning.

TUESDAY AWARDS LUNCHEON AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe

The Hope Forward Advantage: A Framework for Stability, Agility, and Possibility

Stress. Challenge. Change. Uncertainty. These forces shape our lives, and too often we believe they force a choice: performance or wellness, success or integrity, results or relationships, achievements or purpose. The truth is, they are not mutually exclusive. When we know *what* to do, *when* to do it, and *why* it matters, they become interconnected; the foundation for living well and working well.

In this keynote, Dr. Robyne Hanley-Dafoe, award-winning researcher and author of *I Hope So: How to Choose Hope, Even When It's Hard*, introduces a practical, research-driven framework for moving through disruption with clarity, courage, and confidence. With more than twenty years of research in psychology, education, and human development, Dr. Robyne equips audiences with evidence-based strategies they can apply immediately. Participants leave ready to steady themselves, harness stress into momentum, and move forward with hope; the force that defines and shapes the future.



WEDNESDAY KEYNOTE BREAKFAST

Manley Feinberg

Exponential Commitment™

Build Breakthrough Momentum in the Storm of Change and Uncertainty

This dynamic keynote inspires participants to step up in a new way to overcome resistance and reach higher than ever by cultivating Exponential Commitment™ in themselves and those around them. Participants will learn essential Vertical Lessons for deepening their commitment and building momentum. They will discover how to achieve breakthroughs even when rapid change, including AI-driven disruption, creates pressure and disrupts clarity, focus, and forward momentum.

Audience members will leave with actionable insights on what it takes to gain clarity and make decisive progress through chaos every single day. They'll also learn three steps to build and rebuild momentum as well as a daily process to keep them focused and fully committed to their key initiatives.



Continued on page 11

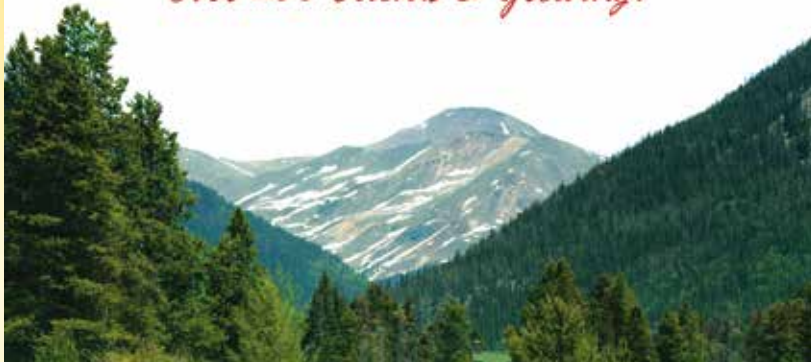
COMMUNITY RESOURCE SERVICES



(303) 381-4960 • www.crsocolorado.com

Providing cost-effective, customized
management and accounting services

Over 200 Clients & Growing!



ICENOGLE SEAVER POGUE

A Professional Corporation
Attorneys at Law

Serving Colorado Special Districts & Other Political Subdivisions

4725 South Monaco Street, Suite 360, Denver, Colorado 80237
www.isp-law.com | 303.292.9100

GMS
INC
CONSULTING
ENGINEERS

Water

Supply
Treatment
Storage
Distribution

Wastewater

Collection
Lift Stations
Force Mains
Treatment

Funding Assistance

Grant & Funding Assistance
Feasibility Studies

Drainage

Hydrology
Detention
Conveyance Systems

Facilities Management

GIS Mapping
Operations Consultation

Utility Consultants

Municipalities
Special Districts
Non-Profits

Utilities

Planning
Permitting

GMS Inc.

Serving Colorado and Kansas
(719) 475-2935
Colorado Springs, CO
jmeyer@gmsengr.com

WEDNESDAY KEYNOTE LUNCH

Ben Whiting

Creating A Limitless Culture™
***Better Results, Better Relationships,
Limitless Possibilities***

What do you get when you combine a background in leadership development with decades of corporate entertainment experience? You get something that is fun, engaging, and that builds a bridge between insight and actionable strategies to bring the best out of your people. This is what Ben Whiting's Creating a Limitless Culture™ keynote delivers.

In addition to experiencing draw-dropping (and often hilarious) magic and mind reading, your group will be able to instantly increase productivity through better communication; reduce drama by learning how to create and sustain quality relationships in the workplace; and learn to thrive amidst constant change with a simple mindset shift that will also help them find not just happiness, but fulfillment in their day-to-day work lives (all while having A LOT of fun!).



THURSDAY KEYNOTE BREAKFAST

Steve Spangler

**The Engagement Effect: Cultivating Experiences That
Ignite Connection, Build Trust, and Inspire Action**

How do you break through the noise, capture attention, and create real connection in a world where people are constantly distracted? You don't shout louder—you design better experiences.

Steve Spangler's *Engagement Effect* is more than a keynote. It's a blueprint for transformational leadership in action. Drawing from the principles in his latest bestselling book of the same name, Steve reveals how leaders, educators, and entrepreneurs can engineer experiences that move people—from passive listeners to active participants, from compliance to commitment.

With over 4.5 billion views on social media, decades of Emmy Award-winning television, and a track record of scaling multimillion-dollar ventures, Steve knows what makes people lean in and stay engaged. His message is simple but powerful: Engagement isn't a tactic. It's a skill you can build, a mindset you can adopt, and a strategy you can master. This keynote experience is high-energy, story-rich, and loaded with memorable demonstrations that illustrate the science of engagement in real time. 🍷



See you in Keystone!

Meet a bank that
customizes
special district
banking solutions
for your unique
needs.



**Western Alliance
Bank®**

1. The ability to integrate with WA ConnectLive may depend on the accounting software used. Services and integration tools may differ by software. 2. Fees may be imposed for additional services related to online banking. Refer to Business Online Banking Setup and Authorization for more information. 3. Funds deposited through the Lockbox will follow Western Alliance Bank's funds availability policy as outlined in the Deposit Account Agreement Disclosure. 4. All offers of credit are subject to credit approval, satisfactory legal documentation and regulatory compliance.

westernalliancebank.com/associations

Western Alliance Bank, Member FDIC.



Discover a bank that knows your industry as well as you do and experience the white-glove service you deserve.

Explore our high-touch service, backed by powerful technology and banking solutions.

WA ConnectLive¹ Software Integration

ePay Portal for Homeowners

Connect Portal with SSO Access

Deposit & Investment Solutions²

No-Fee Lockbox Services³

Lending Solutions⁴



David Ford-Coates

Vice President,
HOA & Special District Banking
(720) 885-1444
dfordcoates@westernalliancebank.com



Tim Bryan

Vice President,
Special District Banking
(720) 987-3945
timothy.bryan@westernalliancebank.com

*See you in Keystone!
2026 SDA Annual Conference
September 15-17, 2026*

**We have the tools to
help you...**

Engineering & Mapping
Facility Development
District Management
Accounting & Finance Services
Planning
Administrative Support



**Mulhern
MRE, Inc.**

Managing Resources thru Engineering

Mulhern MRE, Inc. | 303.649.9857
Visit our website at www.mulhernmre.com

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Review and Perspectives

*By the SDA Policy Team: Ann Terry, Michael Valdez,
Anthony Sandoval, and Megan Wagner*

The SDA Policy Team is putting forth a new style for this year's legislative update. This year, the Policy Team will provide highlights (and lowlights) on important legislation as well as commentary, and where appropriate, insights on selected bills. We are stepping out and as a small spoiler alert, you will not hear us utter words like "craziest," "whackiest," or even "worst" to describe the Legislative Session. Sure, it was non-stop fun, but in terms of headaches and lost sleep, the Policy Team has seen worse. One of the most interesting aspects of the past Legislative Session is the number of pieces of legislation that failed in the process but are likely to return in what we affectionately call the "Gone But Not Forgotten" space in this recap.

Overview

The 2026 Legislative Session will be remembered much like the 2025 Legislative Session and how the 2027 Legislative Session will be forecasted. The consistent theme is the state of the State's budget. In the three years noted, the high-wire budget balancing act that the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) will perform becomes

more and more like managing a three-ring circus. Depending on who you ask, the massive cuts in the budget were necessitated by the federal legislation in 2025 HR 1—"One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act" or the overspending at the state level that was driven by the majority party (if you were not laser focused on the Legislature, the Democrats were blaming HR 1 for the enormous hole in the budget, and the Republicans were blaming the Democrats for creating a structural deficit by growing state government with short term federal dollars that are unsustainable under the State's budget framework). Under any scenario, the budget was the talk of the town.

Gone But Not Forgotten

As promised in the opening, we have added an additional twist to traditional recaps of the most recent Legislative Session. We will spend a fair amount of time talking about bills that we helped kill in the 2nd Regular Session of the 75th General Assembly with the added feature that many of these bills stand a good chance of returning in 2027. The bills that fit into this category are referenced as "Gone But Not Forgotten."

Continued on page 15



Cash Management for Colorado's Special Districts Since 1988

Colorado Surplus Asset Fund Trust

Keeping the 'Local' in Local Government Investment Pool

- **AAAmf-rated** CSAFE Cash: Daily Liquidity
- **AAAf/S1-rated** CSAFE Core: Next-Day Liquidity

This is not an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy shares in CSAFE. Investments in CSAFE are not FDIC-insured. CSAFE is not a bank. Shares of CSAFE are distributed by Ridgeline Public Advisors, LLC, member FINRA.



www.csafe.org
brent.turner@csafe.org
720.879.1318

BUILDING AND PROTECTING COLORADO COMMUNITIES.



Providing general and specialized legal services for special district formation, board governance, public infrastructure development, contracting and finance, elections, employment matters, water law, and general operation of metropolitan, water, sanitation, fire protection, emergency and hospital, and recreation districts and other public service entities.

44 Cook Street, Suite 620, Denver, CO 80206 • www.cegrlaw.com • 303-218-7200

Shareholders

Paul R. Cockrel
Evan D. Ela
Linda M. Glesne
David A. Greher
Matthew P. Ruhland
Joseph W. Norris

Associates

Madison P. Plasencia
Dakota C. Spence-Zurek
Glory S. Schmidt

Paralegals

Micki Mills
Sarah Luetjen
Kristin Herndon
Ashley Costigan
Ellis Carroll

Experience • Integrity • Commitment

Seter, Vander Wall & Mielke, P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

303.770.2700 | www.svwpc.com | svw@svwpc.com

7400 E. Orchard Road, Suite 3300, Greenwood Village Colorado 80111

Representing and
advocating for
local governments

**PROVIDING WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES
FOR SPECIAL DISTRICTS IN COLORADO,
NATIONWIDE, AND INTERNATIONALLY**

303.431.6100

MARTIN/MARTIN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

martinmartin.com

SENTINEL POINT

MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTING



Providing Management and Accounting Services to Special Districts and HOA's.

sentinelpointco.com | **720-983-9837** | nicki@sentinelpointco.com



Property Taxes

Two outgoing legislators (not seeking reelection, and no, not a reference to their personalities) decided to run with an idea that failed to gain any traction with the Property Tax Commission members in 2024. **House Bill 26-1119—Authority for Different Mill Levy Rates** would have allowed local taxing entities to tax land and improvements on the land at different mill levy rates. SDA and the Colorado Assessors' Association provided detailed examples of how the implementation of this policy would have the opposite effect of the sponsor's goal. A large coalition formed to oppose the bill. The statewide assessors' association stated in no uncertain terms that the proposal is as close to impossible to implement as they have ever encountered. SDA pointed out that taxing land at different mill levy rates violates the uniformity clause of the state constitution. Proponents believe that split mill levy rates will encourage building housing on vacant land by keeping improvements on the property at a lower tax rate. The proponents have promised to be back in 2027.

Reflections from Ann: The Property Tax Commission examined this proposal extensively and engaged a broad range of stakeholders in the discussion. Ultimately, the Commission concluded that the proposal was not feasible from either a practical implementation standpoint or a constitutional perspective. In other words, not a good idea for Colorado.

In other legislation around property taxes, another bill that would have modified the business personal property tax was introduced and ultimately amended to resolve SDA concerns with the bill. **Senate Bill 26-116—Property Tax Modifications** proposed several tax changes. For historical context, during the 2021 Legislative Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 21-1312, which increased the business personal property tax exemption (BPPT) from \$7,900 to \$50,000. The \$50,000 exemption was set to be adjusted for inflation every two years. In recognition of the fiscal impact on local governments, the 2021 legislation provided a State backfill for the lost tax revenue. SB26-116 proposed to increase the BPPT exemption, hold it flat going forward, BUT eliminate the State backfill. This was a hit of between \$16 million and \$20 million to local governments in lost tax revenue. SDA worked closely with Colorado Counties, Inc (CCI) and the Colorado Municipal League (CML) to maintain the backfill from the State. The exemption was modified and locked in statutorily at the rate of \$58,000, thus

SB26-116 eliminated the inflation indexing to increase the exemption.

Reflections from Michael and Megan: The sponsor had originally intended to stay out of the messy property tax debates of the last several years. The bill originally included modifications to municipal lodging (hotel) taxes, the valuation of lodging properties, and the business personal property tax exemption but was amended to the discussion above. The lesson learned is that property taxes, be they real-property, sales, personal property, or lodging taxes, are the proverbial 3rd rail under the Dome.

Colorado Open Records Act (CORA)

This was going to be the year. The bill that passed with strong support in both Chambers in 2025 but was vetoed by the Governor was reintroduced to respond to the concerns raised by the Governor in his veto message of the 2025 bill.

This year's effort to update CORA came in the form of **Senate Bill 26-107—Modify Colorado Open Records**. The bill was killed in its first committee of reference despite amendments made by the sponsor to address the objections the Governor made in his veto message of the 2025 legislation. Our efforts to revise CORA include moderate relaxed response times for governmental entities to respond to CORA requests, both everyday requests and requests that are made by the requestor for pecuniary gain.

Reflections from Megan: SB26-107's defeat was purely a result of "behind the glass" politics between members of the State Affairs Committee. National politics also had a hand in changing both a Democrat and a Republican member of the Committee's vote.

Reflections from Anthony: If persistence was a billable line item, CORA reform would already be fully funded! With a new administration ahead, SDA remains ready to regroup and return in 2027. It is our commitment to get this right.



Elections and Voting

An effort to change the process for returning special district and municipal ballots was considered in **Senate Bill 26-119—Authorize Local Electronic Ballot Return**. The bill would have allowed local governments (special districts and statutory municipalities) to authorize electronic ballot return. This concept is not ready for prime time, and SDA's election officials provided a laundry list of reasons the bill could not proceed. In the end, the coordinated effort between SDA and the

Continued on page 16

Colorado County Clerks Association as well as other stakeholders convinced the sponsor to pull the bill and allow for a thorough and broad discussion of the issues with the proposal.

Reflections from Megan: The national debate around election security sealed this bill's fate from introduction. This legislation is an instance where both Democrats and Republicans joined together (for different reasons) to vote against the policy.

Reflections from Anthony: The lesson here is, "just because you can, doesn't mean you should." SDA will be convening an interim working group to study the issue. In an era where elections are a hot topic, any changes to the special district election code must be carefully considered before we can support legislation, thus the interim meetings will be held without any promises of legislation for 2027.

Baby Diaper Changing Stations

From the files of what are we doing here, **House Bill 26-1130—Public Restroom Baby Diaper Changing Station** would have required diaper changing stations in public restrooms. We argued that the associated costs would be an unfunded mandate on special districts because the bill did not provide any State funding to meet the goals of the legislation. Our arguments were sustained when the sponsors amended the bill to exempt state facilities because of the cost to the State that could not be absorbed by the State or in the budgetary dire straits an appropriation was not available.

The bill did not fail because of a disagreement with its goal (family-friendly restrooms), but because enough legislators were concerned about costs, feasibility, and imposing a statewide mandate on local governments and businesses. The sponsors have announced that they will "be back next year."

Reflections from Megan: To secure passage of HB26-1130, the sponsors offered a second-reading House amendment to exempt public entities. However, the amendment's definition of public entities did not include special districts. Although the Senate sponsors were willing to add an amendment to exempt special districts, the House sponsors declined because they feared any further changes would jeopardize the bill's passage. Ironically the sponsors should have been more concerned about the votes in the Senate State Affairs Committee where the bill died.



Health Service District Affordable Housing

The General Assembly continues to prioritize affordable housing legislative policy changes, including **House Bill 26-1300—Health Service District Affordable Housing Service**. The bill would have allowed health service districts, with *only* Board approval, to provide affordable housing without triggering a material modification or 45-day notice process to amend their service plans. The bill would have circumvented the statutory process of approval by a municipality or county of a material service plan modification. The bill was rushed through the House on a fast track, but the Senate heard the concerns raised by SDA, CML, and CCI and killed the bill in Committee.

Reflections from Michael: The early success of the bill in the House is a prime example of the Legislature's focus on finding creative ways to provide more opportunities for affordable housing. The bill provided a work-around to the "red tape" of creating a statutory path for an affordable housing special district. On a positive note, the bill provided a great opportunity for the SDA Policy Team to educate members on the process of forming a health district. The hearing in the Senate Local Government Committee brought to light that there is still education needed for even seasoned legislative members, including a member who serves on a Board and has served in the Legislature for eight years!

Reflections from Anthony: What SDA has learned from HB 26-1300 is that process still matters and truly understanding the bill you're sponsoring is important. We are grateful to the Senate for pumping the brakes and will continue to educate legislators under the Gold Dome next year.

Investment of Public Funds

The goal of **Senate Bill 26-180—Investment Performance Authority** was to create a new, optional system for investing public funds in a way that could generate additional revenue to support childcare for low-income families. The concept of investing funds outside of the Colorado Public Deposit Protection Act is not a new concept under the Gold Dome. This year's iteration, SB26-180, would have established a separate entity called the "Investment Performance Authority (IPA)."

This authority would have invested certain public funds (e.g., enterprise funds, special funds) that would operate as an alternative to the State Treasurer for those funds. The goal was to try to improve investment returns. Conceptually, a specialized authority

with investment expertise could achieve higher returns than traditional conservative state investments. The creative approach to this legislation was to redirect part of those earnings to support childcare assistance for low-income families, distributed through counties. SDA joined forces with the banking community to push this legislation back.

Reflections from Megan: The stakeholders engaged in this legislation on each side were not parties that often work together. Healthier Colorado, the main proponent, worked with the Governor's Office in support of the bill. The State Treasurer testified against the bill joined by the banks, environmentalists, and other progressive groups. It was the unique grouping of organizations that don't often work together that ultimately resulted in the bill's defeat.



Data Centers

In an effort to catch up to a fast-moving societal issue, **House Bill 26-1030—Data Center & Utility Modernization** sought to promote data centers by creating a state incentive program (including up to a 100% sales tax exemption for up to ~20 years) to lure data center developers. The bill tried to ensure that data center expansion didn't conflict with climate policy. Ultimately, HB26-1030 failed because lawmakers could not reconcile competing concerns about economic incentives versus environmental, utility, and taxpayer impacts.

An alternative approach to addressing the issue of data centers was introduced as **Senate Bill 26-102—Large Load Data Centers**. This legislation was focused on creating a strict regulatory framework for very large data centers to ensure they operate in a way that protects ratepayers, the electric grid, water resources, and the environment. To many, the framework that was envisioned was too strict and likely to drive data center investment away, and legislators couldn't find a compromise between regulation and economic development. The sponsor of SB26-102 has publicly committed to bringing the bill back in the 2027 Session.

Reflections from Michael: Both bills are reflective of the struggle policy makers are having with catching up with an issue that has basically left the station. Data centers exist in Colorado already, the question will be how the State responds regarding numerous issues around the data centers; to wit, water, and energy usage. For SDA members, water is always an important factor in changes in public policy.

And now for a more traditional recap of the Legislative Session...

Elections

House Bill 26-1113

Concerning Modifications to Elections

House Bill 26-1113 amends numerous sections of the "Uniform Election Code of 1992" and the "Colorado Open Records Act" to improve the administration, access, and clarity of the statutes that govern Colorado elections.

Examples of the changes to Title 1 election laws:

- » Improving voting access and eligibility
- » Polling place operations and reducing wait times
- » Increasing student and youth voter outreach
- » Updating student and youth voter outreach
- » Adjusting timelines for mailing ballots and handling election logistics
- » Updates rules for election judges, ballot handling, and clerk responsibilities
- » Updates procedures for Congressional vacancy elections
- » Adds authority for emergency planning and rulemaking if elections are disrupted

Most important for special districts, the requirement to file oaths or affirmations for public office with the appropriate clerk and recorder is exempt from filing fees imposed by county clerks and recorders. This amendment was added late in the session at the request of SDA and resolves disparate fee-collection methods used by the clerk and recorders.

Additionally, for coordinated elections, HB26-1113 extended the timeframe from 22 days to 29 days before the election for mailing the mail ballot package to each active registered elector.

Position: Amend

Sponsors: House: E. Sirota, J. Willford; Senate K. Wallace, M. Weissman

Effective: Upon Signature

Final Status: Governor signed on June 1, 2026

Senate Bill 26-059

Multiple Elected Offices Prohibited for General Assembly

As introduced, the bill would have prohibited a member or member-elect of the General Assembly from holding any other elected offices while serving as a member of the General Assembly or while a member-elect of the General Assembly.

At the request of SDA, the bill was amended to exempt members of the General Assembly who hold

Continued on page 19



Providing Special District Management and Accounting Services for Over 30 Years
Evergreen, CO | **303.674.3379** | SimonsonAndAssociates.com | mail@simonson.com



450 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 400
Denver, CO 80203
303-592-4380
www.SpecialDistrictLaw.com

RELIABILITY. EFFICIENCY. CREATIVITY. DELIVERY.

Blending Innovation & Tradition **Since 1955**

Sustainable water/wastewater engineering, management, and operations & maintenance solutions for future generations.



Wade Wheatlake, Project Manager
wade.wheatlake@merrick.com

www.merrick.com



County
Health Pool



A Better Healthcare Choice for *all local governments*



Medical



Dental



Vision



Life



COBRA



HIPAA

Take control of rising health care costs by pooling with fellow entities. This proven, cost-saving solution has been meeting the insurance needs of local governments since 1984.

For more information or a quote, contact:

Marissa Gaertner
CHP Benefits Manager
(303) 861-0507
mgaertner@ctsi.org

County Technical Services Inc.
800 Grant Street, Suite 400
Denver, Colorado 80203

a special district elected office.

Position: Amend

Sponsors: Senate: L. Cutter, M. Ball; House: M. Lindsay

Effective: Upon Signature

Final Status: Governor signed on May 4, 2026

Senate Bill 26-119 Defeated

Authorize Local Electronic Ballot Return

Senate Bill 26-119 would have amended the “Colorado Local Government Election Code” and the “Colorado Municipal Election Code of 1965” to add authorization for special districts and municipalities to use electronic ballot return in elections under the local code. Electronic ballot return allows a voter to return a marked ballot to the Designated Election Official or clerk using a qualified electronic transmission system.

The bill required the Designated Election Official to anonymously transcribe returned ballots electronically onto paper ballots, ensure they are properly counted, and secure them according to statutory procedures. It also sought to establish secure voter-identification and authentication methods while still protecting ballot privacy. Finally, the bill aimed to prevent misuse of electronic ballot return systems by adding security measures and authorizing the Secretary of State to adopt rules safeguarding election integrity.

Note: The bill died in its first committee, but as part of SDA’s opposition, SDA has volunteered to host in-depth stakeholder meetings in the interim to better explain the need for additional study of this proposed change to special district elections.

Position: Oppose

Sponsors: Senate: K. Mullica; House: M. Carter, M. Lukens

Final Status: Defeated in the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee on March 26, 2026

Employment

House Bill 26-1272

Extreme Temperatures Worker Protections

As introduced, the bill would have:

- » Required the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) to collect statewide data on heat- and cold-related workplace injuries and emergencies by January 1, 2027 using a public reporting platform and data from health and workers’ comp sources.
- » Directed the State to create a model

Temperature-Related Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (TRIIPP) by January 1, 2028. Employers with workers who are exposed to extreme temperatures were required to adopt and submit a TRIIPP by September 1, 2028 with ongoing update and review requirements.

- » Finally, the bill mandated that CDLE develop training standards and ensure that workers receive proper training on temperature safety.

As the bill passed both Houses, it was modified substantially. In its final form, HB26-1272 creates a phased system that is intended to reduce worker injuries from extreme heat and cold and standardize workplace safety practices statewide through data collection, model standards, employer plans, and training.

Position: Oppose

Sponsors: House: M. Froelich, E. Velasco; Senate: L. Cutter, M. Weissman

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed (August 12, 2026)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 4, 2026

Senate Bill 26-093

Workers’ Compensation Insurance Coverage Verification

Senate Bill 26-093 is included in this summary of relevant legislation as an example of SDA’s efficacy in monitoring legislation that impacts special districts, especially in an adverse way. As introduced the bill would have prohibited the state, a county, a municipality, a city and county, a district, or other political subdivision of the state from issuing or renewing a building permit; construction permit for a project with a total construction cost of more than \$1 million (construction permit); or contractor’s license unless the applicant has first filed with the governmental entity’s licensing authority or permitting agency a signed declaration verifying that the applicant, the general contractor, and every subcontractor at any tier either maintains valid workers’ compensation insurance coverage or has rejected such coverage. An applicant shall provide proof of workers’ compensation insurance coverage or proof of rejection of coverage by filing the specified documents.

Special districts do not issue construction permits. The inclusion of special districts in the bill was an oversight or a simple mistake, and the sponsors were happy to correct the error and remove special districts from the bill.

Position: Amend

Sponsors: Senate: T. Sullivan; House: T. Mauro, M. Lindsay

Effective: Upon Signature

Final Status: Governor signed on May 29, 2026

Continued on page 20



Fire/EMS

House Bill 26-1115

Prepaid Wireless Telecom Services Modifications

The bill makes changes to the laws implementing the prepaid wireless 911 charge, the prepaid wireless 988 charge, and the prepaid wireless telephone disability access charge. Currently, Colorado imposes these three charges on all retail sales of prepaid wireless telecommunication services. HB26-1115 expands the definition of prepaid wireless services; aligns the 988 surcharges with existing telecom taxes and fees; allows electronic filing and payment; and applies the 988 surcharges similarly to the prepaid 911 charge.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: A. Boesenecker, K. Stewart;
Senate: D. Roberts, S. Bright

Effective: Upon signature

Final Status: Governor signed on March 26, 2026

House Bill 26-1238

Designating Emergency Medical Services Essential Services

The bill designates emergency medical services (EMS), including ambulance and air ambulance services, as an essential service in the state. It also clarifies that off-duty EMS providers are not obligated to respond to medical emergencies.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: D. Johnson, M. Lukens; Senate: M. Baisley, W. Lindstedt

Effective: This act takes effect August 12, 2026, unless a petition has been filed

Final Status: Governor signed on May 5, 2026

House Bill 26-1433

Funding to Sustain Fire-Related Services

House Bill 26-1433 grants the authority to the Division of Fire Prevention and Control to accept gifts, grants, and donations from outside sources to increase funding for the Firefighters' Behavioral Health Benefits Trust. As the State continues to face fiscal challenges, SDA, along with the State Fire Chiefs and the

Behavioral Trust, continues to seek additional funding to provide these vital services for firefighters.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: J. McCluskie, E. Velasco; Senate: L. Cutter, D. Roberts

Effective: This act takes effect August 12, 2026, unless a petition has been filed

Final Status: Governor signed on June 1, 2026

Senate Bill 26-184 Vetoed

Firefighter Cancer Benefits & Workers' Compensation

Senate Bill 26-184 expands workers' compensation protections for firefighters who develop certain cancers linked to firefighting duties. It broadens the list of covered cancers and applies the presumption to full-time, part-time, and volunteer firefighters with at least five years of service. The bill changes the legal standard employers must meet to deny claims, requiring "clear and convincing medical evidence" that the illness was not caused by firefighting work.

SDA's opposition to SB26-184 was not rooted in opposition to firefighters, but was rooted in our concerns regarding fiscal responsibility, fundamental fairness, and sound public policy. First, the bill creates significant and ongoing financial exposure for local fire protection districts and ultimately Colorado taxpayers. The current Colorado Firefighter Cancer Trust structure was designed to provide meaningful benefits while managing costs in a fiscally responsible and sustainable manner. Second, the bill also raises serious equal protection and fairness concerns due to the exclusion of state fire services employees. Third, the bill establishes an extraordinarily high evidentiary standard that is irrebuttable in practice.

Finally, this legislation was introduced and rushed through the legislative process without any prior stakeholder engagement with the local governments responsible for funding and administering these systems. The discussion with the local government entities post introduction was abysmal at best and offensive to the special districts, municipalities, and state fire chiefs who worked collaboratively in years past to help establish the Colorado Firefighter Heart and Behavioral Trusts in addition to the Cancer Trust which is the subject of this legislation. In other legislation that includes changes of this magnitude, interim stakeholder meetings are held, and if a bill is introduced late in the process and sparks controversy, the legislation is laid over to allow for all stakeholder input. Colorado has historically addressed firefighter benefit issues through collaborative, data-driven policymaking. SB26-184 did not follow that model.

Position: Oppose

Sponsors: Senate: R. Rodriguez, M. Ball; House: J. Mabrey, M. Carter

Final Status: Governor vetoed on June 3, 2026



General

House Bill 26-1095

Digital Publication for Legal Notice

House Bill 26-1095 requires a newspaper to also publish legal notices online, either on its own website or by providing a link to the notice to a location where the full text of the notice is available, such as the statewide public notice website. Legal notices published online must be free to access and cannot be kept behind a paywall or subscription.

The bill was amended at the request of SDA to require the statewide public notice website to include a list of legal newspapers. This list will ensure that special districts have a central location to check which newspapers meet the requirement to post legal notices.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: L. Suckla, K. Nguyen; Senate: R. Pelton, W. Lindstedt

Effective: This act takes effect August 12, 2026, unless a petition has been filed

Final Status: Governor signed on May 19, 2026

Senate Bill 26-061

Publication Counties Without Legal Newspapers

Senate Bill 26-061 sets a priority order for local governments to publish legal notices. The new statutory order is as follows:

- » Notices should first be published in a county newspaper that has operated continuously for at least one year and qualifies for U.S. periodical mailing privileges.
- » If none exists, governments may use newspapers that meet most requirements but lack paid circulation, or newer newspapers that otherwise qualify.
- » If no eligible newspaper exists in the county, notices may be published in a neighboring county.
- » Special districts covering two counties may publish notices in either county's qualifying newspaper.

Position: Support

Sponsors: Senate: J. Rich, D. Roberts; House: M.

Lukens, C. Richardson

Effective: This act takes effect August 12, 2026, unless a petition has been filed

Final Status: Governor signed on April 20, 2026

Senate Bill 26-117

Permissible Methods of Selling Lottery Tickets

The bill prohibits the use of credit cards to purchase lottery tickets and requires that all lottery tickets be purchased with cash, including checks, money orders, and debit cards. The bill also adds new restrictions for the online sale of lottery products.

SDA opposed the bill due to the potential decline in lottery sales. The decrease in sales would result in a loss of funding for park and recreation districts, which receive Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funding from lottery purchases.

Position: Oppose

Sponsors: Senate: J. Bridges, J. Amabile; House: J. Mabrey, M. Soper

Effective: The bill takes effect upon the Governor's signature

Final Status: Governor signed on May 29, 2026

AI

Senate Bill 26-189

Automated Decision-Making Technology

In 2024, Colorado passed Senate Bill 24-205—Consumer Protections for Artificial Intelligence, making it one of the first states to regulate AI at a broad level. The bill established standards and requirements for those who develop or deploy artificial intelligence (AI) systems to protect against algorithmic discrimination. This includes risk management strategies, impact assessments, and annual reviews. Those who deploy certain AI systems must publicly publish a statement summarizing the types of systems they deploy and how they manage any known risks, and they must notify consumers when AI is used to make certain decisions, including in employment, finance, or healthcare.

However, since the passage of SB24-205, the Colorado General Assembly has been refining the initial legislation in response to significant stakeholder concerns. In 2025, the General Assembly convened a Special Session to address the State's fiscal challenges and to address the impending implementation of SB24-205. While there was significant debate on SB25B-004 over how to address the issues in SB24-205, the only agreement reached was to delay the bill's implementation until June 30, 2026.

Continued on page 22

Prior to the 2026 Session, a stakeholder group convened to reach consensus on legislation. SB26-189 Automated Decision-Making Technology was introduced to replace most of Colorado's original 2024 AI law with a much narrower, more focused approach. SB26-189 states that when organizations use AI to help make important decisions, there must be consumer transparency, an explanation of the data considered, and a way for people to appeal or request a human review of the decision. The Attorney General must adopt rules to clarify disclosure requirements by January 1, 2027.

Under SB26-189, special districts are providers of "essential government services." Special districts that use software to make decisions about hiring, customer service, billing, or public services may be impacted. SDA will monitor the Attorney General's rulemaking, which will clarify the compliance burden and operational expectations.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: R. Rodriguez, J. Coleman;
House: M. Duran, J. Bacon

Effective: Upon the Governor's Signature

Final Status: Governor signed on May 14, 2026

Taxation

Senate Bill 26-116

Property Tax Modifications

As introduced, Senate Bill 26-116 sought to accomplish several goals:

- » Create a new municipal lodging tax framework
- » Change how lodging properties are valued
- » Extend the senior property-tax benefit
- » Amend the business personal property tax calculations

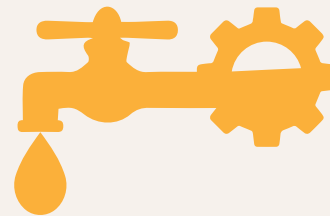
Ultimately, for special districts, SB 26-116 was amended to change the state property tax exemption for business personal property, effective on and after January 1, 2027, by setting the exemption threshold at \$58,000. Additionally, the previous statutory inflation adjustments to the exemption threshold are eliminated going forward.

Position: Oppose

Sponsors: Senate: M. Weissman; House: Y. Zokaie

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 12, 2026)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 1, 2026



Water

House Bill 26-1338

The 2026 Water Projects Bill

This annual bill appropriates funds for the water projects listed in Senate Joint Resolution SJR26-001—Water Projects Eligibility Lists. The list includes additions, modifications, and deletions to the Drinking Water Project Eligibility List and Water Pollution Control Project Eligibility List administered by the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority.

The bill appropriates specific amounts for the 2026-27 state fiscal year from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) construction fund to the CWCB or the Division of Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: K. McCormick, T. Winter; Senate: D. Roberts, C. Simpson

Effective: Upon Signature

Final Status: Governor signed on May 29, 2026

Senate Bill 26-064

Modify Colorado Agricultural Future Loan Program

Senate Bill 26-064 expands the Colorado Agricultural Future Loan Program to allow certain conservation districts and water districts to qualify for loans, particularly to acquire and conserve agricultural land for transfer to eligible farmers or ranchers.

These entities are now eligible to receive funding:

- » Certain C.R.S. Title 37 Irrigation Districts, or
- » Ditch and Reservoir Company created pursuant to C.R.S. Article 42 of Title 7.

Position: Support

Sponsors: Senate: C. Simpson, D. Roberts; House: K. McCormick, M. Soper

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed (August 12, 2026)

Final Status: Governor signed on March 25, 2026



The NSDA Webinar Series is Designed Just for You!

Did you know that the National Special Districts Association (NSDA) has an exclusive webinar series designed specifically for special districts?

These webinars provide practical guidance from trusted business affiliates and subject-matter experts who understand your unique challenges.

Offered once a month from June through November, topics include making sense of federal funding, essential HR tools for smaller districts, improving transparency, and much more.

Below is the schedule as it looks right now.

Thursday, July 16

Federal Funding: Making Sense of It All

Federal funding opportunities are growing—but so is the complexity. NSDA's July webinar lineup helps districts confidently navigate the process from application to advocacy. This step-by-step walkthrough simplifies the process. You'll learn:

- » How to successfully register with SAM.gov
- » What the SF-424 forms actually mean
- » How to avoid common first-time application mistakes
- » Key federal deadlines you cannot afford to miss

Thursday, July 30

Mid-Summer Federal Advocacy Update

Stay informed on the latest federal developments impacting special districts nationwide with NSDA and Manatt. Get timely updates, policy insights, and advocacy priorities directly affecting your district operations and funding landscape.

Thursday, August 13

Maximize Your Mapping Potential with Gridbase

Data is only powerful if you can use it effectively. Discover how advanced mapping tools can improve planning, communication, infrastructure management, and decision-making across your district.

Thursday, September 3

NSDA—Improving Accountability and Transparency in Surplus Sales with GovDeals

Wednesday, September 9

Fall Federal Funding Update with The Ferguson Group (TFG)

Making the Case and Managing the Grant: From Board Buy-In to Post-Award

Winning the grant is only the beginning.

This session tackles the real-world organizational barriers many districts face, including:

- » Limited staff capacity
- » Securing Board support
- » Setting realistic expectations for grant management
- » Understanding post-award compliance requirements

Thursday, November 12

Essential HR Tools for Smaller Districts with CPS HR Consulting

Smaller districts face unique workforce challenges. Learn practical HR tools and strategies to support recruitment, retention, compliance, and employee management—even with limited staff and resources.

For additional information and to register today, please visit the NSDA website at www.nationalspecialdistricts.org and be sure to use the SDA access code to sign in (that code is SDACO8068). 📌



Welcome New SDA Members

District Members

Arapahoe County 911 Authority
Chambers Commercial Business Improvement District
Contrarian Airport Metropolitan District No. 1
Falcon Field Residential Metropolitan District Nos. 1 and 2
Julesburg Fire Protection District
Nunn Fire Protection District
Peakview Metropolitan District No. 1
Pine Ridge Metropolitan District
Schmer Farm Metropolitan District
South Academy Station Metropolitan District Nos. 1-4
Southern Colorado Rail Park Metropolitan District Nos. 2 and 3
Sundown Oaks Metropolitan District
Wildwood Ridge Metropolitan District

Associate Members

Organization	General Type of Services
Colorado Community College System	Public community college system in Colorado
Dibble	Structural engineering, survey + GIS, infrastructure rehabilitation, water + wastewater, flood control, and more
Duke's Root Control	Services to maintain the health of underground infrastructure, including chemical root control; inspection and cleaning; GIS and mapping; and more
F-CIO.net LLC	Technology consulting firm providing fractional CIO and IT advisory services
Gessner Engineering	Civil, structural, and geotechnical engineering; land surveying; and construction materials testing
JHL Constructors	Construction company focused on infrastructure and vertical building projects and services
Munibit	Website platform built specifically for local governments
Taylor Kohrs	Full-service contractor
Vida HR	Human Resources outsourcing; payroll and payroll tax services; benefits administration, and more

Fall Protection Training

Guest article by the Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool

The Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool remains committed to our more than 2,500 public entities as *Your Risk Management Partner*. Each month, we are focusing on a different program or service we offer our membership, either at no cost or at a discounted rate. This month, we're highlighting our Fall Protection Training.

Complimentary Fall Protection Training

Falls remain one of the leading causes of workplace injuries and fatalities across a wide range of industries. Whether employees are working on ladders, rooftops, elevated platforms, or around open edges, understanding how to prevent falls is essential to maintaining a safe work environment.

That's why our Safety Team offers complimentary fall protection training as part of your CSD Pool membership benefits.

This practical, instructor-led



training is designed to help organizations recognize fall hazards, understand applicable protection methods, and strengthen their overall safety culture. Participants will gain valuable knowledge about:

- » Types of fall prevention and fall protection
- » Common fall protection systems and how they are used
- » Best practices for equipment inspection and maintenance
- » Emergency response and rescue procedures following a fall incident

Our experienced safety professionals provide real-world guidance that can help your organization reduce risk, improve compliance, and protect employees who work at elevated heights.

Whether you're looking to refresh existing knowledge, train new employees, or enhance your organization's safety program, we're here to help. Our team is available to answer questions, discuss your specific workplace challenges, and tailor training to meet your organization's needs.

Request your fall protection training today at csdpool.org/request-a-safety-consultation.

To learn more, visit our website at csdpool.org/safety-consulting.

As *Your Risk Management Partner*, we remain committed to providing specialized coverages tailored for public entities, exemplary claims support, and safety and loss prevention services to ensure everyone within the organization—from Board members to supervisors and staff—has the tools they need to succeed. If you have any questions about the resources mentioned here, please visit csdpool.org or message us at csdpool.org/connect. 🍌



Join Us on July 14 to Learn All About Our New Metro District Manager Certification Program!

As we first announced in the April newsletter, we are thrilled to have partnered with the Metro District Education Coalition (MDEC) and the University of Denver to develop the **Metro District Manager Certification Program, a rigorous 12-week professional development initiative designed specifically for Colorado's metro district leaders.**

And now we're ready to roll out all the details!

Join us for our informative webinar on Tuesday, July 14 at 12:00 pm as we discuss everything you need to know!

This unique program equips current and aspiring district managers with the advanced

competencies, ethical framework, and strategic mindset required to lead modern metropolitan districts effectively.

Through a balanced blend of technical training, policy alignment, ethical leadership, and practical application, participants will gain the skills necessary to manage complex metro district operations while upholding the highest standards of transparency, equity, and community responsiveness.

This is one you don't want to miss! For more information and to register, please visit the SDA website at www.sdaco.org. 🍌

*See you in Keystone!
2026 SDA Annual Conference
September 15-17, 2026*



OMB Proposes Major Overhaul of Federal Grant Rules

On May 29, 2026, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published a proposed rule (91 FR 32198) that would significantly revise the regulations governing federal grants and cooperative agreements (2 CFR Part 200). These rules touch virtually all federal financial assistance—transportation, water, housing, energy, and public safety grants among them.

The proposed changes could affect grant administration, compliance obligations, and funding strategy for special districts.

The National Special Districts Association (NSDA) Grants team encourages special districts

to submit public comments by July 13, 2026 at www.regulations.gov (docket OMB-2026-0034). Input from districts, with concrete data and examples, may help shape the final rule that is targeted to take effect on October 1, 2026.

The Ferguson Group and NSDA will continue to monitor this rulemaking and share updates as guidance becomes available.

Please also visit the SDA website at www.sdaco.org to review a detailed memo from The Ferguson Group which walks through the most relevant provisions of the proposed changes and what they may mean for your district. 🦋

**COLLINS | COLE
WINN | ULMER**



COLORADO'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS
Statewide Experience. Local Knowledge.

📞 720.617.0080

✉ info@cogovlaw.com

🌐 www.cogovlaw.com



Scan this QR Code with your 'smart' phone to visit us on the Web

Ask us about our **Fall Protection Training**



Included with your CSD Pool Membership

Our Trainings Cover:

- **Types of Fall Prevention**
- **Fall Protection Systems**
- **Best Practices & More**

Schedule a training session for your district

