

Special District Association of Colorado

SDA NEWS

JULY 2024

Supporting Community-Based Government

2024 Legislative Summary

Upcoming SDA Events!
SDA Annual Conference
September 10-12



- Safe & Liquid Investment Options
- The Benefit of Two Funds
- Rated AAAm / AAf S-1
- Online Access
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Designed by Emmett Jordan

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

Now is the Time to Start Making Your Plans to Join Us!

It's hard to believe, but the **2024 SDA Annual Conference, September 10-12**, will be here before we know it!

We are very excited to bring back our hybrid format, 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 two 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, all the breakout sessions will also be recorded and available to all attendees after Conference** to go back and watch the sessions again, either as a refresher or to catch up on anything they missed. We know this format provides huge benefits for all our attendees, and we are thrilled to offer it again this year.

Our lineup of breakout sessions this year is stellar, and the sessions start early on Tuesday morning. Altogether we have over 40 sessions planned, which will provide an opportunity for participants to hear from a variety of experts on pertinent issues for special districts. On top of all of this, 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 6-7 for all the details).

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. We will have sessions on:

- » Cybersecurity
- » Website compliance

- » Going to the voters for funding
- » Creating a communications program that matches your mission
- » Navigating employment issues with civility
- » Funding options for water projects
- » Tips for compliance with Colorado's open records laws
- » Guide to a successful election in May 2025

This is just the tip of the iceberg so stay tuned for more details on all the sessions we have planned!

In addition, we are bringing back our **Discussion Forums on Tuesday afternoon!** We added this feature to the schedule last year, and the dedicated time for focused conversations on specific topics was very valuable. This will once again be a perfect opportunity for you to meet other attendees from your district type and/or who are facing similar challenges. We are finalizing the details of the topics and our discussion leaders so keep an eye out for more details to come!

We are also bringing back **the outdoor event tent space that will be set up on the 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 4

Tuesday, September 10

- » **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, Pete Blank**. Pete will be sharing some enlightening lessons from popular TV shows on organizational culture. He'll have you laughing and learning at the same time!
- » The day will be filled with **educational and timely sessions** for both Board members and managers 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 **Justin Forsett**. Many of you will remember Justin from his many years in the NFL, and he will be sharing his inspirational message on building resilient teams.
- » Tuesday afternoon is when we will offer our **Discussion Forums** (see above)! Our topics are really coming together so stayed 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!
- » This year we have turned Tuesday night into a **game night!** The casino tables were so popular last year that we have moved them to Tuesday, and we are bringing in more tables! We'll of course also have lots of **amazing food and even other games to play!**



Wednesday, September 11

- » **Sarita Maybin** will kick off the day with her enlightening program **"If You Can't Say Something Nice, What DO You Say?: Practical Solutions for Working Together Better."** Sarita will provide practical approaches and important tips for delivering challenging messages and maintaining positive relationships.
- » Pertinent and informative sessions will take place all morning, with a **goodie break** in between.
- » Our lunchtime keynote speaker, **Jon Petz**, will have you step into a world of wonder and discover the secrets to creating extraordinary value in every interaction in his one-of-a-kind keynote experience.
- » Along with additional educational sessions, the **Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool Annual Membership Meeting** will take place on Wednesday afternoon. This meeting will feature a keynote presentation from **Sam Light, the Deputy Executive Director/General Counsel for CIRSA**. Sam will be discussing the fiduciary responsibility and legal liabilities of Board members and management staff.
- » If you missed the first goodie break in the morning, you can catch another one in the afternoon!
- » Back by popular demand is our **Boots and BBQ event 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 12

- » At Thursday's keynote breakfast, **John Sileo** will walk through the fascinating and multi-faceted world of cybersecurity and discuss how you can build a powerful cyber defense strategy.
- » There will be a **full track of sessions following breakfast**, and then we will be holding a **special panel discussion dedicated to property tax issues in the main ballroom**. Given the ongoing and significant conversations around property tax issues, we are thrilled for the opportunity to dedicate time to focus on this topic.
- » 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 2024 SDA Annual Conference, September 10-12 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! 🍷



Check Out These Keynote Speakers Who Will Be Joining Us at the 2024 SDA Annual Conference!

We have an amazing lineup of keynote speakers for this year's Annual Conference! We are so excited to be able to host this enlightening group of experts who will provide the perfect complement to the information-packed breakout sessions we will be offering. Their keynote presentations will round out our event perfectly! Read on to find out more...

Tuesday Keynote Breakfast

Pete Blank

***Achieve Your "Cultural Vision"
through the Magic of "Tele Vision"***



The Carousel of Progress attraction at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom shares a scene where television has just been invented, and the host shares his vision by stating, "You know, I predict the day when millions of people will learn Latin and Greek sitting in front of their TV sets." While that vision may not be 100% accurate, the truth is that many television shows contain hundreds of examples (both good and bad) to help us deliver on our vision of a positive, engaging organizational culture.

This program will entertain and enlighten you with actual license-protected scenes from television shows including The Office, Ted Lasso, Welcome to Wrexham, The West Wing, Parks & Recreation, and more. Participants will learn from cited research and discover actionable items to implement back at work to enhance their organizational culture. But perhaps most important, participants will laugh!

Tuesday Awards Luncheon and
Keynote Speaker

Justin Forsett

***Greatness Grows Best in the Shadows: A
Playbook for Building Resilient Teams***



In this engaging and uplifting presentation, former NFL running back Justin Forsett will share his motivational and inspirational messages about facing challenges, staying prepared, maintaining a positive mindset, working hard, and overcoming obstacles to achieve success and personal growth.

You've heard the expression, "It's not how many times you get knocked down that counts; it's how many times you get back up." Now imagine getting "knocked down," or in this case, fired, eight times in nine years...AND STILL coming out on the VERY TOP of your game.

Known for his speed and agility on the field, Justin is now a respected leader and businessman off the field. And as an award-winning motivational speaker, he will share his stories of sacrifice, setbacks, and success.



Wednesday Keynote Breakfast

Sarita Maybin

If You Can't Say Something Nice, What DO You Say?: Practical Solutions for Working Together Better

In this lively presentation, Sarita Maybin will teach you practical approaches and positive phrases for delivering challenging messages with tact and respect. She will show you how to determine whether to confront a situation or let it go; a three-step process for conveying concerns with tact and respect; and how to soften the sting when giving negative feedback or bad news. Most importantly, Sarita will provide important tips on how to maintain positive relationships even when delivering not-so-nice news.



Wednesday Keynote Lunch

Jon Petz

Rules for Amazement

Step into a world of wonder and discover the secrets to creating extraordinary value in every interaction in this one-of-a-kind keynote experience. "Rules for Amazement" is led by Jon Petz, keynote speaker, best-selling author, and world's only "Amazement Artist."

In this keynote experience, Jon peels back the curtain to reveal the secret methods along with the art and psychology of true amazement. That's when wonder is discovered and engagement intensifies to create powerful and impactful moments. Apply these same principles in your culture and your business to create more value than ever before. Who wouldn't want to harness that Moment of Amazement to get increased engagement, attention, and retention in your organization?

Jon invites you to unlock the amazement effect within yourself today!

With three essential rules for amazement, you'll witness a real-time engagement on stage and learn how to apply these rules off of the stage. After you walk out, you'll carry these rules with you, ready to create more value in every facet of your life and work.



Thursday Keynote Breakfast

John Sileo

Blockbuster Cybersecurity in a Zero-Trust World

Hackers don't just adapt to change; they bank on it. Has your mindset evolved? The rapid expansion of remote workforces, ransomware gangs, cloud jacking, IoT hacking, supply chain attacks, social engineering, and disinformation campaigns have altered the way we must defend our data, reputation, and profits. Cybersecurity doesn't grow from shinier tools, but from the powerful intersection between humans and technology. In this keynote, John leverages potent lessons learned from losing everything to cybercrime and decades of real-world experience to build a Blockbuster Framework for analyzing, organizing, and communicating your powerful cyber defense strategy.

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A Special Thanks to SDA's Platinum Sponsors!

We are thrilled to be working with our 16 Platinum Sponsors throughout the course of this year and for our upcoming Annual Conference! Below is a brief background on each company, many written directly from their perspectives. Please take a minute to learn more about the great services they provide and how they might be able to help your district. And stop by and visit them while you're at Conference in September!



The Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool is **Your Risk Management Partner.**

We are not your typical insurance company. Because we are member-owned, we don't report to shareholders—we report to our members. Everything we do focuses on life safety, preventing debilitating injury, and the preservation of district property. Our staff of dedicated industry professionals has pulled together comprehensive coverage products and mission-critical services tailored specifically for special districts. Working with members, our staff's mission is to ensure every district employee returns home at the end of his or her shift.

Visit csdpool.org to discover why more than 2,500 organizations trust the Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool with their risk management.

Special districts are our focus and helping them is our passion. Each year, we are amazed by their dedication to their organization and their community; how kind and respectful they are when we meet with them; and how they always

want to make their district better. Even if members have been with us for a long time, they are always willing to hear suggestions and recommendations to help them manage both current and future risks. Whether we're assisting with safety and loss prevention or discussing coverage options to make sure no risk goes unaddressed, our team comes to work every day to look out for special districts and make sure they have the support they need to continue being the best they can be.



COLOTRUST (Colorado Local Government Liquid Asset Trust) is Colorado's original and largest pooled investment trust in the state. Designed specifically for Colorado's local governments, COLOTRUST's pools seek to provide a convenient method for investing in a range of high-quality, short- to medium-term securities carefully chosen to provide for prioritizing safety, and liquidity and yield.

Founded in 1985, COLOTRUST has since experienced rapid growth in both assets and participation. Continually striving to meet the evolving needs of local governments, COLOTRUST proudly offers three investment options that fit into a variety of fixed-income investment strategies, together creating a comprehensive approach to investing.

COLOTRUST is a Platinum Sponsor because it recognizes the importance of SDA when it comes to the support and education of special districts across the state. Currently, special districts make up more than half of the valued participants of COLOTRUST.



Community Resource Services of Colorado (CRS) offers cost-effective, high-quality customized services to more than 250 special district clients. Its approach is to listen as clients outline their needs and then develop a plan that is cost-effective in achieving the clients' goals and objectives.

CRS is dedicated to being your one-stop source in effectively providing services in management, accounting, financial consulting, elections, billing services, project management, and field supervision. Its clients can depend on CRS' highly ethical, experienced, and skilled consulting team.

CRS has been a Platinum Sponsor of SDA for several years, strongly supporting SDA's efforts to provide effective communication, research, legislative support, administrative assistance, and educational opportunities to its members, thereby improving the function of districts throughout the state.

CRS believes that SDA's leadership in helping special districts serve the public in the most efficient and economical manner possible is invaluable.

Founded in 2005, CRS has grown to 25 people on staff with 250 years of combined experience in the industry. Sue Blair, Chief Executive Officer of CRS, has served on the SDA Board since 2013.

**COLLINS | COLE
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Collins Cole Flynn Winn & Ulmer, PLLC is a local government law firm powered by experience, innovation, and collaboration. The five founding partners have practiced together for decades.

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Together, we bring unparalleled experience in special district law, and we implement a team-oriented approach to deliver high quality and cost-effective legal services to our clients.

Our attorneys and paralegals have deep and longstanding involvement with the Special District Association of Colorado. Jim Collins co-founded SDA in 1975, and Allison Ulmer is now the Executive Vice President.

We work closely with SDA to provide seminars, publications, and other educational materials relating to the legal needs of special districts throughout the year, such as:

- » Updating the Board Member Manual
- » Traveling throughout Colorado to provide the SDA Annual Regional Workshops for Board Members and employees
- » Speaking at the SDA Annual Conference
- » Supporting SDA's legislative activities

Our clients trust our guidance and advocacy. We strive to help our clients both solve their current legal problems and prevent future ones by providing proactive and pragmatic legal representation based on our decades of experience.

We take pride in the respectful long-term working relationships we have developed with our clients. Working collaboratively with local governments allows us to understand the needs of the communities our clients serve, and to help serve those needs effectively. You can learn more about us at www.cogovlaw.com, or you can contact us at 720.617.0080 or info@cogovlaw.com.

CSAFE is a local government investment pool established in 1988, celebrating many years of service. We offer two investment funds for cash and investment dollars. Our focus is to provide Colorado's special districts safety of principal, liquidity of funds, and competitive yields through our funds.

The "CSAFE Cash" fund is for overnight and weekly cash demands. The "Colorado Core" fund is for your district's savings and core funds. Both funds provide a stable NAV (Net Asset Value) and professional money management.

CSAFE is proud to be a member of SDA for 36 years and a Platinum Sponsor for over 20 years. CSAFE treasures its relationship with SDA and many hundreds of special districts.

We look forward to visiting with you at the conference. Please refer to our website for more information. www.csafe.org



Highstreet TCW Risk Management is a dedicated full-service agency serving Colorado's special districts. Our goal is to simplify your insurance program management by offering one agency, consulting team, and service team for your workers' compensation, property and liability, and employee benefits needs. With an experienced service team boasting an average of 20 years in the industry, we assist special districts in designing tailored insurance programs, implementing formalized risk management strategies, and developing proactive claims management processes to minimize costs and injuries while ensuring timely return to work.

Our Public Sector Health Care Group (PSHCG) provides a health insurance pool for small and mid-sized governmental agencies, allowing access to employee benefits otherwise unavailable as independent districts. By joining like-minded employers, PSHCG member agencies benefit from a larger, more stable collective, offering a wider range of coverage and pricing options.

Highstreet TCW Risk Management is a Platinum Sponsor because, it says, "SDA and special districts individually have been so supportive of our organization that we would not have it any other way." The firm was founded in 1945 and provides services to more than 1100 special districts in Colorado. Mark Carlson is the President of the Commercial Branch and Cindy Myers is the President of TCW's Employee Benefits Branch.



Colorado Employer Benefit Trust (CEBT) is the health benefits pool endorsed by SDA for more than 25 years to provide medical, dental, vision, life, and disability benefits for SDA-member employers. CEBT is a not-for-profit, self-funded governmental health benefit trust providing quality benefits and excellent service at a reasonable cost to Colorado governmental entities for over 40 years. It currently has approximately 37,000 members from 450 participating public employers of which 250 are special districts.

CEBT chose to be a Platinum Sponsor to honor its long-standing relationship with SDA, and to demonstrate its commitment to special districts throughout the state of Colorado and their need for quality affordable employee health benefits. Founded in 1980, CEBT has a staff of 38 dedicated

Continued on page 13

ABOUT US

Since 1995, the Colorado Employer Benefit Trust has partnered with the Special District Association of Colorado to provide benefit solutions that are superior and affordable. With more than 240 Special Districts participating in the Trust, CEBT is recognized for its comprehensive benefit offerings, exceptional customer service and consistently low rate increases.

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to serving CEBT's public sector customers. Bobby Otte is a Senior Director for WTW, which serves as the administrator for CEBT.

CEBT has been a partner of the Special District Association of Colorado since 1995. The special districts do a lot to serve the communities across Colorado, so being able to provide high quality benefits as a long-term solution allows us to make one part of their job easier and adds value and meaning to the work we do. It's an honor to be able to support special districts, and we look forward to continuing that relationship.



CEGR Law is a team of dedicated local government and public utility attorneys and paralegals working for more than 40 years serving Colorado's communities as general counsel, and providing specialized services, including conducting public elections and water rights administration and litigation.

Our lawyers have worked in nearly all counties in Colorado to organize and advise local government entities engaged in multiple community services through metropolitan districts, and locally managed government services of all types including water, sanitation, fire, EMS/ambulance, hospital, library, and park and recreation districts. We have experience advising on and solving our client's legal issues associated with water rights and litigation; real property transactions; construction contracting; local government elections and TABOR compliance; employment matters; water and wastewater system operations and permitting; bond financing; and intergovernmental contracting.

CEGR Law fosters community relationships and is skilled at working collaboratively with other agencies and their counsel to create partnerships that improve efficiencies through intergovernmental authorities and contacts for combined services. We support all types of special districts, from small rural special districts that rely on volunteer involvement to large service districts with professional staffs providing services to hundreds of thousands of customers and property owners to metropolitan districts that enable the creation of new neighborhood communities and redevelopment of blighted areas.

Special districts are as unique as the communities in which they operate. While we have collectively been involved in legal services to special districts across Colorado for more than forty years, the landscape is always evolving, and each year presents a new challenge to tackle together with our clients. We could not imagine a more interesting and dynamic community of interest, or one with such an ability to impact Colorado residents, than that created by local government.

We take pride in our clients and the valuable services they bring to their local communities and enjoy working collaboratively with elected and appointed public officials and Boards of Directors to address the unique needs of each project. That's why our motto is "Building and Protecting Colorado's Communities."

CEGR Law wholeheartedly supports SDA and the public education and advocacy work that SDA advances on behalf of all special districts. We are thrilled to once again be a Platinum Sponsor of SDA and hope to see you all at this year's Annual Conference in Keystone!



STREAMLINE

Streamline is a website platform that creates user-friendly communication and compliance tools for special districts. Our goal is to simplify the lives of special districts by providing them with the necessary resources to overcome challenges such as limited budgets and staff. We offer a range of solutions, including a website platform with built-in compliance checklists, professional mass communication tools, an intranet system for secure internal operations, and an online payment processing tool. Our platform is designed to make back-office tasks easy and self-service, allowing a single staff member to handle multiple tasks without requiring specialized training or additional hires. With Streamline, special districts can streamline their operations, improve efficiency, and engage their community. Find out more at www.getstreamline.com



Ramey Environmental Compliance provides contract operational services for domestic drinking water, domestic wastewater, and industrial wastewater facilities for special districts, municipalities, and private owners. Ramey Environmental Compliance also provides consulting services in many areas of the water/wastewater industry along with an Equipment Services Division, which provides service and maintenance on existing and new equipment used in the industry.

Ramey Environmental has chosen to be a passionate part of SDA, and most of its clients are

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Representing and
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special districts that are associated with SDA. SDA provides education, leadership, and training opportunities that aren't offered by other associations. SDA also keeps its members informed on legislative and regulatory alerts that affect the costs associated with providing water and wastewater services. This is truly beneficial to Ramey Environmental because when clients are informed on the current status of regulations, it makes Ramey Environmental's job easier to perform.

The company was founded in 1992 and incorporated in 1997. Ramey Environmental currently has 42 employees. R. Wayne Ramey is President of the company, and Linda Ramey is its Chief Financial Officer.

REC joined the PERC Water family in November 2023. Established in 1998, PERC Water is an innovative water infrastructure company that develops, designs, builds, operates, and manages water infrastructure throughout the United States. Their unique project approach results in certainty of cost, schedule, and water quality for their clients. PERC Water can uniquely provide such certainty at an early stage of a project by leveraging their Customized Design Report. Their trademarked and award-winning designs allow for an efficient and environmentally-sensitive solution to water recycling. We look forward to the future of our new journey.



SpencerFane

Spencer Fane LLP serves as general counsel and special counsel to scores of Colorado's special districts and municipalities, including cities, fire protection districts, water and sanitation districts, metropolitan districts, business improvement districts, intergovernmental

authorities, and others. It provides services regarding the formation and representation of these entities in the areas of municipal law, election law, TABOR issues, finance, environmental law, land use, eminent domain, litigation, and other related areas. In addition, the firm serves as bond counsel to numerous political subdivisions throughout the state.

Spencer Fane has been a Platinum Sponsor for years because the firm recognizes that SDA provides essential guidance, education, and legislative representative services to all special districts in the state, and those efforts need to be supported, not only financially, but with the firm's active presence and cooperation.

Founded in 1952, Spencer Fane has more than 520 attorneys and 200 support staff in 26 offices across the U.S. It notes that its attorneys were instrumental in writing the Colorado legislation establishing special districts, as well as the laws governing the electoral process for not only special districts but Colorado municipalities generally. The firm says, "Special districts and municipalities require special knowledge. Let us put our experience to work for you." Denver-based Partner Tom George chairs the Spencer Fane Special Districts group, which is comprised of 10 attorneys and 7 experienced paralegals and support staff.

Spencer Fane attorneys and business professionals enjoy supporting the dedicated and hard-working individuals who serve on Boards, work as staff, and volunteer their time and energy to help their local governments and communities thrive.



Pinnacle Consulting Group, Inc. was founded in 2004 with a focus on serving the needs of local governments. We understand the complexity, compliance requirements, budget limitations, and ever-evolving needs of special districts.

Pinnacle has more than 50 dedicated employees working to meet the goals of each client. We are structured as three client service departments: Finance & Accounting, Management & Administration, and Capital Project Management & Facility Operations. These departments specialize in their individual area of expertise but work collaboratively as a team to provide excellent dependable service. We have proven processes and procedures but remain flexible, which enables us to custom-tailor services to meet the specific needs of our clients in an efficient manner.

Pinnacle's mission is to build lasting mutually beneficial relationships with our clients and community by delivering sound solutions and exceptional service. This mission, along with our core values and cultural characteristics, guides our foundational commitment to our valued clients and our working partners to facilitate success for each and every district we manage. Pinnacle takes great pride in enabling and enhancing communities where people live and thrive.



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Continued on page 17



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Gregory & Associates specializes in helping special districts build employer-sponsored retirement plans to help districts attract and retain talented employees. We're proud to serve any special district no matter the size, and we take responsibility for our service. Gregory & Associates currently services over 40 retirement plans for SDA members and enjoys working with countless individuals currently or previously employed by a special district. We enjoy taking care of those that are there to take care of us and our community.

The company was founded in 1969 in Denver and has three dedicated staff members to support its President, Chad M. Alevras, CRPC®.

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"We truly enjoy the relationships we have made and the sense of community in the special district space. Never before have we been surrounded by a higher concentration of kind, competent, and talented professionals."



Fromm & Company is a family-owned firm providing accounting, management, election, billing, auditing, and compliance services to special districts across the state. Our firm is comprised of individuals with vast experience in the special district world. This experience provides Board members the ability to govern their district while Fromm & Company takes care of the necessary duties to ensure the district is operating smoothly and in compliance with State regulations.

The firm is led by Cathy Fromm, CPA, who has been in the local government finance arena for over 35 years, including ten years as a municipal Finance Director. Cathy has also served as President, Vice-President, and Treasurer for the Colorado Government Finance Officers Association (CGFOA). Other team members' experience encompasses over 20 years in administration, accounting, compliance, management, election, and paralegal services to special districts, in addition to Big 4 CPA auditing experience. Another service Fromm & Company can offer our clients is construction management, with over 40 years of experience amongst our Team members.

SDA provides a wealth of information and guidance to its members. These members are our clients. Fromm & Company values this resource and is honored to be a Platinum Sponsor. 🍂

A Look Back at the Legislative Session that Was

The 2024 Legislative Session is in the books. The time frame for the Governor to sign, veto, or let laws go into effect without signature is past. Term limited legislators now turn their attention to different political opportunities or are excited to return to private life. Soon the party primaries will narrow the field for the November General Election. Most of the legislators left standing will focus on door knocking, lit dropping, and fundraising. In other words, “The Beat Goes On.”

This recap of the Legislative Session highlights bills from across the spectrum that impact special districts. From employment law changes to workers’ comp modifications, the cross section of legislation touches on much of the special district world. This summary provides a broad-stroke overview of some of the bills that were considered in the recently concluded Legislative Session.

Housing, Guns, and Taxes Dominate the Conversation

Housing

Following a year where the most significant legislation for housing reform died on the last day of the Legislative Session in 2023, the 2024 Session once again had a housing theme from the very beginning. This year, instead of an all-encompassing bill (omnibus bill), at least 20 bills were considered in this past Legislative Session. Most of the bills that were introduced were ultimately passed and signed into law. So, the old adage is correct: it is possible to eat an entire elephant, if you take it one bite at a time.

Guns

House and Senate Democrats worked on gun control again this year with at least a dozen bills, however, on some major issues they could not get the support necessary to pass the bills. A quick roundup of legislation saw increased requirements to obtain a conceal carry permit

with more rigorous training; the Colorado Bureau of Investigation will have to investigate illegal firearms transfers and other violations of state firearms law; and new restrictions, with exceptions, on bringing firearms into governmental buildings were all approved. Finally, voters will decide on a new excise tax on firearms in November.

Taxes

The conversation around lowering state income taxes has found a temporary resolution. After years of talking about it, the Legislature was able to agree on a measure to reduce state income taxes. Income tax relief will come in the form of a temporary income tax rate reduction that reactivates the temporary income tax rate reduction. This is the second TABOR refund mechanism for tax years 2024 through 2034. To refund a portion of the FY 2023-24 surplus, the income tax rate for tax year 2024 is temporarily reduced from

4.40 percent to 4.25 percent. In subsequent years, the amount of the income tax rate reduction that is triggered depends on the amount of the TABOR surplus remaining after reimbursements to local governments for homestead property tax exemptions.

And now for the big tax news, the property tax legislation that is on all our minds came to us in the last three days of the Session as Senate Bill 24-233—Concerning Property Taxes. The legislation gradually decreases commercial property assessment over three years and introduces reductions in property valuations for residential properties. The bill also establishes a property tax limit of 5.5% starting in property tax year 2025, which limit can be exceeded by a majority vote of the people in the local government. More information can be found below.

The SDA bill tracker with more bills and more information regarding the property tax legislation can be found on the SDA website at www.sdaco.org.

By the Numbers

Number of bills introduced

705

Bills passed and/or signed

525

Bills Postponed Indefinitely (Pl'd)

105

Bills that failed by other means

75

Employment

Senate Bill 24-113

Safer Youth Sports

SB24-113, for local government entities, requires a criminal history record check (“background check”) of each person prior to employment as a coach of a youth athletic activity by a local government. The background check must determine if the person being investigated has been convicted of, or pled nolo contendere for felony child abuse, a felony of unlawful sexual behavior. Any person who has been convicted of, pled nolo contendere to felony child abuse, a felony of unlawful sexual behavior, or an offense committed in any other state is disqualified from employment as a coach of a youth athletic activity.

A local government may charge a person a fee for the criminal history record check. A local government may rely on the results of a criminal history record check when making hiring and employment decisions and is immune from civil liability unless the local government knows the information is false or acts with reckless disregard concerning the reliability of the information.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: J. Coleman, T. Exum; House: J. Joseph, J. Willford

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on May 17, 2024

Senate Bill 24-232

Public Employees’ Workplace Protections

SB 24-232 amended the Protections for Public Workers Act (SB 23-111) by excluding the following from protected activities: recognition or negotiation of a collective bargaining agreement; some of the actions of managerial or confidential public employees; limitations necessary to maintain nonpartisan role of legislative, elections, or judicial staff; and actions that materially disrupt an employee’s duties, the public employer’s operations, or the delivery of public services.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: T. Sullivan, R. Rodriguez; House: B. Titone, S. Woodrow

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 7, 2024

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Fire/EMS

House Bill 24-1006

Assist Rural Community Wildfire-Related Grant Application

Wildfire Matters Review Committee. HB24-1006 directs the Rural Opportunity Office in the Office of Economic Development to assist Colorado State Forest Service to establish a rural grant navigator grant program to provide grant money to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) providing outreach and technical assistance, including grant writing assistance, to rural communities seeking to apply for state or federal grants for wildfire mitigation prevention, response, or risk management efforts and preparedness.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: M. Snyder, E. Velasco; Senate: L. Cutter, P. Will

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on May 20, 2024

House Bill 24-1024

Extend Outreach Campaigns Wildfire Risk Mitigation

Wildfire Matters Review Committee. HB24-1024 requires the Colorado State Forest Service to conduct enhanced wildfire awareness month outreach campaigns through 2027 and other outreach efforts through the 2026-27 state fiscal year that are designed to increase awareness of wildfire risk mitigation by residents in the wildland-urban interface.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: T. Story, E. Velasco; Senate: L. Cutter

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 20, 2024

House Bill 24-1042

Fire & Police Pension Law Technical Corrections

Pension Review Commission. HB24-1042 updates obsolete statutory cross references. In addition, the bill updates the definition of member in the new hire pension plan statute to clarify that a portion of the definition applies only for purposes of the statewide money purchase plan. The bill also repeals an inapplicable portion of the definition of member in the statewide retirement plan statute.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: M. Snyder, R. Taggart; Senate: K. Van Winkle, C. Kolker

Effective: March 6, 2024

Final Status: Governor signed on March 6, 2024

House Bill 24-1043

State Contribution to Fire & Police Pension Association Death & Disability Fund

HB24-1043 directs the State Treasurer to transfer \$2.05 million per year from FY 2024-25 to FY 2059-60 to the Death and Disability Payment Cash Fund, increasing state expenditures and statutory public entity revenue in those years.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: E. Hamrick, R. Taggart; Senate: K. Van Winkle, C. Hansen

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 28, 2024

House Bill 24-1219

First Responder Employer Health Benefit Trusts

HB24-1219 makes two major changes to current firefighter benefit programs:

- » First, the bill expands state funding for the firefighter heart and circulatory malfunction benefits program to include paid part-time and volunteer firefighters.
- » Second, the bill provides state funding for the firefighter cancer benefits program for eligible full-time, part-time, and volunteer firefighters.
- » State funding ramps up over several years, with full funding in year five and thereafter.

For peace officers, the bill requires an employer to participate in a funded trust to provide cardiovascular screenings, at a minimum, and other health

screenings and prevention. Like the firefighter trusts, the trust is reimbursed by the state for providing the benefits, and if funding to reimburse the trust is insufficient, then the requirement for employers to provide the specified program is optional.

Sponsors: House: J. McCluskie, M. Lynch; Senate: K. Mullica, B. Pelton

Position: Support

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 29, 2024

Senate Bill 24-089

Firefighter Heart Benefits Trust

SB24-089 requires that government employers of firefighters participate in a multiple employer health trust that provides benefits for a heart or circulatory health issue. The bill removes the option of an employer to provide these benefits through accident insurance or an insurance pool, and only allows self-insurance under limited conditions.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: R. Rodriguez; House: L. Daugherty, R. Weinberg

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 24, 2024

Senate Bill 24-194

Special District Emergency Services Funding

SB24-194 authorizes fire and ambulance districts to collect an impact fee on the construction of new buildings, structures, facilities, or improvements including oil or gas wells and related equipment and on previously improved or unimproved real property within the district's boundaries if the impact fee is related to the overall cost of the district's services. Districts must notify impacted local governments no later than 60 days before adopting the impact fee, and those impacted may file an action for declaratory judgment to determine whether the impact fee schedule complies with the provisions in this bill.

The bill also permits fire and ambulance districts to levy a uniform sales tax at a rate determined by the Board of the district, subject to the approval of district voters. Any sales tax approved by voters in a fire or ambulance district must be collected, administered, and enforced by the Colorado Department of Revenue (DOR).

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: D. Roberts, P. Will; House: B. McLachlan, R. Armagost

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the

General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on May 22, 2024



General

House Bill 24-1062

Warrants for Metro Sewage Disposal Districts

HB24-1062 allows authorized metropolitan sewage disposal district inspectors to enter and inspect, in a reasonable time and manner, any property for violations of an approved industrial pretreatment program. If the property owner denies the inspectors entry, the district may obtain a warrant directly from a district or county court to inspect the property.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: B. Titone, G. Evans; Senate: K. Priola, R. Gardner

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on March 17, 2024

House Bill 24-1107

Judicial Review of Local Land Use Decision

HB24-1107 requires courts to award reasonable attorney fees to defendants who win any case involving a judicial review of a local land use decision, unless the person bringing forward the case is the land use applicant. The bill also allows governments to treat a local land use decision as valid while any judicial review of the case is pending.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: S. Bird, W. Lindstedt; Senate: F. Winter, J. Bridges

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 30, 2024

Continued on page 22

House Bill 24-1172

County Revitalization Authorities

HB24-1172 allows counties to create county revitalization authorities (CRAs) to promote economic revitalization in unincorporated areas of the state. CRAs may use resources like tax increment financing (TIF) and private financing to conduct revitalization projects according to approved plans. Plans must be reviewed by county planning commissions and are subject to the typical notice and public decision-making processes. The bill outlines the requirements for counties choosing to create and administer a CRA.

Under the bill, CRAs do not have the power to levy or assess property taxes or any other taxes. Taxing entities that overlap a CRA, other than the county itself, *may* request to join the authority and can join through a public hearing held by the authority. Tax increment financing approved with a county revitalization plan is limited to a 30-year period under the bill.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: R. Taggart, S. Bird; Senate: B. Kirkmeyer, K. Mullica

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 4, 2024

House Bill 24-1267

Metropolitan District Covenant Enforcement Policy

HB24-1267 requires metropolitan districts to comply with certain procedural requirements for covenant enforcement and design review services. Under the requirements of HB24-1267, a Board of a metropolitan district:

- » Must adopt written policies;
- » Must establish a fair and impartial fact-finding process that gives a unit owner notice and an opportunity for a hearing;
- » Cannot foreclose on a lien based on resident's delinquent fees, penalties, or other charges owed to the district;
- » Cannot charge a unit owner for any court costs and attorney fees when a court determines the owner did not commit an alleged violation; and
- » Cannot prohibit residents from specified types of uses with their property.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: I. Jodeh, J. Bacon; Senate: J. Coleman, C. Hansen

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on April 19, 2024

House Bill 24-1454

Grace Period Noncompliance Digital Accessibility

HB24-1454 creates a one-year extension, to July 1, 2025, of immunity from liability for failure to comply with the digital accessibility standards for a governmental entity that demonstrates good faith efforts toward compliance or toward resolution of any complaint of noncompliance. The 2021 legislation (HB 21-1110) required state agencies and public entities to comply with digital accessibility standards on or before July 1, 2024.

Position: Support

Sponsors: House: D. Ortiz, R. Pugliese; Senate: P. Lundeen

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 24, 2024

Senate Bill 24-216

Standards for Decisions Regarding Library Resources

SB24-216 requires Boards of public libraries to establish policies for the acquisition, retention, and display of library resources, as well as a policy, with a process, for the removal of materials from circulation upon a request from a patron. Libraries must not remove materials based on demographic characteristics of the author of the material or based on partisan disapproval of the material in question.

Libraries may remove materials from circulation only if the material has been reviewed based on the policy that the Board adopts. Boards that adopt policies for the potential removal of materials must post that policy publicly. A person who requests that a material be removed from circulation must reside in the legal service area of the library. These requests to remove materials are open records under the Colorado Open Records Act.

The bill protects any library staff member from retaliation, discrimination, or termination for refusing to comply with a request to remove material from circulation for any resource that is not removed in accordance with board policy.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: L. Cutter, D. Michaelson Jenet; House: J. Joseph, E. Hamrick

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 31, 2024

Senate Bill 24-131

Prohibiting Carrying Firearms in Sensitive Spaces

SB24-131 prohibits a person from knowingly carrying a firearm, both openly and concealed, in the following government buildings, including their adjacent parking areas:

- » State legislative buildings, including buildings at which the offices of elected members are located;
- » A building of a local government's governing body, including buildings at which the offices of elected members or the chief executive officer of a local government are located; and
- » A courthouse or other building used for court proceedings.

Unlawful carrying of a firearm in a government building is a class 1 misdemeanor. The bill includes exceptions for law enforcement officers; members of the United States armed forces or Colorado National Guard; security personnel; persons carrying as part of the lawful and common practices of a legal proceeding; and persons who hold a permit to carry a concealed handgun who are carrying a concealed handgun in an adjacent parking area. The bill permits a local government to enact a law permitting carrying at a local government building included in the bill.

Existing law prohibits openly carrying a firearm within any polling location or central count facility, or within 100 feet of a ballot drop box or any building in which a polling location or central count facility is located, while an election or any related ongoing election administration activity is in progress. The bill prohibits carrying a firearm in any manner at those locations.

Position: Support

Sponsors: Senate: S. Jaquez Lewis, C. Kolker; House: K. Brown, M. Lindsay

Effective: July 1, 2024

Final Status: Governor signed on May 31, 2024



Supporting Community-Based Government



Taxation

House Bill 24-1052

Senior Housing Income Tax Credit

HB 24-1052 reinstates a refundable income tax credit for income tax year 2024 for qualified seniors that have not claimed the senior property tax exemption for the 2024 property tax year.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: M. Weissman, R. Marshall; C. Kolker, C. Hansen

Effective: Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 6, 2024

House Bill 24-1302

Tax Rate Information to Real Property Owners

HB 24-1302 requires local governments to submit additional information on each levy collected through the annual levy certification process, including the following: the mill rate, maximum authorized mill rate, revenues collected, revenue growth from the prior year, and if the revenues are subject to the TABOR expenditure limit or other limit on revenue growth, and any other information determined necessary by the Department of Local Affairs.

Position: Amend

Sponsors: House: J. Parenti, L. Frizell; Senate C. Hansen

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on June 3, 2024

Continued on page 24

SB24-233 (Concerning Property Tax) Overview for Non-School Local Governments

	PTY* 2024	PTY 2025	PTY 2026	PTY 2027	PTY 2028
Property Tax Limit	No new limit	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Residential AR**	6.7%	6.4%	6.95%	6.95%	6.95%
Homestead Exemption from Actual Value	\$55K	10% of first \$700K***	10% of first \$700K***	10% of first \$700K***	10% of first \$700K***
Non-Residential AR**	27.9%	27%	25%	25%	25%
Commercial Exemption from Actual Value	\$30K of actual value				

* Revenues are collected in the year following the Property Tax Year (PTY) – eg. PTY 2024 is collected in 2025

** Assessment Rate (AR)

***The Homestead Exemption is adjusted by inflation/CPI starting in PTY 2025

Estimated Impacts to Non-School Local Governments

	PTY 2024	PTY 2025	PTY 2026
Revenue Impacts	(\$435.9 million)	(\$386.0 million)	(\$451.5 million)
State Backfill	\$10.3 million		
Total Revenue Impacts	(\$425.6 million)	(\$386.0 million)	(\$451.5 million)

The SDA bill tracker with more bills and more information regarding the property tax legislation can be found on the SDA website at www.sdaco.org.

Senate Bill 24-111

Senior Primary Residence Prop Tax Reduction

SB 24-111 creates a new subclass of residential real property, “qualified-senior primary residence real property,” for property tax year 2025 and thereafter. This subclass includes residential real property used as the primary residence of the owner-occupier and includes multi-family residential property. The actual value of the property is adjusted by 50% of the first \$200,000 of value before the assessment rate is applied.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: Senate: C. Hansen, C. Kolker; House: M. Young, S. Lieder

Effective: Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on May 14, 2024

Senate Bill 24-233

Property Tax

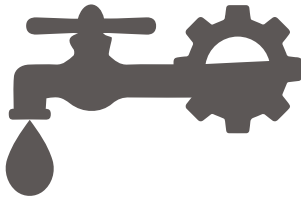
SB24-233 makes several changes to property taxes and administration, taking effect if no major changes are approved by voters at the statewide election in November 2024, and includes: de-coupling school levies from all other taxing jurisdictions for purpose of setting different assessment rates, or reductions or exemptions; establishing a 5.5% revenue growth limit for non-school, non-home rule taxing jurisdictions; lowering the residential and non-residential assessment rates; and providing a homestead exemption for residential property.

Position: Amend

Sponsors: Senate: C. Hansen, B. Kirkmeyer; House: deGruy Kennedy, L. Frizell

Effective: The date of the official declaration of the vote for the statewide general election held on November 5, 2024, if voters do not approve initiatives which reduce valuations for assessment or require voter approval for retaining property tax revenue that exceeds a limit at that November 5, 2024 election.

Final Status: Governor signed on May 14, 2024



Water

Senate Bill 24-005

Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation

SB24-005 prohibits local governments and special districts from installing, planting, or placing nonfunctional turf, artificial turf, or invasive plant species as part of a new development or redevelopment project. Further, beginning January 1, 2025, the Department of Personnel and Administration (DPA) must not use prohibited landscaping in construction and renovation projects on state facilities. The bill does not apply to nonfunctional turf installed before the effective dates, certain grass seeds or sod, or artificial turf on athletic fields of play. Golf courses are excluded from the provisions of the bill.

Position: Support

Sponsors: Senate: D. Roberts, C. Simpson; House: K. McCormick, B. McLachlan

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on March 15, 2024

Senate Bill 24-081

Perfluoroalkyl & Polyfluoroalkyl Chemicals

SB24-081 updates the Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) Chemicals Consumer Protection Act and other requirements enacted by House Bill 22-1345. Current law establishes a phase-out timeline for the sale of products that include added PFAS. The bill moves some phase-out deadlines forward and adds additional products to the phase-out, including certain outdoor wear, cookware, and artificial turf.

Position: Support

Sponsors: Senate: L. Cutter House: C. Kipp, M. Retinal

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 1, 2024

House Bill 24-1379

Regulate Dredge & Fill Activities in State Waters

HB24-1379 expands the authority of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to establish requirements, prohibitions, and standards for the regulation of discharged dredge and fill materials into state waters, including wetlands. The bill specifies activities that are exempt from dredge and fill program requirements, and exclusions for certain types of waters that may otherwise fall under the definition of “state waters.”

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: J. McCluskie, K. McCormick; Senate: D. Roberts, B. Kirkmeyer

Effective: Upon signature of the Governor

Final Status: Governor signed on May 29, 2024

House Bill 24-1463

Restrictions on Tap Fees

HB24-1463 requires that the Board of a special district, within 30 days of receiving a written request from any local government within the boundaries of which the district operates or partly operates, provide the rate schedule for the district’s tap fees, system development fees, or other fees and charges that contemplate future water or sanitation system usage, and, upon request of the local government, provide the any professional analyses and a detailed written justification of the costs and methodologies used to calculate those fees.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: C. deGruy Kennedy, A. Hartsook; Senate: C. Hansen, B. Kirkmeyer

Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 5, 2024

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Workers' Compensation

House Bill 24-1220

Workers' Compensation Disability Benefits

HB 24-1220 amends the Workers' Compensation statutes as follows:

- » Allows a claimant for workers' compensation benefits to refuse an offer of modified employment if the employment requires the claimant to drive to and from work and the treating physician has restricted the claimant from driving;
- » Adds the loss of an ear to the list of other body parts for which an injured worker can receive whole person permanent impairment benefits;
- » Increases the impairment rating caps; and
- » Requires a workers' compensation insurer to pay benefits to a claimant by direct deposit upon request by the claimant.

Position: Monitor

Sponsors: House: L. Daugherty; Senate J. Marchman

Effective: Effective: 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. (August 8, 2024)

Final Status: Governor signed on June 4, 2024

In Closing

After weeks and months of unending political rhetoric and political tussling, the Legislature was able to sign off on a couple of positive notes at the close of the Second Regular Session of the 74th General Assembly. Long goodbyes for many members who are termed out occupied much of the last three days, though there was time enough to squeeze in the property tax reform bill (see above, SB 24-233) that is intended to remove the need for property tax legislation for at least the next three to four years. Fingers crossed. The legislation is intended as a legislative response to a ballot initiative (#50 Constitutional) that would reduce property tax revenues in the hundreds of millions. Also in the picture is a ballot title (#108 Statutory) that would reduce property tax revenues statewide by \$3 billion in the first year it takes effect. As of this writing, initiative #108 proponents are working to collect the requisite number of signatures to qualify for the November 2024 ballot.

The text for Initiative #50 is reprinted in the next column for ease of access. Since this initiative has already qualified for the ballot, it will receive a new designation from the Secretary of State for the November General Election.

2024 November Ballot Issue: #50

Voter Approval to Retain Additional Tax Revenue

This measure was approved for the November 5, 2024 General Election ballot by the Secretary of State. The requisite number of valid signatures were submitted and approved by the Secretary of State.

Text of #50—Voter Approval to Retain Additional Tax Revenue

(New language is in bold, capital letters)

Be it Enacted by the People of the State of Colorado: SECTION 1. In the constitution of the state of Colorado, section 3 of article X, amend (1)(a); and add (1)(e) as follows: Section 3. -Uniform Taxation - Exemptions. (1)(a) Each property tax levy shall be uniform upon all real and personal property not exempt from taxation under this article located within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax. The actual value of all real and personal property not exempt from taxation under this article shall be determined under general laws, which shall prescribe such methods and regulations as shall secure just and equalized valuations for assessments of all real and personal property not exempt from taxation under this article. Valuations for assessment shall be based on appraisals by assessing officers to determine the actual value of property in accordance with provisions of law, which laws shall provide that actual value be determined by appropriate consideration of cost approach, market approach, and income approach to appraisal. However, the actual value of residential real property shall be determined solely by consideration of cost approach and market approach to appraisal; and, however, the actual value of agricultural lands, as defined by law, shall be determined solely by consideration of the earning or productive capacity of such lands capitalized at a rate as prescribed by law. **IF THE TOTAL OF STATEWIDE PROPERTY TAX REVENUE IS PROJECTED TO GO UP MORE THAN 4% OVER THE PRECEDING YEAR, VOTER APPROVAL IS NEEDED FOR GOVERNMENT TO RETAIN THE ADDITIONAL REVENUE. (1)(e) FOR VOTER APPROVAL OF A PROPERTY TAX REVENUE INCREASE, ANY REFERRED MEASURE MUST BE A STAND-ALONE SUBJECT. THE BALLOT TITLE SHALL READ: "SHALL PROPERTY TAX REVENUE BE INCREASED BY [TOTAL PROJECTED INCREASE OVER THE PRECEDING YEAR] ALLOWING GOVERNMENT TO RETAIN AND SPEND PROPERTY TAX REVENUE ABOVE THE 4% ANNUAL LIMIT ON PROPERTY TAX INCREASES FOR [DATES X TO X]?"** SECTION 2. Effective Date: This act takes effect on the date of the proclamation of the Governor announcing the approval, by the registered electors of the state, of the proposed initiative. 🟡

Important Reminders Regarding the Public Deposit Protection Act (PDPA)

Guest article by the Colorado Division of Banking

Who We Are

The Colorado Division of Banking (Division) protects the public interest and preserves public trust in the Colorado banking industry by regulating the business of state-chartered commercial banks and trust companies, state-licensed money transmitters, and by enforcing the Public Deposit Protection Act (PDPA), Title 11, Article 10.5 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.).

About the PDPA

The PDPA is a Colorado state law re-enacted in 1989 to serve the taxpayers and citizens of Colorado by ensuring the expedited repayment of **public funds** (defined in Section 11-10.5-103(9)(b) and (12), C.R.S.) held in **deposit accounts** (time, savings, or demand) in **Division-approved banks** in the event of default or liquidation of the bank holding the deposits. *The PDPA does not protect public fund investments.*

The PDPA protects public deposits at approved banks above the FDIC insurance limit by requiring each bank to deliver eligible collateral to a Division-approved escrow institution to be held in safekeeping and pledged to the Division. Approved banks are monitored and examined by the Division, and the PDPA requires monthly reporting of public deposits and an annual audit.

Public deposits belonging to a special district, as well as numerous other local governments, are protected under the PDPA; however, state law has several requirements to ensure protection.

PDPA Requirements of Your Special District

- » Public funds must be deposited in an approved bank. A list of approved banks is available on the Division's website. It is unlawful for public funds to be deposited in an unapproved bank (Sections 11-10.5-111(1), C.R.S. and 11-10.5-111(4)(b), C.R.S.). *Please see additional information below.*
- » Prior to opening a bank account, the District's Official Custodian (defined in Section 11-10.5-103(9)(a) and (b)) must apply to the Division for Official Custodian Identification Numbers (PDPA Numbers). PDPA Numbers are established via an "Assignment Letter" that includes unique numbers for approved banks to identify and report public deposits (Section 11-10.5-111(2) and (3), C.R.S.). *Please see additional information below.*
- » Prior to opening a bank account, the approved bank must be informed by the District's Official Custodian that public funds will be deposited and are subject to the PDPA (Section 11-10.5-111(2) and (3), C.R.S.). The Assignment Letter should be provided to the approved bank.
- » It is the responsibility of the District's Official Custodian to maintain documents or other verification necessary to properly identify public deposits (Section 11-10.5-111(2), C.R.S.).

The Risk of Non-Compliance

Compliance with the PDPA by using only approved banks is paramount for the additional protection granted by the pledging of collateral to protect deposits greater than the FDIC insurance limit. By using an approved bank, in the unlikely event of a bank failure, the Division and the FDIC will work collaboratively in restoring access to your public funds. By not complying with the PDPA, additional protection above the FDIC insurance limit is nonexistent. This situation would have detrimental impacts on Colorado taxpayers, public units and entities, and provided services.

Determining if Your District is in Compliance

- » Ensure public deposits are held at an approved bank. The Division refers to approved banks as "Eligible Public Depositories." A current list is available on the Division's website at <https://banking.colorado.gov>. Click the "PDPA" tile. On the next page, click the "List of Eligible Public Depositories" link. On the next page, select "PDPA Eligible Depositories" from the Institution Type dropdown, then click Search. If your district's bank is not listed, please contact DORA_PDPA@state.co.us for assistance.
- » Ensure your district has been assigned a PDPA Number. A list of assigned PDPA Numbers is available on the Division's website at <https://banking.colorado.gov>. Click the "PDPA Numbers" icon along the top row. If your district cannot be located, or if "Application Required" is listed for your district, please contact DORA_PDPA@state.co.us for assistance.
- » Ensure your district has notified its approved bank that public funds are on deposit and a copy of the district's Assignment Letter has been provided. If the district cannot locate its Assignment Letter, please contact DORA_PDPA@state.co.us for assistance.
- » Notify the Division of district changes (i.e., name changes, consolidations, Official Custodian changes, etc.) to ensure records are up to date. Please email DORA_PDPA@state.co.us.

How to Verify Reporting of Your District's Deposits

The District's Official Custodian may contact the Division at DORA_PDPA@state.co.us to ensure its deposits are being reported by the approved bank. Additionally, the Division recommends establishing a close business relationship with the district's approved bank and notifying the bank in advance of large, incoming deposits.

Thank you for your attention to this topic and your efforts to protect Colorado's public deposits. 🍷

Editor's Note: The Division's PDPA Team is comprised of Allison Rothermel, Administrator; Jennifer Kim, Examiner; Caity Anderson, Examiner; and Angela Davidson, Program Assistant.

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Making the Most of Your CSD Pool Membership With...

Training Credit Discount Program

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's highlight is on the Training Credit Program, which provides members with up to 10% off their Liability contributions for participating in select training courses.

Training Credit Discount: The Fine Print

Members can earn up to 5% off their Liability contribution when 80% of district employees participate in the program. Or earn up to 10% off with 100% participation! Credits apply only to Liability and related coverages and cannot reduce a contribution below the minimum. Districts with no employees are not eligible for this program.

The Rules

District employees must sign up for Vector Solutions' online training platform and take at least one course from a preselected list of courses. This platform is completely free and has hundreds of courses to take beyond those prescribed for the Training Credit program. In addition to the qualifying online courses, we also count any trainings our CSD Pool Safety and Loss Consultants perform for your employees, including SKIDTRUCK driver training.

Only full time and part time employees are required to participate in this program. Seasonal employees, volunteers (firefighters, coaches, etc.),



Colorado Special Districts
Property and Liability Pool

Board members, on call employees, and contractors and agency temps are all optional.

Each district has a full year to complete the requirements. The Training Credit program opens on October 1 and closes on September 30 each year.

Signing Up

If you meet the criteria above and wish to sign up for the Training Credit program, all you must do is visit our website and apply via a short survey. This allows us to track your participation and send you frequent updates on your progress.

Remember, this training platform is **free to members**, and every employee at your organization can have their own login. For more information, visit csdpool.org/training/credit to apply and start earning your discount today.

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 email us at info@csdpool.com. 🟡



NSDC Announces Chantal Unfug as New Federal Advocacy Director



Chantal Unfug

The National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC) is excited to announce Chantal Unfug's appointment as its new Federal Advocacy Director. Chantal brings unparalleled expertise in local government, coalition building, consensus building, and public policy to this pivotal role.

Chantal Unfug has a distinguished career in the local government sector, where she has demonstrated exceptional skills in creating and leading coalitions; building consensus among diverse stakeholders; and influencing public policy. Her extensive experience and proven track record will be invaluable as NSDC continues to advocate for the needs and interests of special districts at the federal level.

"We are thrilled to welcome Chantal Unfug to the NSDC team," said Ann Terry, Chair of NSDC [and CEO of SDA]. "Her deep understanding of local government dynamics and ability to build strong, effective coalitions will significantly enhance our federal advocacy efforts."

As the new National Public Affairs, Outreach & Engagement Director, Chantal will lead NSDC's efforts to shape and influence federal policies that impact special districts nationwide. Her leadership will be critical in ensuring that special districts' voices are heard and considered in federal decision-making processes.

—National Special Districts Coalition



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- A new year of training begins October 1 and runs through September 30.



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