

VOTE LIKE YOU MEAN IT

A helpful resource to simplify the
2021 Colorado ballot measures



Developmental
Pathways



Hey there Voter

In odd election years, Colorado statewide ballot measures are limited to fiscal issues around the Taxpayer Bill of Rights or TABOR. This means that for the statewide measures, we will be voting on initiatives that impact taxes. There are THREE statewide ballot measures.

Every vote counts, and Developmental Pathways wants to be sure you have the information you need to make an informed vote. This statewide voter guide simplifies the issues on your ballot. Our goal is to educate you in a way that empowers you to look at both sides of the issue so that you can make your choice. Not included in this guide are local ballot issues that may vary depending on the city, county, and special district that you live in.

For each measure, there are arguments for voting yes and no. Some of these arguments will have opinions. It's up to you to make a choice on which side you agree with.

For more information, check out the Colorado Blue Book, which you may have already received in the mail. If not, you can find it online here in [English](#) or [Spanish](#). There is also an [audio version](#). The Blue Book tries to give fair information to all voters (including you!), but sometimes it can be a bit confusing. That's why we - and many other groups - create voter guides based on the Blue Book in an attempt to simplify some pretty complex issues and encourage dialogue on both sides.

Amendment 78: Legislative Authority for Spending State Money

Helpful background info

- Not all money that comes into the state is from tax dollars; these dollars are known as **custodial funds**. This is money that the state receives through other means like legal settlements, emergency relief funds, other federal dollars, transportation funding, grants, gifts, and donations.
- Currently, individual state agencies can spend certain custodial monies without specific appropriation from the State Legislature.
- The measure does not change the particular purpose for which custodial money must be spent. If passed, the State Legislature may make different spending decisions than state agencies.

What your vote means:



A **YES** vote means all state spending will be distributed by the State Legislature and that custodial money will be deposited in and spent from a new fund.



All state spending should be treated the same and be required to be distributed through the State Legislature or General Assembly.



The legislature should have more control over how all revenue coming into the state is spent.



Many supporters of this amendment think it increases transparency and accountability in government.



A **NO** vote keeps the current process in place and allows discretion for how certain non-tax dollars are spent.



Allows state agencies to continue spending custodial money and certain other money without distribution by the State Legislature.



Many opponents of this amendment think it adds unnecessary and expensive bureaucracy and has unintended consequences. Allocating these funds through the legislature could create delays or disruptions in services. For example, donations to colleges and universities could be subject to legislative appropriation should this measure pass.



Proposition 119: Learning Enrichment and Academic Progress Program

Helpful background info

- Recreational marijuana is currently subject to a state **excise tax** of 15% (not accounting for additional local taxes). An excise tax is a sales tax that only applies to specific items.
- The program this proposed tax will support include tutoring and extra instruction in subjects including reading, math, science, writing, music, and art, targeted support for children with special needs and learning disabilities, career and technical education training, and other academic or enrichment opportunities; and prioritizing program financial aid for low-income students.

What your vote means:



A **YES** vote will increase taxes by 5% on retail marijuana by 2024 and diverts \$20 million in State Land Trust Funds which help fund public schools.

Supporters believe school closures caused by COVID have urgently increased the need for outside instructional support, especially among low-income students who cannot afford the cost of tutoring or enrichment services.

Supporters also like that once financial aid is awarded, families and students will have the choice about which certified tutors or other instructional providers best meet the specific needs of their student.



A **NO** vote means the program will not be created.



Opponents are concerned that Proposition 119 allows public money to be directed to private out-of-school service providers instead of invested directly in public schools.



Opponents also think increasing prices of marijuana could lead to an increase in underground markets demand which hurts legitimate businesses.

Proposition 120: Property Tax Assessment Rate Reduction

Helpful background info

- In the 2020 election, Coloradoans voted to repeal the Gallagher Amendment and keep property tax rates the same.
- Proposition 120 affects property taxes for certain types of residential property.

What your vote means:



A **YES** vote will lower property tax rates for multifamily housing and lodging properties. It allows the state to keep \$25 million per year in revenue above the constitutional limit if it is used to support local government's property tax exemptions for seniors and veterans with a service-related disability.



Supporters believe that this provides targeted tax relief for important sectors of Colorado's economy.



A **NO** vote will keep the assessment rates for lodging and multifamily housing properties that are in current law.



Opponents believe that this may hurt school funding and result in cuts to government services.



Colorado Ballot Issues 2021


What do they mean for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities?



Proposition 120: Property Tax Assessment Rate Reduction

Decreasing property taxes may result in reduced funds for counties. This could impact county services as well as CCBs that receive money from county property taxes (known as mill levy). This measure would result in lower property taxes for multifamily housing and lodging properties. It would also reduce local government revenue by an estimated \$1.03B in 2023.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, **Senate Bill 21-293** was passed. This would affect the impact of Proposition 120 because it creates new categories of property tax assessments.





Developmental Pathways

Developmental Pathways is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency serving individuals with developmental disabilities/delays and their families. We are one of Colorado's Community Centered Boards (CCB) connecting people to federal, state, county, and private funding in Arapahoe County, Douglas County, Elbert County, and the City of Aurora. We passionately believe inclusion is for everyone and offer a variety of services, including Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver programs.



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