



The Denver Foundation

# 2023 Public Policy Principles

The Denver Foundation has always led on issues of importance to our community. We believe we have a responsibility to take bold steps to advance racial equity and drive meaningful systemic change. Our community believes we have this responsibility, too.

To that end, the foundation has developed a policy framework and principles to inform our activity in policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels in alignment with our mission, vision, and core values.

In 2021 the foundation distributed more than \$100 million, making almost 6,000 grants across Denver, Colorado, and the U.S.

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

We believe that economic opportunity is achievable when the community has the tools and resources to build wealth, increase assets, and create local and just economies.

We support policy proposals that strengthen community wealth building and workforce development opportunities across the Metro Denver region.

We will consider policy proposals to increase individual wealth, reduce displacement of small businesses, increase employee ownership and worker cooperatives, and develop workforce development programs for transition into new economies.

## EDUCATION (K-12)

We believe that access to a well-funded and racially equitable education system is critical for communities in Metro Denver to thrive.

We support policy proposals that prioritize racial equity in the K-12 public school system and increase school funding equitably.

We will consider policy proposals to modify the school funding formula in Colorado to increase funding to Metro Denver school districts that are disproportionately funded, and enact reforms to address students receiving high-quality public education and equitable education opportunities.

**Our recent work:** We supported [HB22-1230](#) and [HB22-1359](#). HB22-1230 continues a workforce development program that helps job seekers cover costs associated with technology, attire, transportation, or other resources needed when seeking new job opportunities. HB22-1359 provides lending opportunities to low-income individuals through a new household financial recovery program within the state treasurer’s office.

**Our recent work:** We supported [HB22-1202](#), a bill that expands on how “at-risk students” are identified by using existing data points (neighborhood socio-economic status, census data, and medical assistance programs). This is a starting point to address inequity in school funding.

## THE DENVER FOUNDATION

For almost 100 years, Denver residents have trusted The Denver Foundation to steward charitable funds to meet today’s needs and tomorrow’s opportunities. It’s a growing legacy and a community-wide effort to build a better future for everyone.

As a tax-exempt, nonprofit, philanthropic organization, The Denver Foundation stewards more than 1,000 funds established by engaged philanthropists. In partnership with the foundation, our donors make gifts to organizations throughout the Seven-county Metro Denver region, across Colorado, and beyond.

## MISSION

We inspire people and mobilize resources to strengthen our community.

## OUR VISION

A Metro Denver that is racially equitable in its leadership, prosperity, and culture.

## CONTACT

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## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

We believe that environmental justice begins with targeted policy efforts and investments in under-resourced communities to address the impacts of climate change.

We support policy proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create resilient communities across the Metro Denver region.

We will consider policy proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through investments and standards for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and air quality programs across Metro Denver, and adopt resiliency and adaptation plans for under-resourced communities.



## HOUSING

We believe the continuum of housing programs designed to address affordable housing and homelessness should be well-funded and respond to the history of exclusionary housing policies.

We support policy proposals that increase opportunities for affordable housing options and establish systemic support to address barriers to housing security.

We will consider policy proposals to improve protections for renters, lessen regulatory barriers, and enhance equitable funding to create affordable housing for households making 0-30% of the area median income, and increase support for those experiencing homelessness.



## TRANSPORTATION

We believe that access to reliable and affordable public transportation options is a core function of a thriving community.

We support policy proposals that make equitable investments into public transit to address the current challenges impacting ridership.

We will consider policy proposals to equitably infuse federal, state, and local funding in transportation systems in Metro Denver, and policy proposals to ensure improved service routes and fare structures and levels to get people to needed services, education, and jobs.



## PHILANTHROPIC GIVING AND NONPROFIT SECTOR

We believe that philanthropists and nonprofits must work together to co-create change to address community needs. We must elevate the work of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors to ensure that policies further both sectors' investments in community change

We support policy proposals at the federal level to further charitable giving, deepen collaboration between philanthropists, nonprofit organizations, and government entities, and address evidence-based concerns of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. The foundation also supports advocacy efforts to educate decision-makers on the foundation's engaged philanthropy model (grantmaking, business model, etc.).

We will consider policy proposals that impact philanthropic giving and nonprofits, and proposals that specifically affect community foundations.

**Our recent work:** We supported supported [HB22-1244](#), a bill that empowers the state of Colorado to develop a program to establish targeted health-based air quality standards for air toxins.

**Our recent work:** We supported supported [HB22-1287](#), a bill that increases protections for mobile home park residents. The foundation also supported Denver's Expanding Housing Affordability ordinance which establishes the first municipal requirement to designate affordable housing units for rental and sale.

**Our recent work:** We supported [SB22-180](#), a bill that provided access to transit across during the month of August across the state at no cost. The foundation also supported [RTD's System Optimization Plan](#), a strategic plan to advance the redesign of transit services across Metro Denver to address disparities and connect community members to services, education, and employment opportunities.

**Our recent work:** We serve on national and state-level workgroups with philanthropic organizations to identify reforms that address the concerns behind regulations on community foundations.