

The Denver Foundation has always led on issues of importance to our community. The foundation's decision to deepen our public policy and advocacy work stems from community feedback suggesting that we use our voice and funds to lift up everyone in our community.

We will also defend our freedom to give because we, as philanthropists, serve the public best when we can operate freely, responsibly, and in partnership with the communities we serve. This is especially important at this moment.

Our policy framework and principles inform how we engage in important policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels.

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

We believe that affordability is important, and economic opportunity is achievable when the community has access to the tools and resources to build individual and community wealth. We support policy proposals that strengthen community wealth building and workforce development opportunities across Metro Denver. We will consider policy proposals that:

- remove barriers that make it harder for people and small businesses to succeed economically
- protect and improve programs that give individuals and small businesses more access to funding, training, and career development opportunities

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

We believe that policy change and government investments should address the impacts of climate change. We support policy proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and further resilient communities across the Metro Denver region. We will consider policy proposals that:

- help improve air quality, increase availability of and access to energy-efficient homes and buildings, and promote affordable renewable energy use
- preserve existing funding and policy resources to further environmental justice in under-resourced communities
- improve access to public transportation

### **Our 2025 work:**

We co-led the passage of a bill for transparent pricing for consumers, including tenants and small business owners. We supported the Vibrant Denver Bond, to repair and improve Denver's infrastructure and community spaces, and the Yes on 5B for Adams 12 Kids ballot measure, for career and technical education for students in the Adams 12 Five Star School District.

### **Our 2025 work:**

We supported a bill to update standards and create funding for the state's emissions reduction goals for buildings. Our leadership role within the Community Foundation Climate Collaborative, furthers efforts to accelerate equitable energy transitions in Denver and nationwide.

## **THE DENVER FOUNDATION**

For 100 years, The Denver Foundation has been a leading philanthropic organization dedicated to creating a strong, thriving Metro Denver, Colorado, and beyond. Through enduring partnerships with individuals, nonprofits, and civic leaders, we have made a significant and lasting impact.

Over the past century, we have received \$2.1 billion in gifts and given \$1.5 billion to support the community. The Denver Foundation plays three critical roles: stewarding an endowment to address both current and future needs in Metro Denver, collaborating with community leaders to tackle the region's core challenges, and managing more than 1,500 charitable funds on behalf of individuals, families, and businesses.

We believe in bringing people together to create positive change and are dedicated to bridging gaps and fostering partnerships to achieve our vision of vibrant and connected communities.

## **CONTACT**

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## HOUSING

We believe that to make housing more affordable, we need to recognize how past policies have excluded people. We also need to fix the lack of investment in proven, housing-first approaches that give people stable housing, then connect them with the support services they need to stay housed. We support policy proposals that promote the development and preservation of affordable housing for individuals with the lowest incomes (0-30% Area Median Income) in Metro Denver. We will consider proposals that:

- strengthen protections for renters, make it easier to preserve and build affordable housing, and help reduce homelessness
- protect the policies, funding, and programs that help people stay in their homes and expand their housing options



## YOUTH WELL-BEING

We believe that access to a well-funded and racially equitable education system is essential for both academic success and the mental well-being of students. We support policies that help reduce gaps for students of color in K-12 schools, including their education and access to mental health services. We also support policy proposals to increase equitable funding for public schools in Metro Denver. We will consider policy proposals that:

- enact reforms to ensure underserved students receive a high-quality public education
- increase access to mental health programs for K-12 youth
- preserve recent changes to the school funding formula in Colorado
- promote sustainable, predictable funding levels



## PHILANTHROPIC GIVING AND NONPROFIT SECTOR

We believe that philanthropists and nonprofits must collaborate to create systems to meet community needs and further both sectors' ability to increase investments in community change. We support policy proposals to promote charitable giving and foster collaboration among philanthropists, nonprofits, and government entities in Metro Denver. We will consider policy proposals that:

- address evidence-based concerns of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors in Metro Denver and nationally
- improve the delivery of mission-driven services and programs of community foundations and nonprofits in Colorado
- protect funding for current grantmaking programs
- defend the independence of the philanthropic sector from attacks on its freedom to give

## CRITICAL AND TIMELY ISSUES

Critical and timely issues will always arise. We are committed to engaging in policy proposals that impact our community in alignment with our mission and vision.

### Our 2025 work:

We defended past policies and supported bills aimed at protecting renters. We also supported the Vibrant Denver Bond Package, to develop affordable housing projects and improve current permanent supportive housing facilities. We provided comments on Denver's housing prioritization policy and served as a strategic advisor for Denver's Housing Department of Housing Stability.

### Our 2025 work:

We supported a bill to update student restraint and seclusion practices. We supported Yes on 5B for Adams 12 Kids, to increase teacher pay and support their mental health. We participate in the Blue Bear Collaborative, a group of Colorado foundations working to improve the mental health of youth by funding partnerships, programs, and policy changes.

### Our 2025 work:

We supported legislation to require state agencies to provide retainer payments to nonprofit organizations when entering into contracts or grant agreements. We also supported legislation to increase funding for the state's Outdoor Equity Grant Program and update the state's Welcome, Reception & Integration grant program.

### Our 2025 work:

We supported a bill to establish a CO Voting Rights Act, and a bill that protects immigrant families by strengthening constitutional protections at public locations like hospitals, schools, and childcare centers.