



Dennis Hisey's "Common-Sense" Plan

Promote Public Safety & Back Our First Responders

Criminal justice reform has been a popular mantra in Denver lately. But well-intentioned reforms can sometimes be misguided. Criminals are not victims. Police officers are not oppressors. As state Senator, I defend our first responders, who put their lives at risk. Safe streets and neighborhoods are the first responsibility of government. And drug decriminalization has gone too far, particularly when it comes to deadly fentanyl.

- **Criminalize fentanyl:** A 2019 law signed by Governor Polis decriminalized possession of up to 4 grams of fentanyl. That's enough to kill thousands. It's no surprise that fentanyl-related deaths increased 382% in Colorado between 2019 and 2021. I opposed fentanyl decriminalization in 2019, and I will be relentless in working to recriminalize it.
- **Make Law Enforcement Funding a Priority:** The defund the police movement has had dire consequences nationally and here in Colorado. Crime rates are spiking. I will defend the police and work to ensure that law enforcement and criminal justice funding is the state's first and top priority.
- **Get Repeat Offenders Off the Street:** Releasing repeat offenders back onto our streets puts our communities at risk. That's a nonstarter for me. I support a criminal justice system that is fair, but also tough. Violent repeat offenders belong behind bars not in our neighborhoods.

Reduce the Cost of Living

Inflation is sky high, and part of the problem lies with politicians. President Biden and Congress have enacted inflationary policies. Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve has been printing money like crazy. Here in Colorado, the inflation rate is even worse than the rest of the nation, thanks in part to bad policy choices. While we cannot stop Washington, D.C. from making inflationary choices until we elect new leadership to Congress and the White House, El Paso County deserves a Senator who will work to promote more affordable energy, health care and housing right here in Colorado. That is what I aim to do.

- **Get Spending Under Control:** Colorado's budget has increased 10 billion dollars, over 30% in the past four years. Government will always spend all the money it collects and only a portion goes to core government services. To reduce government spending we

have to reduce taxes and fees. I have a bill this year that will eliminate the state tax on prepared food that every year will leave over 400 million dollars in the pockets of the Coloradans that earned it. They will then have the ability to spend that money on what is important to them.

- **Affordable Housing:** Whether you are purchasing or renting, housing costs have risen so dramatically the past few years that many people have been priced out of the market. As a member of the Affordable Housing Task Force, I was able to make recommendations designed to increase the supply of worker housing, including less government regulation. My Tiny Home bill this session will give consumers more options and more control of their housing decisions. Two more of my bills focus on more homes and apartments for low wage workers and housing for low-income Coloradans including the disabled and elderly.
- **Generate Affordable Energy Here at Home:** In recent years, Governor Polis and the Democrats in the Legislature have enacted onerous regulations against Colorado energy workers, killing jobs and making us more dependent upon energy from outside our state. Let's get our energy workers back on the job. Energy development and environmental protection need not be mutually exclusive.
- **Quality, Affordable Health Care:** Politicians in Washington, D.C. and in Denver have imposed policies that have driven up health insurance costs. They impose requirements on insurers that prevent them from selling affordable plans. We need to give consumers more choice, and require more price transparency.
- **Protect the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR):** TABOR requires voters to approve proposed tax hikes. But in recent years, Governor Polis and the Legislature's Democratic majority have circumvented TABOR by characterizing tax hikes as "fees". That's exactly how they passed a significant gas tax increase, and utility rate increases driving up the cost of living for Coloradans. In February of 2022 the Governor announced he was suspending the gasoline fees the Democrats passed and he signed - until after the election (Gazette 2/25/22). I will defend TABOR and oppose any effort to raise "fees" that are, in fact, taxes.

Improve Our Schools

One of the most important policies over which the Legislature has control is education. I am passionate about promoting excellence in our public school system. Unfortunately, too many kids across Colorado are effectively trapped in underperforming schools, meaning they start life at a serious disadvantage. This is not acceptable to me.

- **Competition and Choice:** I strongly support our public schools, but I also believe that competition promotes improvement and excellence. Parents and kids should have access to choices and opportunities such as charter schools and non-public schools. It was private schools, after all, that led the way during the COVID pandemic.

- **End the School Closures and Masking Mandates for Good:** Clearly, kids are especially resistant to the virus. Forcing them to mask up and/or work from home for up to two years has had negative consequences on learning and social and emotional maturation.
- **No More Social Promotion:** Too many kids who are performing below grade level are promoted to the next grade, often times over fears that holding them back could hurt their self-esteem. These students deserve better. At the very least they deserve a remediation plan; otherwise, their chances for success in the future are seriously diminished.
- **Trade and Vocational Schooling:** Kids who choose not to enroll in a four-year institution should have options that prepare them for success in the workplace. Trade and vocational schools are an underutilized option. I strongly support giving kids and young adults access to affordable trade and vocational schooling options. In 2020, I successfully enacted a new law that allows school districts to establish a fund to send high school graduates to post-secondary trade and vocational schools at no charge to the student. I'm proud that successful model has been adopted and implemented right here in El Paso County.
- **Depoliticize the Classroom:** Kids should not be punished for articulating unpopular ideas. We need to embrace free expression. Teach kids how to think, not what to think. Let's get back to basics – reading, writing, arithmetic as well as critical thinking skills – my Parental Bill of Rights bill puts parents back in charge of their children's education and takes politics out of the classroom.

Defend the Interests of El Paso County

Let's face it. With just over four Senate seats out of 35 in the entire Senate, El Paso County is greatly outnumbered. More than half of the Senators come from the Denver Metro, and they rarely have our best interests at heart. As your State Senator, I will aggressively but, diplomatically work to advance El Paso County's interests, whether the issue is transportation funding, dispersing education dollars, or funding training for law enforcement to make our streets safe. I will never forget who I represent at the State Capitol!