



The Colorado
Health Foundation™

Recommendations for Colorado's Next Secretary of State

Who We Are

The Colorado Health Foundation (CHF) is a statewide, nonprofit and nonpartisan philanthropic organization with a mission to improve the health and wellbeing of Coloradans. Through community engagement, research, grantmaking, and private sector investments, the Foundation aims to ensure that everyone in Colorado has what they need to be healthy.

The Foundation is deeply committed to listening to communities across Colorado and to amplifying their voices and interests. We develop nonpartisan educational resources to help Colorado's future leaders cultivate productive working relationships with the communities they serve. The Foundation does not endorse candidates for public office or engage in lobbying activity to support or oppose ballot measures or specific pieces of legislation. However, we do seek to inform policymakers with relevant nonpartisan research, analysis, and factual community context.

Our health is influenced not only by our individual choices but also by the conditions of our neighborhoods and the public policies that govern our lives. We believe all Coloradans should have the tools and opportunities to be healthy where they live and have a voice in the decisions that impact them. Colorado's Secretary of State has a critical role in advancing this vision by protecting access to voting, strengthening public trust in elections and civic information, making public disclosure systems more user friendly for the public, and maintaining business, nonprofit, and charitable registration systems that support nonprofit organizations and small businesses.

How the Secretary of State Can Support Coloradans' Health

The following recommendations highlight how the Secretary of State can help build a Colorado **where everyone belongs, where everyone has a say, and where everyone can thrive**. All recommendations are rooted in years of deep community engagement, statewide listening, and nonpartisan research and analysis (see resource list below).

A Colorado where everyone belongs

Belonging is shaped by whether people can participate fully in civic life and trust that government systems are accessible, secure, and responsive to the communities they serve. For the Secretary of State's Office, belonging begins with the ability of every eligible Coloradan to participate in fair elections with confidence and without unnecessary barriers. It also depends on whether community organizations, nonprofits, and small businesses can navigate state systems without excessive administrative burden and whether the public can access clear, trustworthy information about the government processes that shape their lives.

ACTIONS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE CAN TAKE TO ENSURE BELONGING

Protect equitable access to voting and fair elections

- **Strengthen voter registration and ballot access.** Continue defending and strengthening voter registration, ballot access, accessible voting options, language access, campus and youth voter engagement, and public education so every eligible Coloradan can register and vote with confidence.
- **Support trustworthy elections through consistent, nonpartisan information.** Expand clear public communication, county clerk coordination, election security education, and rapid responses to election misinformation so communities understand how Colorado's elections work and why their certified results can be trusted.

A Colorado where everyone has a say

Having a say means Coloradans can understand, trust and influence the government decisions that shape their lives. Responsive and accountable government institutions are not just a cornerstone of healthy communities; they are essential pathways to greater health and well-being for everyone in Colorado. Yet public trust depends on more than good intentions. It requires clear legal guidance, consistent transparency practices, inclusive opportunities for community participation, strong compliance with open meetings and public records laws, and a fair, accurate, and complete 2030 Census count that ensures every person in Colorado is represented.

ACTIONS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE CAN TAKE TO ENSURE COLORADANS HAVE A SAY

Strengthen government transparency, accessibility, and accountability

- **Modernize public disclosure tools.** Modernize campaign finance, lobbying registration, and ballot-measure disclosure tools so information is easier for the public, community organizations, journalists, and policymakers to find and use.
- **Prioritize and sustain the Local Ballot Measure Tracker** (<https://coloradohealth.org/local-ballot-measure-tracker>) as a voter transparency tool. Continue the public-private partnership between the Secretary of State's Office and CHF to maintain the Local Ballot Measure Tracker as an accurate, publicly available, nonpartisan one-stop shop for city- and county-level ballot measures across Colorado. The next Secretary of State should support timely updates, public awareness, and continued coordination so voters can access clear, trustworthy information about local measures impacting their communities.
- **Maintain and improve support for accessible, consistent state rulemaking.** Continue strengthening the Secretary of State's role in maintaining the Code of Colorado Regulations and supporting agency rulemaking by improving public access to rulemaking notices, filings, adopted rules, and related guidance. The Office should use its rulemaking systems, training, and technical assistance to promote consistent practices across agencies, clear public notice, accessible participation opportunities, and stronger accountability in government decision-making.

Protect and advance a fair, accurate, and complete 2030 Census count for all people in Colorado, particularly historically undercounted communities

- **Partner on statewide census readiness by supporting strong civic infrastructure.** The Secretary of State's Office plays a critical supporting role in the civic infrastructure that makes a complete count possible: maintaining trusted public information, voter and civic engagement partnerships, transparent public-facing data systems, and accessible registration and compliance tools for the nonprofit and community organizations that will help reach historically undercounted populations. Direct the Office's resources to fully support execution of a successful 2030 Census.

A Colorado where everyone can thrive

Thriving requires more than individual effort; it depends on strong community-serving organizations, small businesses, and public systems that are clear, accountable, and easy to navigate. Coloradans are better able to thrive when nonprofits, charitable organizations, and small businesses can comply with state requirements without diverting disproportionate time and resources from serving their communities. The Secretary of State can support these conditions by improving registration systems, preserving the public's access to important data, and providing plain-language tools that make compliance easier and more consistent.

ACTIONS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE CAN TAKE TO HELP COLORADANS THRIVE

Reduce administrative burden for nonprofits and small businesses

- **Improve registration and compliance systems.** Continue improving business, nonprofit, and charitable solicitation registration systems through plain-language guidance, training, reminders, and user-friendly online tools that help community-based organizations comply without diverting resources from mission-critical work.
- **Preserve and improve entity ownership and registration data.** Maintain strong entity reporting practices and public-facing business data that help the state, advocates, researchers, and communities understand ownership, identify patterns, and protect Coloradans from fraud or misuse.

Additional Resources

- [Educational Resources for Candidates Seeking Public Office in Colorado](#)
- [The Colorado Health Foundation Policy Agenda: Transforming State Governance](#)
- [Report: The State of Procurement and Grantmaking in Colorado](#)
- [Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll](#)
- [Local Ballot Measure Tracker](#)
- [The Good Neighbor Guide Toolkit](#)
- [Housing on the Ballot](#)
- [Coming Together Across Differences: Messaging Recommendations](#)
- [Pride and the Power of Belonging](#)