

THE WOMANIFESTO 2020

A Nonpartisan Ballot Guide for Everyone Who Cares About Strengthening Colorado

wo·man·i·fes·to

noun: a public proclamation of policy goals, intentions, or views, especially one issued before an election; a policy statement or platform

As a community, when we vote, we shape the future. It was only 100 years ago when women's voting rights began when the 19th Amendment was enacted. To this day, progress must continue to ensure the right to vote for all women.

The Women's Foundation of Colorado (**WFCO**) **works for a future when women of every background, age, and identity thrive.** How do we do this? As the only community foundation in our state focused exclusively on economic mobility for women, we use several strategies: WFCO informs our community through research. We translate information into action with our grantmaking partnerships. We build more equitable systems for all Colorado women through nonpartisan advocacy. Learn more at www.wfco.org.

WFCO created this ballot guide with statewide input from a diverse group of Coloradans committed to elevating opportunities for women to strengthen our state. Please keep reading and join us in improving economic outcomes for Colorado women by voting in the November 3, 2020 election.

VOTE WITH WOMEN
IN MIND.

When women thrive, Colorado rises. Of the 11 questions on the November 3, 2020 statewide ballot, several will impact women's economic advancement. Join us in voting to strengthen all of Colorado by improving opportunities for women.



Should the Gallagher Amendment be repealed to remove certain property tax requirements that limit essential resources and services at local and state levels? **YES on Amendment B**



Should universal pre-Kindergarten education and health programs be funded with increased taxes on nicotine and tobacco products? **YES on Proposition EE**



Should abortions be prohibited after 22 weeks gestational age? **NO on Proposition 115**



Should state General Fund revenue be reduced by more than \$158 million next year through an income tax reduction, further restricting investments in Colorado women's economic mobility? **NO on Proposition 116**



Should Colorado establish a paid family and medical leave insurance program for our workforce to care for themselves or a family member in times of need? **YES on Proposition 118**

All Coloradans will benefit from a more prosperous future when women and all our skills and talents are fully included in our communities. WFCO believes women's race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, or other elements of social and/or physical identity should not define our opportunities. We advance policy changes that promote equity by:

- Addressing root causes of poverty and promoting economic security
- Improving Colorado's tax and budget policies so sufficient resources can be dedicated to WFCO priorities
- Promoting issues and protecting rights aligned with our values

As a 501c3 tax-exempt organization, WFCO takes positions on issues, not candidates.

Our public policy committee examines each issue with particular focus on economic impacts and implications for equity for all women. Our levers for change include community education & engagement, advocacy, and grassroots & direct lobbying.



Our Values

Promise
Leadership
Community
Learning
Equity and Inclusion
Stewardship and Accountability

Keep reading
to learn more about
these ballot questions
and WFCO's positions.
**Don't forget to vote by
November 3, 2020!**



The Women's
Foundation of Colorado

Women Thriving. Colorado Rising.®

WFCO.ORG/WOMANIFESTO



AMENDMENT B: REPEAL THE GALLAGHER AMENDMENT

WFCO POSITION: SUPPORT

WFCO REASONING: Local and state budgets are strained by the unintended consequences of the Gallagher Amendment to the Colorado Constitution. Adopted in 1982 to provide homeowners relief from rapidly rising property taxes, the constitutional requirements related to property taxes ended up limiting local funding for schools and requiring the state budget to make up the difference in education funding. **This leaves less money in the state budget for other priorities, including transportation, child care, housing, and other resources essential for women and families on the path to economic security.**

To maintain the 45 percent residential/55 percent non-residential ratio for the property tax base required by the Gallagher Amendment, rising home values along the Front Range have pushed residential property tax assessment rates down statewide. This means that local governments collect less in property taxes and can contribute less to their school systems and other local needs, such as fire protection districts and hospitals. The state budget then must allocate more to fund education, which restricts funding for everything else, including resources essential for promoting women's economic security. Check out this [video explainer](#) from the Colorado Fiscal Institute that explains the Gallagher Amendment and its impacts.

WFCO will continue to advocate for additional improvements to Colorado's tax and budget policies to invest in women and a more equitable future. Repealing the Gallagher Amendment is an important step. **It would not increase residential property taxes – voter approval would still be required to do so.** Repealing Gallagher would stop further automatic reductions in residential property tax assessment rates that strain local and state budgets and limit investments in resources to move women forward.

SUMMARY OF BALLOT MEASURE: The Gallagher Amendment requires that home values make up no more than 45 percent of the state property tax base, and that nonresidential (commercial) property makes up the remaining 55 percent. This constitutional measure proposes to:

- Remove the requirement that the statewide property tax base be comprised of a constant ratio of 45 percent residential and 55 percent nonresidential property
- Repeal the requirement that the residential assessment rate be adjusted based on a mathematical formula to maintain the constant ratio
- Repeal the requirement that the assessment rate for most nonresidential property be fixed at 29 percent



PROPOSITION EE: TAXES ON NICOTINE PRODUCTS

WFCO POSITION: SUPPORT

WFCO REASONING: This measure will establish an early care and education system in Colorado with diverse types of providers and care that meets the needs of all types of families and children. It also addresses the harmful impact of tobacco, nicotine, and vaping on Colorado's teens. Additionally, we know that significant revenue will be needed to address the shortfall expected by the impact of COVID-19 on our economy.

SUMMARY OF BALLOT MEASURE: This statutory measure would raise taxes on tobacco and add a tax on nicotine vaping products for the first time. The first two and a half years of revenue would support Colorado's economic rebuilding from COVID-19 by including funds dedicated toward education, housing, and other key initiatives that support women's economic security. Remaining tax revenue would support tobacco and nicotine cessation initiatives and fund universal access to voluntary preschool for all children the year prior to kindergarten entry.



PROPOSITION 115: PROHIBIT ABORTIONS AFTER 22 WEEKS

WFCO POSITION: OPPOSE

WFCO REASONING: [Research](#) clearly links a person's complete access to reproductive health to better economic security. WFCO has supported programs that fund access to family planning and opposed past ballot measures that would have impacted access to abortions. WFCO supports access to the full range of reproductive health information, care, and justice for women statewide. We believe that women have the right to decide to have or not to have children, free from stigma. This measure infringes on that right and takes away every Colorado woman's ability to make the medical decisions that are best for their own unique circumstances. Click [here](#) to access WFCO's full reproductive health statement.

SUMMARY OF BALLOT MEASURE: This statutory measure would ban abortions after 22 weeks gestation unless the pregnant woman's life is in danger. There are no exceptions for rape and incest, maternal health, or a lethal fetal diagnosis. It would be a Class 1 misdemeanor to perform or attempt to perform an abortion after 22 weeks since the woman's last menstrual period, with fines of up to \$1,000. The Colorado Medical Board would be required to suspend the medical license for at least three years for health care providers who perform or attempt to perform a prohibited abortion.

**PROPOSITION 116: STATE INCOME TAX RATE REDUCTION****WFCO POSITION: OPPOSE**

WFCO REASONING: Resources to help women overcome barriers to economic opportunity are wise investments, but this income tax reduction would limit child care, affordable housing, transportation, and other essential resources for our communities. Even before the financial crisis brought on by COVID-19, Colorado's state budget was strained by complex interactions of several amendments to the state constitution that impact taxes and spending requirements. [This article](#) from The Colorado Sun offers a helpful explanation. This measure would reduce state General Fund revenue by an estimated \$158.4 million in FY 2020-21 and nearly \$170 million the following year, based on [nonpartisan analysis](#) by Legislative Council staff. A decrease in the income tax rate would require additional cuts to an already depleted state budget and further restrict investments in essential community resources for women and their families, such as child care, affordable housing, and transportation.

SUMMARY OF BALLOT MEASURE: This statutory measure would reduce the state income tax rate from 4.63 percent to 4.55 percent beginning with the 2020 tax year. Taxes will be reduced by \$40 per year for taxpayers with an annual income of \$50,000 and \$80 per year for those with annual income of \$100,000.

**PROPOSITION 118: PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM****WFCO POSITION: SUPPORT**

WFCO REASONING: [Only 17 percent of the Colorado workforce has access to paid family and medical leave and only 8 percent of workers with incomes in the bottom quartile have paid family and medical leave.](#) Access to paid family and medical leave means more women can remain in the workforce, caregiving responsibilities can be shared more equitably, more families can meet their basic needs, employers can retain talent and reduce costs, and economic activity increases. The advantages of paid leave extend to all family members.

SUMMARY OF BALLOT MEASURE: This statutory measure would establish a paid family and medical leave insurance program to provide partial wage replacement for up to 12 weeks of paid leave for any covered individual's own medical needs or to care for a family member.

Leave details:

- Beginning in 2024, up to 12 weeks of leave, with up to 4 additional weeks in the event of qualifying complications of pregnancy or childbirth
- Low-income workers receive 90 percent of their pay during leave
- Maximum weekly benefit is 90 percent of state average weekly wage (approximately \$1,000)
- Purposes of leave include:
 - Care for new child by birth, adoption, or foster care placement
 - Worker's own or family member's serious health condition
 - Qualifying exigency leave related to a family member's active duty services or impending call or order to active duty in the armed forces
 - Need for safe leave to seek protection, care, security, or legal assistance due to domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault or abuse for the covered individual or their family member
- Leave may be used for the qualifying individual or their family, with an inclusive definition of family

Which workers and employers are included?

- Workers are eligible after earning \$2,500 in wages
- Employers are those who employ at least one individual and include state and local governments (local governments/school districts can opt out)
- Self-employed workers can opt in

How is it paid for?

- Beginning in 2023, employers and employees split 50/50 premium contributions of 0.9 percent of employee wage
- After 2024, premium rate could be adjusted, up to a maximum of 1.2 percent of employee wage
- Employers with fewer than 10 employees are exempt from employer portion of premium
- Employers may choose to pay up to 100 percent of premium
- Employers may opt to offer private plans that meet minimum requirement

Visit wfc.org/womanifesto for more information on each measure and each question on the statewide ballot.



The Women's Foundation of Colorado

Women Thriving. Colorado Rising.®

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VOTING -We **celebrate the centennial of women's right to vote and acknowledge that even today, not all women, especially women of color, have access** to this fundamental right. Voter suppression still happens throughout our country. **We must remain vigilant and proactive in exercising this right and ensuring that regardless of background and identity every person can vote.** If you see or experience voter suppression, please visit [www.wfco.org/civicingement](http://www.wfco.org/civicingagement) to find resources.



REGISTER TO VOTE:

- Register to vote and confirm or update your voter registration at www.GoVoteColorado.com or **complete your voter registration form** and **mail it to your county clerk and recorder.**
- Colorado law allows voter registration through election day. Refer to guidance from your county clerk and recorder to make sure you receive and submit your ballot in time so that your vote counts.
- To register to vote, individuals must be 18 years old by election day (although individuals as young as 16 can register in preparation for their 18th birthdays), citizens of the United States, and have lived in Colorado at least 22 days prior to election day.
- Visit the Colorado Secretary of State website for more information.



VOTE BY NOVEMBER 3, 2020:

- All Colorado voters (whose registration is completed at least 8 days in advance of an election) receive a mail-in ballot. Mailed ballots must be **received** (not just postmarked) by your county clerk and recorder by 7:00 p.m. on election day.
- If you are unsure whether your ballot will be received in time, drop it off at a designated drop-off location until 7:00 p.m. on election day.
- Polling locations are also available for in-person voting. Visit [your county clerk and recorder's website](#) to find your polling place or ballot drop-off location.
- Visit the Colorado Secretary of State website for more information about mail-in ballots and to check whether your mail-in ballot was received and accepted.



Remind your friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues to register and to vote.

Be sure to share The Womanifesto with them. Find it here:

www.wfco.org/womanifesto

and in Spanish find it here:

www.wfco.org/womanifesto-ES

Visit www.wfco.org for updates and additional resources.