

Second Regular Session
Seventy-third General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R22-0762.01 Ashley Athey x2291

HJR22-1022

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Luck and Williams, Baisley, Carver, Lynch, Neville, Ransom, Van Winkle

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(None),

House Committees

State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs

Senate Committees

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 22-1022

101 **CONCERNING THE CONSIDERABLE AND CONTINUING IMPACTS ON THE**
102 **PEOPLE OF COLORADO DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY FROM THE**
103 **COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE MANY EFFORTS MADE TO**
104 **COMBAT IT.**

1 WHEREAS, Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a global
2 pandemic, causing significant loss of life and impacting the lives of
3 billions of people worldwide, including Coloradans; and

4 WHEREAS, On March 11, 2020, with the first case of COVID-19
5 having already been identified in Colorado, Honorable Governor Jared
6 Polis issued executive order D2020 003, declaring a state of emergency;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, On March 25, 2020, Honorable Governor Jared Polis

*Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

1 issued a subsequent executive order D2020 017, which, in addition to
2 other prior actions, began what would become many numerous steps to
3 aggressively mitigate the spread and medical impact of COVID-19 on the
4 people of Colorado, including stay-at-home orders, hospital and other
5 visitation limitations, masking requirements, and business lockdowns,
6 among others; and

7 WHEREAS, These mitigation efforts directed at stopping the
8 spread of and protecting Coloradans from COVID-19 had other unwanted
9 impacts on and required sacrifices from Colorado families, businesses,
10 places of worship, and all residents; and

11 WHEREAS, The impact to those harmed by these mitigation
12 efforts was in some cases substantial and life-altering; and

13 WHEREAS, Many of our seniors, including our grandparents and
14 great-grandparents, bore, as a group, some of the greatest burdens from
15 both the disease and the measures to curtail it; and

16 WHEREAS, From these mitigation efforts, some of our seniors,
17 particularly those in nursing homes or assisted living residences, were
18 forced to be separated for prolonged periods from family, friends, and
19 other visitors, and were impacted more than most by reduced access to
20 regular medical or other care; and

21 WHEREAS, Places of worship were deemed "nonessential" and
22 closed, leaving Coloradans with few, if any, public outlets for prayer,
23 worship, support, counseling, teaching, and spiritual guidance while
24 anxiety, depression, fear, frustration, and other natural pressures were
25 intensified by isolation, uncertainty, and loss; and

26 WHEREAS, From these mitigation efforts, particularly lockdowns
27 and stay-at-home orders, many Coloradans have endured significant
28 economic impacts, including an estimated \$29.7 billion loss in total
29 economic activity when comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 to the
30 second quarter of 2020, with nearly 40,000 Colorado businesses closing
31 between the second quarter of 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, and
32 assuming 2019 trends would have continued if not for the pandemic, a
33 12.5% cost to Colorado's real GDP; and

34 WHEREAS, From these mitigation efforts, Coloradans have
35 endured significant impacts to medical and mental health care access,

1 including the delay of important medical procedures, the unintended
2 discouragement of medical check-ups, and the unfortunate detrimental
3 effect to overall mental health for Colorado residents, including increased
4 suicides and overdoses; and

5 WHEREAS, A recent Brown University study found that babies
6 born during the pandemic have IQs that are significantly lower than
7 babies born in the decade prior to the pandemic, with the study
8 recognizing that the environmental changes alone, driven in part by stress,
9 fear, and anxiety surrounding the pandemic on pregnant mothers and
10 others, restrictions of access to places like doctors' offices and elsewhere,
11 as well as reduced social interactions with family, friends, and
12 community, have significantly and negatively affected the prenatal and
13 postnatal development of children; and

14 WHEREAS, Policies forcing the least vulnerable to the virus,
15 namely the youngest among us, to wear masks for long periods of time
16 have resulted in significant social and emotional delays, including
17 particularly adverse impacts for children with certain speech pathology
18 needs, tragically stunting or even reversing years of development; and

19 WHEREAS, From these mitigation efforts, many Coloradans have
20 endured significant impacts to education, including the disparate impact
21 to students' progress; the cancellation of important and often
22 once-in-a-lifetime student activities such as prom, sports, and other state
23 tournaments; the impact to students, parents, teachers, and administrators
24 from requirements of remote learning; and the overall disruption to
25 students, professors, and other professionals studying, teaching, and
26 supporting students at institutions of higher education; and

27 WHEREAS, Due to forced closures, remote learning, and
28 classroom disruptions, a majority of public school students in Colorado
29 are suffering from significant learning loss and, worse, according to the
30 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, visits to emergency rooms
31 have increased for adolescents attempting suicide, especially girls
32 between the ages of 12 to 17; and

33 WHEREAS, Hospital policies based on government guidelines left
34 many people to die alone, without sufficient representation and advocacy;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, The state medical board hindered the doctor-patient

1 relationship by discouraging doctors from providing life-saving
2 treatments to their patients during this pandemic; and

3 WHEREAS, Domestic violence cases surged in 2020 shortly after
4 the start of the mitigation efforts, all while those restrictions and other
5 measures made it more difficult for the victims to seek help; and

6 WHEREAS, The designation of "nonessential" forced the
7 temporary or permanent closure of small businesses in Colorado, with the
8 number of small businesses declining by over 40% by June 2021 from
9 pre-pandemic levels; and

10 WHEREAS, Johns Hopkins Institute for Applied Economics
11 recently published a paper titled "A Literature Review and Meta-Analysis
12 of the Effects of Lockdowns on COVID-19 Mortality" in which they
13 concluded that lockdowns "had little to no public health effects" but
14 "imposed enormous economic and social costs"; and

15 WHEREAS, Countless other Coloradans have silently suffered and
16 sacrificed from the mitigation efforts in countless other ways, all deeply
17 personal and meaningful, and often without due recognition or even
18 acknowledgment; and

19 WHEREAS, While the true cost of mitigation and other efforts
20 may never be fully appreciated, nor the benefits ever fully understood,
21 research is now being published that should give us pause before we
22 approach any such situation in a similar way again; and

23 WHEREAS, Difficult situations sometimes require difficult
24 decisions that may leave no great solutions or that cause disproportionate
25 impacts and harm while intending to protect others; and

26 WHEREAS, While best efforts in dynamic situations can
27 sometimes prove inadequate or even ineffective after the crisis is passed
28 and time is available to more fully review such policies, best practices in
29 good government should compel us to, at a minimum, acknowledge all
30 Coloradans adversely impacted by those efforts and to commit to learn
31 from them so as not to repeat the same; now, therefore,

32 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-third*
33 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

1 That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, hereby:

2 (1) Honor and extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of our medical
3 professionals, medical community, first responders, and the many
4 Coloradans from all walks of life who served and sacrificed so much for
5 so many over the last two years in the face of the devastating COVID-19
6 pandemic;

7 (2) Honor and extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of our retail
8 business owners, professionals, employees, contractors, and service
9 providers, including delivery drivers and the many other in-home or
10 at-home providers, who bravely served our communities over the last two
11 years, as able and at personal risk, to provide families, friends, colleagues
12 and, most often, strangers with much needed groceries, medicine,
13 products, services, and other daily essentials during the pandemic;

14 (3) Honor and extend our heartfelt apology to and hereby
15 recognize the sacrifice of the many Colorado business owners and their
16 employees that disproportionately bore the economic burden from the
17 measures taken over the last two years in an effort to protect Coloradans,
18 measures that led to significant harm, heartache, and, in some cases,
19 financial ruin for them and their families;

20 (4) Resolve to remain dedicated to the memory of the many
21 Coloradans who lost their lives directly or indirectly from the pandemic
22 and from those efforts taken to mitigate it, including our grandparents,
23 parents, siblings, children, relatives, friends, co-workers, colleagues, and
24 neighbors;

25 (5) Extend our heartfelt apology and condolences for those lost
26 and for the significant pain endured by every Coloradan over the last two
27 years, whether directly from the effects of COVID-19 or indirectly from
28 the efforts taken by the state in response to it, and hereby formally
29 recognize their sacrifices;

30 (6) Seek forgiveness from every Coloradan negatively impacted
31 by the policies followed and made by the State of Colorado during this
32 pandemic; and

33 (7) Resolve to learn from the mistakes made, however well
34 intended, so as not to repeat them should a similar situation arise again
35 during our lifetimes or thereafter.

1 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
2 to Honorable Governor Jared Polis and the members of Colorado's
3 congressional delegation: Senators Michael Bennett and John
4 Hickenlooper and Representatives Diana DeGette, Joe Neguse, Lauren
5 Boebert, Ken Buck, Doug Lamborn, Jason Crow, and Ed Perlmutter.