

First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 25-0610.02 Jessica Herrera x4218

HOUSE BILL 25-1215

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Taggart and Joseph,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Bridges and Kirkmeyer,

House Committees
Appropriations

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING THE REDISTRIBUTION OF THE LOTTERY FUND, AND, IN
102 CONNECTION THEREWITH, REDISTRIBUTING FUNDS FOR THE
103 OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL
104 CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE FUND.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

Current law distributes, to the extent available, the first \$3 million of the lottery fund to the outdoor equity fund, the next \$3 million to the public school capital construction assistance fund, and any remaining

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

money as follows:

- 25% to the wildlife cash fund;
- 25% to the parks and outdoor recreation cash fund; and
- 50% to the public school capital construction assistance fund.

For the 2024-25 state fiscal year and each state fiscal year thereafter, the bill redistributes, to the extent available, the first \$3 million of the lottery fund to the outdoor equity fund, the next \$4 million to the public school capital construction assistance fund, and any remaining money as follows:

- 10% to the wildlife cash fund;
- 10% to the parks and outdoor recreation cash fund;
- 30% to the outdoor equity fund; and
- 50% to the public school capital construction assistance fund.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) Since its creation, the outdoor equity grant program,
5 administered by the outdoor equity board in the division of parks and
6 wildlife, has provided a total of \$8.5 million to support meaningful
7 outdoor experiences for Colorado youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth,
8 low-income youth, indigenous youth, rural youth, and youth with
9 disabilities. These transformative experiences have allowed individuals
10 to discover and cherish the beauty of our state through environmental
11 education, experiential learning, stewardship programming, and more.
12 Through December 2024, this investment has supported more than 65,000
13 Colorado youth and families in experiencing the positive impact of the
14 great outdoors.

15 (b) The demand for the outdoor equity grant program reflects a
16 deep and growing need for opportunities that connect Colorado's
17 underserved youth to the outdoors. In 2023, hundreds of organizations

1 across the state put forward meaningful projects to empower youth
2 through outdoor experiences, but the program could only support a small
3 fraction of them due to limited funding. In 2024, the outdoor equity grant
4 program board received 263 grant proposals with a total ask of \$21
5 million dollars.

6 (c) This pattern has repeated year after year, with the
7 overwhelming majority of thoughtful and impactful applications going
8 unfunded. Despite the program's success in transforming lives, only 14%
9 of eligible applications have received support so far. The demand for this
10 program is a testament to its importance, but it also highlights how much
11 more could be done to ensure every young person in Colorado has the
12 chance to experience the outdoors and the life-changing opportunities it
13 provides.

14 (d) Public school capital construction assistance grant requests to
15 address health and safety needs in school buildings vastly outnumber
16 available grant funds every year. Increased funds for the public school
17 capital construction assistance fund will help meet more of those
18 qualified requests. These funds also generate local matching dollars for
19 public school facility projects and are local economic drivers, with more
20 than 17 direct and indirect jobs created or supported for every \$1 million
21 invested in building excellent schools today (BEST) grant program
22 schools.

23 (e) Increased investment in public school capital construction
24 assistance grants ensures that more public school facilities can be
25 renovated or rebuilt to meet modern safety and accessibility standards,
26 creating healthier learning environments and fostering long-term
27 educational success for Colorado's students; and

1 (f) The general assembly has the opportunity to reallocate existing
2 resources to support more of these critical programs without any new
3 funding.

4 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that by prioritizing
5 the outdoor equity grant program within our current budget, we can
6 expand access to transformative outdoor experiences for Colorado's
7 underserved youth, ensuring that more young people benefit from the
8 life-changing impact of nature.

9 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 44-40-111, **amend**
10 (12)(b)(III) and (12)(b)(IV); and **add** (12)(b)(V) as follows:

11 **44-40-111. Lottery fund creation - definitions.**

12 (12) (b) Pursuant to subsection (10)(b) of this section, the state treasurer
13 shall transfer money that would otherwise be allocated to the general fund
14 pursuant to section 3 (1)(b)(III) of article XXVII of the state constitution,
15 and as described in section 33-60-104 (1)(c), as follows:

16 (III) For the 2022-23 state fiscal year, to the extent available, the
17 first two million two hundred fifty thousand dollars to the outdoor equity
18 fund; the next three million dollars to the public school capital
19 construction assistance fund; and any remaining money as follows:
20 Twenty-five percent to the wildlife cash fund, twenty-five percent to the
21 parks and outdoor recreation cash fund, and fifty percent to the public
22 school capital construction assistance fund; ~~and~~

23 (IV) For the 2023-24 state fiscal year, ~~and each state fiscal year~~
24 ~~thereafter~~, to the extent available, the first three million dollars to the
25 outdoor equity fund; the next three million dollars to the public school
26 capital construction assistance fund; and any remaining money as follows:
27 Twenty-five percent to the wildlife cash fund, twenty-five percent to the

1 parks and outdoor recreation cash fund, and fifty percent to the public
2 school capital construction assistance fund; AND

3 (V) FOR THE 2024-25 STATE FISCAL YEAR AND EACH STATE FISCAL
4 YEAR THEREAFTER, TO THE EXTENT AVAILABLE, THE FIRST THREE MILLION
5 DOLLARS TO THE OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND; THE NEXT FOUR MILLION
6 DOLLARS TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE
7 FUND; AND ANY REMAINING MONEY AS FOLLOWS: TEN PERCENT TO THE
8 WILDLIFE CASH FUND, TEN PERCENT TO THE PARKS AND OUTDOOR
9 RECREATION CASH FUND, THIRTY PERCENT TO THE OUTDOOR EQUITY
10 FUND, AND FIFTY PERCENT TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL
11 CONSTRUCTION ASSISTANCE FUND.

12 **SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
13 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
14 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
15 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
16 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
17 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
18 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
19 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
20 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.