

OFFICE OF THE CLERK AND RECORDER



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February 21, 2025

Colorado General Assembly
Attn.: House Finance Committee
C/O Representative William Lindstedt, Chair
C/O Representative Brianna Titone, Vice Chair
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Subj: HCR25-1001

Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 25-1001, which proposes an amendment to the Colorado Constitution to expand eligibility for the Senior Property Tax Exemption. As the former El Paso County Assessor, the current Clerk and Recorder, and a dedicated board member of the Pikes Peak Commission on Aging, I have firsthand experience with the challenges that seniors face when it comes to housing affordability and mobility. This resolution is an essential step in ensuring that seniors can continue to benefit from a property tax exemption they have earned, even if they choose to relocate within Colorado.

As it stands, Colorado's current Senior Property Tax Exemption requires seniors to reside in their primary home for at least ten years to qualify. This requirement restricts seniors from making necessary housing transitions without losing their financial benefits. HCR25-1001 provides a critical solution by allowing seniors who have previously qualified for the exemption since 2016 to transfer their benefit to a new primary residence. This change would significantly impact El Paso County and the entire state in the following ways:

- 1. Empowering Seniors to Downsize** – Many seniors find that their long-time residences, often large family homes, become difficult to maintain as they age. By allowing the exemption to transfer, this resolution enables them to transition to more suitable housing options, such as condominiums, townhomes, or single-level ranch-style homes, without the financial penalty of losing their exemption.
- 2. Improving Real Estate Inventory and Affordability** – The ability for seniors to move freely will increase the availability of larger homes for younger families, helping to alleviate the housing shortage and stabilize real estate prices. In El Paso County, where housing demand remains high, opening up more inventory will benefit buyers and sellers alike.
- 3. Supporting Colorado's Aging Population** – The senior population in Colorado continues to grow, and with it, the need for policy solutions that allow them to age with dignity and financial stability. Seniors have contributed to our communities for decades, and allowing them to retain their earned property tax benefits fosters a fairer and more supportive system.

4. Enhancing Economic Mobility and Local Tax Revenue Stability – When seniors are encouraged to move to appropriate housing rather than being financially trapped in homes they no longer need, it promotes economic movement and stability in the housing market. This also helps local governments by ensuring more equitable property tax contributions from appropriately valued and occupied residences.

Conclusion

The passage of HCR25-1001 represents a commonsense solution to an ongoing issue faced by Colorado's senior homeowners. I strongly urge this Finance Committee to advance this resolution and give voters the opportunity to approve this amendment in the 2026 general election. By doing so, we will be supporting our senior residents while strengthening our housing market and communities across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Schleiker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Steve Schleiker, Clerk and Recorder
El Paso County