

My name is Andrew Barton, and I am the Programs and Engagement Manager at Colorado Common Cause, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works for open, honest, and accountable government and seeks to strengthen public participation in civic life.

Common Cause has worked since 1971 to represent the public interest and to strengthen public participation in civic life.

For our citizen legislature to truly reflect the Coloradans it represents, public office must be a viable path for everyday people not just the independently wealthy.

This bill is an important step toward opening the path to public office to Coloradans who have been traditionally shut out. Working class Coloradans rarely make it to public office; nationally, about 3% of state legislators held working class jobs at the time of their election, compared to 52% of their constituents ([2018 study](#)).

Many would-be candidates who seek to serve and represent their communities are shut out of the possibility due to low wages that cannot support the high cost of living throughout Colorado. The amount that Colorado legislators make (~\$41-43k) is a major determinant of who can and cannot afford to run and hold office ([Colorado Sun analysis](#)).

To truly embody what it means to be a citizen's legislature, Colorado must be a place where young people, people of color, and working class people can run for office and support themselves financially through their terms once elected.

This bill is a step in the right direction. It will create a process through which fair pay can be determined for our general assembly.

[‘Splitting myself in half’: Colorado's citizen-legislature clashes with financial realities | COVER STORY | Legislature | coloradopolitics.com](#)