

### I Together Against COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic poses an unprecedented challenge for our country, threatening our health, wellbeing and economic security. Now more than ever, we need to work together to ensure that our government has a coordinated, strategic response to safeguard the public's health and safety. We also need to equitably distribute a vaccine, protect consumers from emerging dangers and take action to prevent or mitigate future pandemics. Key 2021 priorities:

- Watchdog local and state leaders to ensure that decisions around temporarily closing or reopening schools, businesses, and our community are made based on public health expert advice and prioritize saving lives.
- Ensure we have the proper systems in place to provide the [necessary PPE](#) to the state.
- Ensure Colorado and local communities are [testing enough people](#) to allow for a trace and quarantine program to effectively suppress the virus.
- Continue our work to stop future health emergencies with a focus on stopping the overuse of antibiotics on livestock and crops that endanger the effectiveness of one our most important modern medicines.

### I Beyond Plastics

Every day, people throw away tons of plastic “stuff” — cups, plates, bags, containers, forks, knives, straws, spoons and more. All of this waste not only clogs our landfills, trashes our parks, and litters our streets, but it also washes into our rivers and oceans, where it can harm wildlife.

It's time to move beyond single-use plastic, by getting rid of the most harmful waste, and stopping the use of things we truly don't need. Nothing we use for a few minutes should threaten our health and pollute our future for hundreds of years. Key 2021 priorities:

- Passage of a plastic pollution bill sponsored by Representatives Lisa Cutter and Alex Valdez, and Senator Julie Gonzales that would eliminate among other things to-go food containers made of polystyrene foam (commonly known as Styrofoam).
- Passage of state and local policy that would eliminate single-use plastic bags and create a fee on single-use paper bags.
- Lift Colorado's preemption statutes that disallow many local governments from taking action on plastic pollution.
- Support efforts to hold producers responsible for the waste they create including moving policy recommendations forward from a CDPHE study that will be published in July 2021.
- Support efforts to expand local curbside recycling and composting programs.

CoPIRG is an advocate for the public interest. We speak out for a healthier, safer world in which we're freer to pursue our own individual well-being and the common good.

For more information about CoPIRG's 2021 priorities, to request our support for a bill, or to ask questions about our position on a specific issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. We look forward to working with you.

— Danny Katz, CoPIRG Executive Director, 608-215-0929, [danny@copirg.org](mailto:danny@copirg.org)

## | The Right to Repair

The goal of the Right to Repair movement is to give every consumer and small business access to the parts, tools and service information they need to repair products so we can keep things in use and reduce waste. Manufacturer barriers to repair means more costs to consumers and more electronic waste. Beyond barriers for our everyday equipment from smartphones to tractors, barriers to repair can be a matter of life-or-death when it comes to life-saving devices like ventilators. Biomedical repair technicians have often been denied access to the essential tools and information they need to keep ventilators, defibrillators and other critical equipment in service. Key 2021 priority:

- Colorado should adopt broad “right to repair” reforms, which would allow consumers, farmers, small businesses, biomedical technicians and more to fix their property and devices in order to reduce waste and save money.

## | Transform Transportation

Colorado’s reliance on polluting fossil fuels for transportation puts our health and safety at risk. CoPIRG supports proposals that reduce the need to drive so the easiest, cheapest and most pleasant ways to travel are also the cleanest and healthiest. In addition, we need to ensure every vehicle on the road is zero emissions. Key 2021 priorities:

- Any effort on a local, state or federal level to increase transportation funding must be focused on fixing and maintaining our current infrastructure and expanding multimodal options like transit, walking, and biking.
- No dollars should be invested in highway projects if they increase driving and exacerbate air pollution, traffic, and our unacceptably unsafe roads.
- Cities and counties should expand people-friendly-street policies like reducing speed limits to 20 mph in neighborhoods, dedicating more space to walking and biking, and making temporary shared street projects permanent.

- Colorado should adopt additional clean vehicle policies like the Advanced Clean Truck program and rules that ensure we reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector.
- Building off the PUC’s approval of Xcel Energy’s Transportation Electrification Plan, we will watchdog Xcel’s investments to ensure consumers see benefits and support additional utility efforts to build out EV infrastructure
- RTD needs reforms including lifting the arbitrary fare-box revenue requirement. We support the rapid completion of RTD’s Reimagine process so the region has a long-term transit vision. In addition, we must ensure transit agencies receive the dollars they need right now to fully fund our transit networks.
- Cities and counties can lead the way to a clean transportation future by becoming a GoEV community and making an 100% electric vehicle pledge. We will expand the number of municipalities that are a part of this program and work to connect school districts and transit agencies to the assistance they need to convert their buses to 100% electric-powered.
- Micromobility programs including bikeshare, electric scooters, and electric bike systems should be launched in municipalities across the state to build out networks that reduce driving and vehicle ownership.

## | Energy Efficient, Clean Buildings

Saving energy is a common sense solution. We need to increase energy efficiency and promote energy conservation in homes and businesses as well as reduce the reliance on fossil fuels to power and heat our buildings. Key 2021 priorities:

- Help consumers access critical clean building technologies like heat pumps and heat pump water heaters.
- Increase transparency around energy use in buildings and push our most inefficient ones to improve their efficiency
- Create incentives for utilities to reduce the use of fossil fuels in buildings

## | Consumer Protection

Consumers deserve fair rules of the road and an even playing field in the financial marketplace. Consumers should be able to buy products on the marketplace without concern about hidden fees, scams, safety risks, or privacy violations. Key 2021 priorities:

- Our [Consumer Watchdog](#) program will continue to produce consumer tips and put out consumer alerts to help people avoid scams, traps, and harm. We will continue to work with the Colorado Attorney General's office to provide data and information so they can take action.
- Support local and state efforts to establish Offices of Financial Empowerment that can combine the tools of free one-on-one counseling and navigation services with non-predatory products and strong consumer protections.
- Ensure the Office of Consumer Counsel, a critical voice for consumers in the utility space, is reauthorized and has the tools it needs to be successful.
- Stop predatory products or practices that harm Colorado consumers.

## | A Healthy, More Liveable Colorado

It's time to reorient public policy and our economy to prioritize the health and wellbeing of Colorado residents. The products we put on our bodies should be safe. No Coloradan should be exposed to lead or other known toxic chemicals in their drinking water. We should not stand by while millions of kids are getting hooked on nicotine with serious implications for their health and future. We are spending far too much on health care, and getting far too little in return. Key 2021 priorities:

- **End the Nicotine Trap** - Ban the sale of flavored vaping products, making it more difficult for underage users to fall into the nicotine trap.

- **Get Lead and Other Toxins Out of Drinking Water** -
  - Colorado should require schools to prevent lead contamination, down to 1 part per billion, at every tap used for cooking or drinking. We also need any major infrastructure bills to invest in getting the lead out of our water system
  - Colorado should prevent the proliferation of "forever chemicals" (PFAS) in our drinking water.
- **Make it Toxic Free** - By directly calling for companies to take action and by supporting state legislation, we're working to ensure the products we use on our bodies every day don't contain toxic ingredients that put our health at risk.
- **High Value Health Care** - We're calling for policies that rein in prescription drug prices, eliminate surprise medical billing, and programs that will maintain a competitive marketplace, increase consumer choice, and bring costs under control.

## | Good Government and Transparency

CoPIRG supports policies that ensure that every citizen, regardless of wealth, has equal opportunity to influence the actions of our government. We will continue to support efforts to expand public financing programs like the one approved by Denver voters in 2016 as well as ensure citizens have access to the information they need to be active citizens.

Key 2021 priorities:

- Amplify the power of small donors at the local level by creating a publicly-financed match system.
- Ensure Coloradans in special districts and cooperative utilities have access to important election information and clear paths to participate in elections
- Ensure COVID relief and stimulus dollars are accounted for and the public has access to information to determine the effectiveness of this large government spending.