

## **– The 75<sup>th</sup> Colorado General Assembly – New Legislators**

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As the 2025 legislative session kicks off, Colorado will welcome 25 legislators starting their first terms under the Gold Dome (with the exception of Dan Woog, who previously served one term in the House from 2020-2022). These newcomers bring fresh energy and perspectives to the State Capitol.

In the House, Democrats will hold a slightly reduced majority of 43-22, following Republicans' successful efforts to flip three seats in the recent elections. Meanwhile, the Senate remains under Democratic control, with a 23-12 majority, though the chamber saw some shifts with two seats changing hands.

Vacancy committees have also filled several positions, introducing new faces to the Capitol. Matthew Ball was selected by a Democratic vacancy committee to represent Senate District 31 in central Denver, defeating Rep. Steven Woodrow after five rounds of voting. With Ball's win, only one vacancy remains in House District 41, following Rep. Iman Jodeh's appointment to Senate District 29 replacing Janet Buckner. On the Republican side, John Carson was chosen to fill the vacancy in Senate District 30, left by Kevin Van Winkle.

With such notable changes taking place, it can be hard to keep track of who's who. To help you get acquainted with the new members of the 75<sup>th</sup> Colorado General Assembly, I've put together an overview of the individuals who will be joining the ranks in 2025. These new legislators are poised to address the state's pressing issues, such as housing, education, and fiscal policy, while adjusting to the evolving political landscape.

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### **Senate District 29: John Carson (R)**

(Vacancy Appointment) Senator John Carson, a former CU regent, succeeds former Sen. Kevin Van Winkle, who resigned in December to accept an appointment to the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners. Carson worked to eliminate the Douglas County teachers' union when he was on the school board and advance taxpayer-funded vouchers for private schools, an issue that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The lawsuit was tossed out when Democrats took over the school board in 2015. Carson has called for eliminating the state income tax, supporting school choice and the Second Amendment, and requiring law enforcement to cooperate with federal officials on immigration.



### **Senate District 31: Matt Ball (D)**

(Vacancy Appointment) Senator Matt Ball replaces outgoing Sen. Chris Hansen in the Colorado Senate. Ball won on the SD311 vacancy committee in the fifth round of voting with 61 votes. A fifth-generation Coloradan, Matt Ball, spent years in the military as an Army Ranger. He did three combat deployments in Afghanistan and one in Turkey, where he was with a group of special operators combating ISIS in Syria. When he returned to the United States, like many veterans, he experienced mental health struggles — which he says has informed his priorities since. He attended law school at Stanford and practiced appellate and private criminal defense law for five years. Most recently he served as the policy director for Denver Mayor Mike Johnston.

**Senate District 13: Scott Bright (R)**

Senator Scott Bright is the only new member of the Colorado Senate. He won Senate District 13, replacing term-limited Democratic Sen. Kevin Priola. Bright secured approximately 56% of the vote in the general election. He runs his family’s childcare and preschool businesses in Weld County and serves as president of the Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado. Bright has stated that reducing the cost of living in Colorado is his primary focus. He ran on a platform of lowering taxes, promoting education, and ending job-killing regulations.



**House District 4: Cecelia Espenoza (D)**

Rep. Cecelia Espenoza will represent Denver's House District 4, succeeding Rep. Tim Hernández. Espenoza defeated the more progressive Hernández in the June Democratic primary with 53% of the vote and won the general election by a significant margin. A former appellate immigration judge and immigration lawyer, Espenoza lists gun safety as a key priority, with a potential focus on tax credits for gun safe purchases. She has been affiliated with the Round Table of Former Immigration Judges, Denver Cafecito, and University of Utah alumni board. She will serve on the House Judiciary Committee and the House State, Civic, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.

**House District 6: Sean Camacho (D)**

Attorney and Air Force veteran Rep. Sean Camacho will represent Denver’s House District 6, replacing Rep. Elisabeth Epps. Camacho won the Democratic primary with 61% of the vote and the general election with 85%. He is focused on increasing housing availability across all income levels. As of 2024, Camacho was affiliated with the Colorado Dream Foundation and Foster Source. Camacho will serve on the House Energy and Environment and House Finance Committees. He also plans to compete for a vacancy in the state Senate, potentially leading to another vacancy in House District 6.



**House District 8: Lindsay Gilchrist (D)**

Rep. Lindsay Gilchrist replaces term-limited Rep. Leslie Herod in Denver’s House District 8. Gilchrist ran unopposed in the primary and won the general election with 87% of the vote. She has worked with the U.S. House of Representatives’ Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health and founded her own political strategy group. Gilchrist has spent time volunteering as a court appointed special advocate (CASA) and has been affiliated with Step Up. Some of her key issues include criminal justice reform, child welfare, and gun violence prevention. Gilchrist will serve on the House Health and Human Services Committee and the House Education Committee.

**House District 16: Rebecca Keltie (R)**

Rep. Rebecca Keltie will represent House District 16, replacing Democratic Rep. Steph Vigil. Keltie, a defense contract engineer and Navy veteran, won by three votes after a mandatory recount. Keltie has also worked in information technology, project management, atmospheric science, meteorology, oceanography, and as a small business owner. She says she will work to increase public safety, champion education and parental rights, and strengthen small business. She will serve on the House Judiciary Committee and House Business Affairs and Labor Committee.





**House District 18: Amy Paschal (D)**

Rep. Amy Paschal replaces Rep. Marc Snyder in House District 18 in western Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs. Paschal won by about 7 points in the general election. A former software engineer turned stay-at-home mother, Paschal has been politically active for over a decade. Some of Paschal’s top issues include the economy, affordable housing, homelessness, and infrastructure funding. She has been affiliated with the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, El Paso County Democratic Party, and Sierra Club. She will serve on the House Energy and Environment Committee and the House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government Committee.

**House District 19: Dan Woog (R)**

(Returning Member) Rep. Dan Woog flipped House District 19 by defeating Democrat Jillaire McMillan by over 100 votes after an automatic recount. Woog previously served one term in the House from 2020 to 2022. Woog works as a real estate broker and a small business owner, living in Frederick, Colorado. Previously, he served on the Erie Economic Development Council and the Erie Planning and Zoning Commission, and he was elected and re-elected to the Erie Board of Trustees. He ran unsuccessfully for mayor of Erie in 2018. He will serve as the ranking member of the House Energy and Environment Committee.



**House District 20: Jarvis Caldwell (R)**

Rep. Jarvis Caldwell replaces Rep. Don Wilson in House District 20 in northern Colorado Springs. Caldwell, an Air Force veteran, won the general election with 70% of the vote. He previously worked as an aide and communications director for the House GOP. He said his number one priority for House District 20 is getting legislation passed that gets costs down. He’s supportive of further addressing the current property tax crisis and positive legislation like senior property tax exemption portability. Caldwell will serve on the House Education and House Judiciary Committees.

**House District 24: Lisa Feret (D)**

Rep. Lisa Feret replaces Rep. Lindsey Daugherty in House District 24. A former military police officer and current Medicaid and housing policy expert, Feret defeated her Republican opponent by 15 points in the general election. Feret is an advocate for both crime reduction and law enforcement reform. She supports alternative approaches to police action such as early intervention, the mental health co-response model, and solving the root causes of crime. She will serve on the House State, Civic, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee and House Health and Human Services Committee.

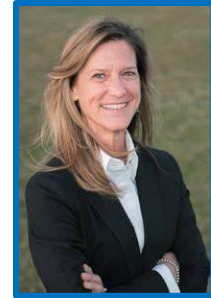


**House District 30: Rebekah Stewart (D)**

Rep. Rebekah Stewart, a former Lakewood City Council member, will represent House District 30, replacing term-limited Rep. Chris deGruy Kennedy. Stewart won the Democratic primary and the general election with about 63% of the vote. Her career experience includes working as a therapist and director of finance and operations for a nonprofit. Stewart, the first board-certified music therapist elected to office in Colorado, said she wants to bring her experience advocating for the disability and health care communities to the legislature. She will serve on the House Finance and House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government Committees.

**House District 31:(D) Jacque Phillips**

Rep. Jacque Phillips, a civil rights attorney and former Thornton City Councilmember, replaces Rep. Julia Marvin in House District 31 in Thornton. Phillips defeated Marvin in the Democratic primary after losing to her in a 2024 vacancy committee process. She was a high school dropout who waited tables and paid her way through Aims Community College. Phillips then went on to obtain her doctorate at the University of Northern Colorado and a law degree at the University of Denver. Phillips will serve on the House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government Committee and House Education Committee.



**House District 36: Michael Carter (D)**

Rep. Michael Carter, an Army veteran and public defender, replaces Rep. Mike Weissman in House District 36. Carter won the general election with 71% of the vote. His career experience includes working as an attorney and small business owner. He worked as a Colorado deputy public defender from May 2006 to August 2009. He has also served as a judge pro tem for the City of Westminster Municipal Court and a parking magistrate for the City of Aurora. Carter has served as a member of the Defenders Union of Colorado, the Sam Cary Bar Association, the Arapahoe County Bar Association, and the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar. He will serve on the House State, Civic, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee and as the vice chair of the House Judiciary Committee.

**House District 38: Gretchen Rydin (D)**

Rep. Gretchen Rydin, a social worker, therapist, and former member of Littleton City Council, replaces Rep. David Ortiz in House District 38. Rydin won the general election with 55% of the vote. Rydin says her top issues for this session are equitable housing, mental health and addiction, and small business support. She will serve on the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee and House Health and Human Services Committee.



**District 45: Max Brooks (R)**

Rep. Max Brooks will represent House District 45, replacing Rep. Lisa Frizell. Brooks, a Castle Rock Town Council member, won the general election with 62% of the vote. He has also served on town boards and commissions and on the boards of other organizations. He works in advertising and marketing for KOA, a radio station in Denver. His top issues this session include addressing affordability issues (including housing), public safety, and parental choice. He will serve on the House Finance Committee and House Business Affairs and Labor Committee.

**House District 48: Carlos Barron (R)**

Rep. Carlos Barron, a former city council member from Fort Lupton City, replaces Rep. Gabe Evans in House District 48. Barron, who ran unopposed in the general election, has a background in the oil and gas industry. Barron emigrated from Guanajuato, Mexico to the United States with his family when he was an infant. He lives in Fort Lupton, Colorado, with his wife and three children. Previously, he served on the city's planning commission. He works as the general manager of his father's company, which is part of the oil and gas industry, and has been with the firm for 23 years. Now that he's at the Capitol he wants to look into lowering the cost of living for Colorado residents. He will serve on the House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government Committee and House Energy and Environment Committee.





**House District 49: Lesley Smith (D)**

Rep. Lesley Smith, a former at-large University of Colorado regent and Boulder Valley School District board member, will represent House District 49, replacing Rep. Judy Amabile. Smith, a scientist and educator, won the general election with 64% of the vote. Early in her career, she was the first woman aquanaut at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s underwater research habitat, Aquarius. Smith says she will prioritize education, affordability, the environment, and use a scientific approach to help solve Colorado’s pressing challenges. She will serve on the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee and House Education Committee.

**House District 50: Ryan Gonzalez (R)**

Rep. Ryan Gonzalez won House District 50 by defeating Democratic Rep. Mary Young. He previously ran in the 2022 election and was defeated by Young. Gonzalez was born to Mexican immigrants who came to America for better opportunity. He describes himself as pro-liberty, pro-free market, pro-faith, and pro-family. He wants to address what he describes as the roadblocks put in place by the current administration in Colorado, which he says has led to rising inflation, increased crime, and a loss of values and civil liberties. Gonzalez, with a background in banking, will serve on the House Energy and Environment Committee and the House Finance Committee.



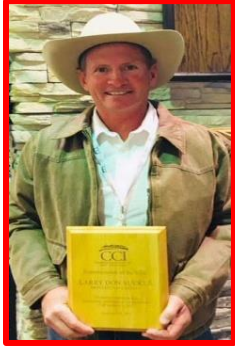
**House District 52(D)**

Rep. Yara Zokaie will represent House District 52, replacing Rep. Cathy Kipp. Zokaie, a tax law expert and chief deputy assessor for Larimer County, won the general election with 63% of the vote. She is a first-generation Iranian American, and has previously being involved with progressive politics, including advocating for paid family leave. Zokaie has represented people and small businesses across the country against the IRS and Departments of Revenue. Zokaie says her top issues this year include public education funding, progressive tax policy, health care for all, and protecting the environment. She will serve on the House Judiciary and House Finance Committees.

**House District 50: Chris Richardson (R)**

Rep. Chris Richardson, a second-term Elbert County Commissioner and Army veteran, replaces Rep. Rod Bockenfeld in House District 50. Richardson’s career experience includes working as a military officer, professional logistician, and resource manager. As of 2024, Richardson was affiliated with the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. As President of the Eastern Region of the statewide county organization (CCI) of County Commissioners, he worked closely with legislative stakeholders to strengthen local control and avoid unfunded mandates. He won the 2024 election with over 75% of the vote. Richardson will serve as the ranking member of the House Transportation, Housing, and Local Government Committee and on the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee.





**House District 58: Larry Suckla (R)**

Rep. Larry Suckla, a retired firefighter, replaces Rep. Marc Catlin in House District 58. Suckla won the general election with 53% of the vote after winning the Republican primary by three votes. Suckla is a farmer and rancher from Cortez, in the southwestern corner of Colorado. He has experience in logging, construction, and landscaping. He served as a Montezuma County commissioner for eight years, from 2013–2021, and in 2017 he was named Colorado County Commissioner of the Year by his fellow commissioners across the state. He will serve on the House Transportation, Housing and Local Government Committee, the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee, and the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee.

**House District 59: Katie Stewart (D)**

Rep. Katie Stewart, a former emergency medical technician and Durango School Board member with a background in political advocacy, replaces term-limited Rep. Barbara McLachlan in House District 59. She won the general election with just over 51% of the vote. Stewart said she believes access to health care in rural Colorado, including reproductive health care, resonated with voters in the district. Stewart’s campaign focused on areas like affordable housing and protecting reproductive rights. Some of her key issues for 2025 include water, housing, and partnering with Native nations. Stewart will serve on the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee and House Health and Human Services Committee.



**House District 63: Dusty Johnson (R)**

Rep. Dusty Johnson replaces Rep. Richard Holtorf in House District 63. Johnson, a former Morgan County GOP Chair, will focus on the district’s urban-rural divide. Dusty says her passion for agriculture and rural communities has been deeply rooted in her character from her upbringing in 4H and FFA. Her priorities include supporting agriculture, advocating for rural communities, common sense water planning, and accountable healthcare reform – including mental health. She will serve on the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources Committee, the House Education Committee, and the House Health and Human Services Committee.

**House District 65: Lori Garcia Sander (R)**

Rep. Lori Garcia Sander replaces Rep. Mike Lynch in House District 65. Garcia Sander won the general election with 61% of the vote. She is a retired public-school teacher and school administrator. She and her husband have an organic apple orchard on their property in Eaton, and they lease land for cattle grazing in Red Feather Lakes. Garcia Sander describes herself as a common-sense conservative. Her key issues include school choice and education, the economy, and public safety. She will serve on the House Appropriations Committee, the House Education Committee, and the House Health and Human Services Committee.

