

HOUSE JOURNAL
SIXTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF COLORADO
Second Regular Session

Second Legislative Day

Thursday, January 10, 2008

- 1 Prayer by Dr. Gary Bowser, First Baptist Church, Denver.
2
3 The Speaker called the House to order at 9:00 a.m.
4
5 Pledge of Allegiance led by Alyson Gardner age 4, Crayon College,
6 Yuma.
7
8 The roll was called with the following result:
9
10 Present--62.
11 Excused--Representative Rice--1.
12 Vacancy--1.
13 Absent--Representative Summers--1.
14 Present after roll call--Representative Summers.
15
16 The Speaker declared a quorum present.

18
19 On motion of Representative Balmer, the reading of the journal of
20 January 9, 2008, was declared dispensed with and approved as corrected
21 by the Chief Clerk.

22
23
24
25 **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION**
26
27 **HR08-1004** by Representative(s) Madden and May M.--Concerning
28 changes to the rules of the House of Representatives.
29

30 (Printed and placed in members file.)

31
32 On motion of Representative Madden, the resolution was **adopted** by
33 **viva voce** vote.

34
35 Co-sponsors added: Representatives Benefield, Butcher, Casso, Curry,
36 Ferrandino, Fischer, Gagliardi, Hodge, Kefalas, Kerr A, Labuda, Merrifield,
37 Soper, Stafford, Stephens.

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39
40 House in recess for Joint Session.

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43

JOINT SESSION

1
2
3 The Joint Session was called to order by the Speaker of the House,
4 Andrew Romanoff.

5
6 On motion of Senator Gordon, the morning roll call of the Senate was
7 made the roll call of the Joint Session.

8
9 Present--33.
10 Excused--Senators Sandoval, Ward--2.

11
12 On motion of Representative Madden, the morning roll call of the House
13 was made the roll call of the Joint Session.

14
15 Present--63.
16 Excused--Representative Rice--1.
17 Vacancy--1.

18
19 The Speaker declared a quorum present and as is customary presented the
20 gavel to the President of the Senate to preside over the joint session.

21
22 President Groff requested the Joint Committee, composed of Senators
23 Tupa, Taylor, and Representatives Primavera, Gagliardi, Swalm to escort
24 the Governor from the Governor's Chambers to the rostrum.

25
26 Chief Sergeant-at-Arms Suman announced the arrival of the Honorable
27 Bill Ritter, Governor of the State of Colorado.

28
29 The Joint Committee escorted the Governor to the rostrum where he
30 addressed the Joint Session.

31
32
33
34 **ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE**
35 **Bill Ritter**

36
37 To all Coloradans outside this chamber, good morning.

38
39 To Lieutenant Governor O'Brien, President Groff, Speaker Romanoff, Mayor
40 Hickenlooper, Executive Directors, Board of Education members, Supreme
41 Court justices, Treasurer Kennedy, Attorney General Suthers, Secretary of State
42 Coffman, Honorable Representatives and Senators, thank you for being here
43 today.

44
45 We are blessed with several other special guests as well: Representative
46 Perlmutter, local government leaders, and Ute Mountain Ute Chairman Ernest
47 House Sr. Thank you all for everything you do for Colorado.

48
49 Colorado's First Lady, Jeannie, two of our children - Tally and Sam - and my
50 mother, Ethel, are here as well. Jeannie: thank you for everything you do for the
51 people of our state, particularly your focus on mental-health issues.

52
53 President Groff, I am proud to serve with you as you make history. Speaker
54 Romanoff, as you serve your final year in the House, be proud of the history you
55 have made.

56

1 To all who will be leaving the General Assembly after this session, it has been
2 an honor to serve with you.
3
4 Congratulations to the newest members - Representatives Christine Scanlan,
5 Mark Ferrandino and Doug Bruce. I look forward to working with each of you
6 as we move forward.
7
8 Let's also acknowledge Senator Steve Ward and Representative Joe Rice, who
9 are in Iraq. I saw them a few weeks ago. They are among the many brave men
10 and women from Colorado serving in harm's way. It was one of my greatest
11 honors as Governor to meet with so many of them on my visit. We owe them
12 all a tremendous debt of gratitude for their service.
13
14 It's inspiring to stand here with you at the start of a new legislative session.
15 Actually, it's a little like fly fishing. Fly fishing is about hope and possibilities.
16 Every time you cast a line, drop a fly onto the water or move to a new spot,
17 there's a new opportunity for a promising return. It is my hope that each of us
18 approaches this session with a sense of hope, of promise, of the immense
19 possibilities. My hope for the next 120 days is that we strengthen what is great
20 about Colorado and build on the work we started in 2007:
21
22 "The New Energy Economy has made our entire economy stronger, especially
23 in rural areas. We're creating new jobs by building wind farms in wheat fields,
24 and we're getting international recognition because of it.
25
26 "We took critical steps to protect Coloradans against mortgage fraud and
27 foreclosure - progress that is now considered a national model for other states
28 to follow.
29
30 "We began to address the high rate at which criminals are returning to prison,
31 thus preventing innocent people from becoming victims and keeping
32 communities safe.
33
34 "We forged ahead on health care reform, education reform and funding for
35 higher-ed, and laid the groundwork for future action.
36
37 Let's celebrate those successes, but let's not be satisfied. There is much more to
38 be done for the people of Colorado. Fulfilling the Colorado Promise is a long
39 journey. Over the past 12 months we put key building blocks in place. Over the
40 next 120 days, we must:
41
42 "Make real progress on education reform, because too many of our students are
43 unprepared for college or the 21st century workforce.
44
45 "Strengthen our robust economic climate for new and existing businesses by
46 investing in higher education and transportation, because the global economy
47 is getting more competitive every day.
48
49 "Move ahead on health-care reform, because escalating health-care costs impact
50 every family and every business.
51
52 "Ensure that our election and voting systems work and are fair.
53
54 "And continue to secure Colorado's energy future, protect Coloradans from
55 fraud and violent crime, and keep the pressure on Washington to enact
56 meaningful immigration reform as we enforce our own laws in this area.

1 We must do this, always with an eye toward making government work more
2 effectively, and being fiscally responsible with every taxpayer dollar.

3
4 We must overcome some big challenges if our vision for Colorado is to become
5 a reality. Over the last year, scores of dedicated Coloradans have helped us sort
6 through the issues and potential solutions to some of the toughest challenges we
7 face: how to fund a 21st century transportation system; how to make sure all
8 Coloradans have access to affordable, quality health care; how our schools and
9 colleges can accomplish their missions.

10
11 These are all high-priority issues, as is continuing broad-based discussions on
12 how best to address conflicting provisions in our state's Constitution. But we
13 aren't going to come up with big fixes in all of those areas all at once. It would
14 be a fool's errand to even try. We must make steady progress across the board,
15 doing what we know is right and what we can afford.

16
17 This will take discipline, focus, leadership and courage. It will mean, for all of
18 us, making strategic, sometimes difficult, choices as we move ahead for the
19 people of Colorado.

20
21 I will return to each of these issues, but I want to talk for a moment about why
22 I am so optimistic about Colorado's future and about why I know we can keep
23 achieving great things.

24
25 I.. State of the People
26

27 In my first year as Governor, I spent time with thousands of Coloradans outside
28 this building and outside of Denver. Nearly 100 venues in all, plus hundreds of
29 events within the metro area. It's important to meet people where they live and
30 work, where partisanship doesn't matter. We celebrated their successes, we
31 shared their struggles, and we listened.

32
33 By listening, we found the inspiration and direction that should guide us here
34 in the Capitol. Wherever we went in 2007, we found people fulfilling the
35 Colorado Promise, ordinary people doing extraordinary things, Coloradans
36 making Colorado proud:

37
38 "I personally congratulated the 42 Colorado scientists who were part of the
39 Nobel Prize-winning team on climate change. They're perfect examples of why
40 we must make investments in our research universities.

41
42 "We celebrated with Principal Sandra Lundt and the students at Poudre High
43 School in Fort Collins after they won the National Science Bowl. There were
44 other high schools across Colorado that competed nationally and represented
45 our state in an exemplary fashion as well. We need look no further than those
46 students to understand why a rigorous K-12 education is so important.

47
48 "We joined people in Peetz, Twin Buttes, Dove Creek, Grover, Alamosa and
49 Windsor to celebrate wind farms, solar plants, a blade manufacturing plant and
50 a biodiesel plant - the pioneering businesses of our New Energy Economy.

51
52 "In Del Norte, we applauded doctors, nurses and health professionals who are
53 providing care in the San Luis Valley, where 25 percent of the population lacks
54 health insurance.

55
56

1 "In Rifle, I celebrated the 20th anniversary of the State Veterans Nursing Home
2 with heroes like Joe Kaspar, a World War II gunner who flew 48 missions
3 defending our flag and our country.

4

5 It's people like these who make it an honor and a privilege to serve as governor.
6 Their experiences are uplifting, optimistic and hopeful, full of possibility and
7 opportunity. They are real-life examples of how good policy can help people
8 reach their full potential.

9

10 It's a lot harder to feel pain and loss, but we did that too, and wherever we
11 could, we found legitimate ways for government to intersect with where people
12 struggle.

13

14 "We went to La Junta to help farmers and ranchers who were devastated by last
15 year's blizzards. And we secured a federal disaster declaration and state and
16 federal funding.

17

18 "We comforted families who lost loved ones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

19

20 "We stood with Holly Town Administrator Marsha Willhite and all of the
21 people of Holly after that deadly tornado ripped through town. And we did more
22 than stand - we provided logistical support, financial aid and housing assistance.

23

24 "We mourned the loss of several state employees, including Trooper Zach
25 Templeton.

26

27 "And, like all of you, we still struggle to understand the deadly violence that
28 erupted inside New Life Church and the Youth with a Mission dormitory last
29 month.

30

31 "We lost too many friends in 2007. We should all pray for the families of Sam
32 Williams, Phil Figa, Elizabeth Blake, John Parr, Sandy Widener and Chase Parr
33 - people who contributed so much to Colorado. Let's remember their voices,
34 their lessons and their gifts.

35

36 II. Listening, Learning and Taking Action

37

38 As much as anyone, John Parr taught me that the way we do business is just as
39 important as what we do. Over the past year, we have listened to and involved
40 a wide spectrum of people in some of the most serious policy challenges we
41 face in Colorado. And we involved them because as a state we are blessed with
42 amazingly smart and talented people.

43

44 A collaborative decision-making process that reaches for common ground is
45 vital. The only way to find creative, forward-looking solutions is by involving
46 the community, reaching across traditional divides and setting aside partisan
47 politics.

48

49 We can all be proud of the unconventional partnerships we forged in 2007.
50 Utilities, consumers and environmentalists united behind our new renewable
51 energy standard. Hospitals and nurses came together around staffing and
52 patient-safety issues. Sportsmen, conservationists, farmers and the business
53 community helped produce Colorado's first Climate Action Plan.

54

55 The people elected us to solve problems, to get results and to make a difference.
56 They did not elect us to wage partisan warfare or to lock down and refuse to

1 engage in productive dialogue. We must never mistake sound bites for sound
2 public policy. Collaboration doesn't mean shying away from healthy debate or
3 making hard decisions. I take comfort in the diversity of views and beliefs
4 represented in this chamber, in the fact that different people see the same
5 subject in different lights, to borrow a phrase from Patrick Henry.

6
7 Collaboration is about hope and possibility. A year after my inaugural address,
8 I believe more than ever that hope wins out over cynicism. I believe that if we
9 govern well, we can build a public trust in the institutions of government. I
10 believe in the Colorado Promise, doing all we can to fulfill the God-given
11 potential inside every one of us.

12
13 Our goals are ambitious. Achieving them will only happen over the course of
14 time, with patience and prudence and reason. We made enormous progress in
15 2007, and we will continue to push ahead in 2008. Here, now, is both a look
16 back at our successes, and a look ahead at some of the areas where we need to
17 focus over the next 120 days:

18
19 **LEGISLATIVE, POLICY AND BUDGET AGENDA**

20
21 **I. Voting and Democracy**

22
23 First and foremost, we must - and we will - fix the problems we face because
24 of decertified electronic voting machines for the 2008 elections. Our democracy
25 depends not only on the people's ability to vote, but also on their confidence
26 that every vote counts. I want the people of Colorado to know that we in this
27 building, working alongside Secretary of State Coffman and our county clerks,
28 will promptly deliver for the 2008 elections a system we can all be proud of.

29
30 **II. New Energy Economy**

31
32 We can certainly be proud of the New Energy Economy. It's a perfect example
33 of how we work best together. Last year, I stood before you and said the New
34 Energy Economy would become our calling card to the 21st century. And it has.
35 It serves as a hallmark for what responsible and forward-thinking public policy
36 can achieve. It's more than just a collection of laws. It's a new direction for the
37 entire state.

38
39 Every day, the New Energy Economy means new opportunities and new jobs
40 in every corner of Colorado, from the energy-rich Western Slope to the wind-
41 swept Eastern Plains, from fast-growing Northern Colorado to the sun-drenched
42 San Luis Valley. It means Colorado is being recognized nationally and
43 internationally. We enacted 20 pieces of clean-energy legislation, and our
44 commitment is bearing immediate fruit:

45
46 "In 2007, we saw nearly 650 megawatts of wind farms built on Colorado's
47 Eastern Plains - enough energy to power nearly 250,000 homes.

48
49 "Vestas Blades picked Colorado for its first North American wind blade
50 manufacturing plant. This means hundreds of new jobs for Colorado. Thanks
51 to companies like Vestas, Ascent Solar and Abengoa, thanks to world-class
52 research institutions, the next generation of new-energy technology is being
53 developed right here in Colorado.

54
55 "Just the other day, I helped open Stone Mountain Elementary School in
56 Douglas County. This is a school that's powered in part by the sun, is a model

1 of energy efficiency and conservation, and will itself be used to teach students
2 about renewable energy.

3
4 We're going to carry those 2007 accomplishments straight into 2008. This year,
5 we will be launching Phase 2 of the New Energy Economy, called "Bringing the
6 New Energy Economy Home." This will include opportunities for every
7 individual and every business in Colorado to take part. We are developing all
8 of the following:

9
10 "A Colorado Carbon Fund, a voluntary carbon offset program that will support
11 new, clean-energy and greenhouse-gas-reduction projects to be built right here
12 in Colorado;

13
14 "A "Go Solar" incentive program to put clean solar power within reach for all
15 Coloradans;

16
17 "An "Insulate Colorado Program" to make home heating more affordable and
18 efficient.

19
20 We also will be working with Representative Solano and Senator Shaffer on a
21 net-metering, or home-grown energy, program. If you have solar panels on your
22 roof and your electric meter runs backwards as you put energy back onto the
23 grid, you should get credit for that.

24
25 In last year's speech, I announced the creation of an annual Governor's
26 Excellence in Renewable Energy Award. Today, I'm pleased to announce our
27 first winners. They are: Craig Cox from Intrawest Energy Alliance; New
28 Belgium Brewery in Fort Collins; the Fort Carson Army Post; the Northeast
29 Denver Housing Center; and the Smiley Building in Durango. There are
30 representatives from each of the award winners with us today up in the gallery.
31 Congratulations to all of you for bringing Colorado's New Energy Economy to
32 life, for helping us give new meaning to "bold and ambitious" and for helping
33 to establish Colorado as an international leader.

34
35 The New Energy Economy is every bit about energy security, economic security
36 and environmental security. It also provides a valuable lesson - we need to bring
37 the same level of energy we are bringing to the New Energy Economy to
38 everything else we do. If we do that, there's no limit on how far we can go in
39 tackling every other challenge in front of us, from education to transportation
40 to health care.

41
42 III. Natural Resources and the Environment

43
44 The New Energy Economy is not just about renewable energy. The only way we
45 will ever secure Colorado's energy future is through responsible and balanced
46 development of Colorado's other God-given resources, including natural gas,
47 coal and oil.

48
49 Here in Colorado, we're doing our part to supply the nation's energy needs. But
50 we must be stubborn about protecting our air, land, water and wildlife. We must
51 build sustainable prosperity, and it's got to be about more than just economic
52 prosperity. Our elk and deer herds, our clean air and water, our unique
53 communities - those are all special things that deserve special protections.

54
55 We took steps last year by expanding and diversifying the Colorado Oil and Gas
56 Conservation Commission. This year, we're crafting rules to implement House

1 Bills 1298 and 1341, and we're doing it the Colorado way - through an open
2 process that brings together industry, community leaders, environmentalists,
3 sportsmen, local government and other stakeholders.

4

5 This is the same way we put together Colorado's first comprehensive Climate
6 Action Plan, which will make Colorado a leader in agricultural carbon offsets,
7 cleaner power plants and the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.

8

9 It's the same way we are working on land-management issues for the Roan
10 Plateau. I believe we can reach most of the natural gas resources beneath the
11 Roan, and we can do it through state-of-the-art drilling technology and phased
12 leasing and paced development. And, we can do it while dramatically
13 expanding the acreage that will be off-limits to drilling. This is a uniquely
14 Colorado solution that strikes an important balance - a balance that will protect
15 our environment and benefit our economy, our local communities and our
16 energy industry.

17

18 On other important natural resource issues:

19

20 "I look forward to continuing our forest-health efforts this year, working with
21 Senator Gibbs and Representatives White and Scanlan on the pine beetle, and
22 collaborating with local, state and federal stakeholders on a number of forest
23 health issues.

24

25 "On water issues, Colorado continues to wrestle with the always difficult
26 challenges of quality, supply and infrastructure. As we grow, we must work
27 harder than ever to reach consensus, to forge new agreements, and to make the
28 most of conservation, efficiency and reuse practices. I am confident that our
29 state's new leadership team, working alongside local officials, legislators,
30 farmers, ranchers, recreational users and consumers, will develop new
31 approaches to these challenges.

32

33 "I appreciate the good work Representative Madden and the Departments of
34 Revenue and Regulatory Agencies have done to address abuses of the state's
35 conservation easement program. Last year I signed House Bill 1361, and this
36 year I look forward to additional legislation that will stem fraud and protect this
37 important conservation tool.

38

39 "I also commend Representative Buescher and Senator Schwartz for their
40 leadership on a revision of the Federal Mineral Lease formula. As we move
41 forward, my top priority will be to protect impacted communities, and then look
42 at whether other capital needs in the state can be met with increasing FML
43 dollars. We have a unique opportunity to build for the future, one we cannot
44 miss.

45

46 IV .Economic and Business Development

47

48 Keeping Colorado's economy healthy, making sure businesses are able to stay
49 competitive in a 21st Century global marketplace, and creating job
50 opportunities in every part of Colorado are important goals for me and my
51 administration.

52

53 2007 was a year of great success - with United Launch Alliance, Vestas Blades
54 and AVA Solar at the top of the list. We've created specific strategies to target
55 four of our most-promising economic sectors: aerospace, energy, tourism and
56 the biosciences. 2008 holds just as much promise, and I'm pleased to work with

1 you and the business community on an economic-development package that
2 will make it easier to attract, retain and expand businesses in Colorado.
3
4 This package will simplify how businesses calculate taxes - the single-sales
5 factor approach. It will exempt 30,000 companies from the Business Personal
6 Property Tax over time, and it will increase state investments in bioscience and
7 clean energy projects. Together, we will ease the tax burden for thousands of
8 businesses. We also will cut red tape and simplify filing processes, and we will
9 help rural small businesses grow and stay competitive.
10
11 Representatives Jahn, Riesberg, Rice, Hodge and Buescher, and Senators
12 Bacon, Shaffer, Ward and Williams - thank you for sponsoring this important
13 package of reforms. These bills are good for our economy, good for our small
14 businesses and good for our communities.
15
16 We all know the best economic-development strategy is an education strategy.
17 If we're going to create a more robust business environment and provide
18 businesses with the best workforce in the world, if we're going to train
19 Coloradans for Colorado jobs, we have to do better. And we can't do it by
20 putting the cost of a college education out of reach for working families.
21
22 From 2001 to 2006, no other state cut funding to higher education more than
23 Colorado. We rank 48th in the nation in higher-ed funding per-student, and
24 dead last in total funding per student.
25
26 The good news is we're making progress. In the budget request I submitted to
27 you in November, I proposed a \$59.5 million, 8 percent increase to higher-ed
28 funding. And that follows a \$52 million, 7.5 percent increase the year before.
29 As a result, we're closing the funding gap that separates our colleges from our
30 national peers.
31
32 The Department of Higher Education is working closely with college presidents
33 on a long-term funding strategy. This is no easy task, getting all of the college
34 and university presidents onto the same page. As someone who graduated from
35 a public university in Colorado 30 years ago, as someone who worked his way
36 through college and law school, as someone whose education has opened door
37 after door, this is a priority for me.
38
39 But this is not just about funding. It's also about quality workforce development,
40 which is why today I'm pleased to announce the three co-chairs of our new Jobs
41 Cabinet: Ruth Ann Woods from Trinidad State Junior College, Qwest vice
42 president Teresa Taylor, and long-time civic leader Jim Lyons. They've joined
43 us today in the gallery. Thank you for taking on such a crucial mission for the
44 people of this state.
45
46 The Jobs Cabinet will work to align Colorado's economic-development
47 strategies, education programs and regional workforce needs to make sure we
48 are producing the highest-quality, 21st century labor force for Colorado
49 businesses.
50
51 Another pillar of Colorado's economic infrastructure is our transportation
52 system. We all know what we face: Demand and costs are soaring. We need to
53 focus on safety and efficiency. We must build our capacity, including
54 alternative-transit systems to cut down on pollution and give travelers more
55 options. So, last year, I appointed a bi-partisan transportation panel to identify
56 sustainable funding sources to replace today's dwindling revenues.

1 My deepest thanks to everyone who served on the panel. They did extraordinary
2 work, and are providing us with real options. Now we must work together to
3 find common ground. We can continue to make steady progress this year. But
4 how we go forward depends largely on whether we can build a bi-partisan
5 consensus around contentious funding issues.

6

7 V. Better Government

8

9 As you know, we launched the Government Efficiency and Management review
10 last year. The GEM review is just one example of how we are making state
11 government more effective by streamlining processes, cutting waste and serving
12 as responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. The GEM review already has
13 identified \$145 million in potential savings and benefits over the next five
14 years, and we should have more good news to report this spring.

15

16 As part of the GEM review, we solicited ideas from the dedicated men and
17 women who work for the state - and a stunning 12,000 workers filled out online
18 surveys. Ideas ranged from eliminating duplicate signatures and extra paper
19 forms to using high-tech tools to fight Medicaid fraud. Employees like Susan
20 Hunt in the Division of Youth Corrections and Kyle Shelton at the State Patrol
21 have been invaluable contributors. We're engaging employees differently than
22 ever before, and the people of Colorado will benefit from more efficient and
23 responsive services.

24

25 We've also opened up the government efficiency process to the public so that
26 all people in Colorado can submit their ideas via e-mail or a toll-free phone
27 number. In addition, we're making the entire budget process more transparent
28 to the public by posting every department's budget online, and by launching the
29 taxpayer accountability report with Treasurer Kennedy.

30

31 The Governor's Office of Information Technology is bringing the state's
32 splintered IT operations together under one roof. An IT Consolidation Bill will
33 be introduced by Representatives Andy Kerr and Buescher and Senators
34 Cadman and Morse to enact these reforms. Thank you for carrying this
35 important legislation.

36

37 As we modernize our own Information Technology structure, we also are
38 making more services available on-line to the people and businesses of
39 Colorado. On-line driver's license and vehicle registration renewal are available
40 in more and more counties. This year, we expect all Colorado taxpayers will be
41 able to file income taxes on-line if they choose. We're also working toward an
42 easy on-line tool to help new businesses obtain and file necessary forms and
43 paperwork.

44

45 Our efforts to make government more efficient also extend to the issue of wait
46 times at Driver's License Offices. With the help of Senator Johnson, we are
47 opening three new driver's license offices in Denver, Jefferson and Larimer
48 Counties. We also are hiring 53 new employees to staff those offices, to help
49 reduce travel and wait times, and to enhance services in rural Colorado.

50

51 VI. Protecting People

52

53 One of the most important functions of government is protecting people from
54 violent crime, fraud and other offenses. As a former prosecutor, I take that role
55 seriously, and we made great strides in 2007. I'm looking forward to even
56 greater gains this year.

1 Our Departments of Public Safety and Corrections are doing impressive work
2 addressing Colorado's high rate of prison re-offenders. We're focusing on
3 education, job-training, drug-treatment, mental-health treatment and more.
4 Every time we keep a released inmate from re-offending, we keep an innocent
5 person from becoming a victim, and we save taxpayer dollars.

6
7 Thanks to your leadership, we now have some of the strongest mortgage-fraud
8 and foreclosure-prevention laws in the country. We're cracking down on
9 mortgage scams and dishonest brokers, and providing consumers threatened
10 with foreclosure with options to keep their homes.

11
12 This year, the Department of Regulatory Agencies will continue transforming
13 itself into a consumer protection department. The Department and its Division
14 of Insurance saved Colorado insurance consumers almost \$80 million last year.
15 Most of those savings are in the form of reduced workers' comp insurance rates
16 - good news for Colorado businesses.

17
18 I'm very excited about the new School Safety Resource Center we are launching
19 this year. The Department of Public Safety will be identifying sites around
20 Colorado to conduct vulnerability assessments, train faculty and students, and
21 provide additional violence-prevention measures to keep students and teachers
22 safe. We will be working with local educators and prevention groups to create
23 individually tailored safety plans. Thank you, Senator Morse and Representative
24 Stephens for sponsoring this school-safety legislation, which will be designated
25 Senate Bill 1.

26
27 We must do a better job protecting those who can't protect themselves -
28 including foster children and those with severe developmental disabilities. I
29 have requested nearly \$500,000 to increase the number of employees who
30 monitor county foster care programs, from just one - for the entire state - to
31 seven. In addition, we have requested \$10.6 million for staffing, facilities and
32 services for people with developmental disabilities.

33
34 Regarding homeland security, we are fortunate to have General Mason
35 Whitney's leadership in this area. With his new team, with new controls and a
36 new vision, we have begun to make significant changes, and you'll see more
37 over the coming months. We're taking a hard and different look at how we
38 protect Coloradans, how we ensure accountability for federal grant dollars, and
39 how we structure the lines of authority.

40
41 I also know we will see a number of new ideas from groups looking at our
42 criminal and juvenile justice systems. It's important that as a nation of laws, we
43 constantly scrutinize laws that pertain the justice system to ensure they are fair,
44 relevant and make a meaningful difference.

45
46 VII. Health Care
47

48 Let's turn to two areas where we must make substantial progress this session:
49 health care and education. On health care, my goal remains the same - that all
50 Coloradans have access to some basic level of health care. I know that's
51 ambitious. Nearly 800,000 Coloradans, 17 percent of our population, lack
52 insurance. 180,000 of them are children. Every uninsured Coloradan means
53 higher costs for every family, every person living on a fixed income, and every
54 business.

55
56

1 We spend \$30 billion a year on health care in Colorado, but we don't get \$30
2 billion worth of value. We have to continue addressing that, and we have to
3 keep doing it in a way that acknowledges the fiscal constraints of this state. We
4 have to do it with a shared sense of responsibility, from individuals to
5 employers to insurers to providers to government.

6
7 And we have to take a realistic, building-block, steady approach to progress.
8 We need to be strategic, disciplined and focused, and restraining costs must be
9 at the heart of our reforms.

10
11 In just a few weeks, you will receive the final report from the 208 Commission
12 on Health Care Reform. Chairman Bill Lindsay, all commission members and
13 everyone who participated in that process did groundbreaking work. They know
14 better than anyone that there's no magic bullet to fix a system that is so
15 fundamentally broken.

16
17 But we began repairing that system in 2007, improving access for the
18 uninsured, especially vulnerable populations - low-income children, fragile
19 senior citizens and others who live at the margins and need immediate
20 assistance. Last year, we enrolled 10,000 more kids into Children's Health Plan
21 Plus. 10,000 children - that is significant.

22
23 We also addressed the cost issue in a number of substantive ways. We launched
24 a "medical home" program for Medicaid children that focuses on prevention to
25 reduce expensive emergency room visits. The GEM review also identified ways
26 to save millions of dollars by eliminating waste and preventing Medicaid fraud.
27 As we find efficiencies, cut waste and bring more transparency to the system,
28 we can reinvest those savings back into the system.

29
30 This year, we'll continue to aggressively work on cost and access issues. My
31 Fiscal Year 08-09 budget request calls for enrolling 17,000 more eligible
32 children into CHP+, and we'll be undertaking major efforts to enroll more
33 eligible families in Medicaid by simplifying, streamlining and modernizing the
34 application and administrative processes.

35
36 On cost control, we'll be launching five new disease-management programs and
37 fully funding the Childhood Immunization Information System, two steps that
38 will yield significant savings over the long run. I'm also directing my health care
39 team to spearhead a collaborative effort that will address cost and quality. We
40 will bring all stakeholders - including insurance companies, hospitals and
41 physicians - to the table. Many of them have personally committed to me they
42 will stay at the table for the long haul, for what I like to call a little corporate
43 introspection.

44
45 Some of these ideas are born from the 208 Commission, and they are an
46 acknowledgment that we must take a staged and thoughtful approach to
47 systemic reform.

48
49 In all of my travels across Colorado, I hear anger and frustration from people
50 about cost, quality and access. People with insurance have no confidence they'll
51 have it tomorrow. Employees and employers alike are frustrated at double-digit
52 cost increases year after year after year. And people are frustrated that
53 Washington has failed to craft a national solution. Maybe a new president will
54 change that.

55
56

1 But in Colorado, we won't wait for reforms to come from Washington. Instead,
2 we will make smart changes to the system and do what we can afford as we
3 work toward our long-term goals.

4

5 VIII. P-20 Education

6

7 One year ago, I told you I wasn't big on litmus tests, but that we should gauge
8 all of our actions and decisions against one question: Is it good for Colorado's
9 children, for Colorado's future?

10

11 Education is the cornerstone of our economy and it dictates how we will move
12 Colorado forward in the 21st century. So much of what I've just talked about
13 comes back to education. If ever there was a place to be bold and ambitious, to
14 push hard and fast against the status quo, this is it.

15

16 To keep Colorado great, today's students - and tomorrow's leaders - will have
17 to meet global challenges around energy, transportation and technology. For
18 that to happen, we have to think bigger about revitalizing our education systems
19 than ever before, or the world will pass us by.

20

21 Speaker Romanoff, President Groff and Treasurer Kennedy have confidently
22 pushed against the status quo with their Building Excellent Schools Today, or
23 "BEST," capital funding plan. I congratulate them for making safe and modern
24 schools a priority.

25

26 Last year, I set a 10-year goal of cutting the dropout rate and achievement gap
27 in half, and doubling the number of college degrees and certificates. This year,
28 we have specific proposals to help achieve those goals, thanks in large part to
29 the P-20 Education Council co-chaired by Lt. Gov. O'Brien, business leader
30 Bruce Benson and CSU-Pueblo President Joe Garcia. Mr. Benson and Mr.
31 Garcia are also here with us today.

32

33 These proposals include eliminating the current wait-list for the Colorado
34 Preschool Program and extending full-day kindergarten to 22,000 more children
35 statewide. I also am proposing the creation of a Colorado Counselor Corps,
36 which will send 70 counselors into targeted middle and high schools with a
37 specific mission: make the dream of college a reality for more kids.

38

39 We're able to do these things because last year we listened and finally gave
40 voice to voters in 98 percent of our school districts who repeatedly said, "Invest
41 local revenues in local schools. Make smarter investments with our limited
42 resources."

43

44 After just a few months of work, the P-20 Council shows us very clearly that
45 Colorado does not lack talent. Rather, we lack an overarching educational
46 vision, a vision that aligns standards from pre-school to college and puts an
47 emphasis on proficiency and learning.

48

49 Many people are working hard to change that, including our partners at the
50 Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education. Therefore,
51 today, I am announcing the "Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids," and it will
52 be co-sponsored by Senators Romer and Penry and Representatives Witwer and
53 Scanlan.

54

55 This will be the most revolutionary shift in education policy this state has seen
56 in years. For too long, our education systems and policies have been focused on

1 "seat time" and course titles, assuming that measuring the number of years in
2 a particular class is somehow more important than measuring whether students
3 actually learned anything. But when nearly one-third of college freshmen in
4 Colorado require remedial training, something is wrong.

5
6 Therefore, I am proposing that we put our education emphasis where it belongs:
7 on helping kids learn, on measuring knowledge and skills, on connecting what
8 is taught in high school with exactly what is expected in college.
9

10 I am proposing that we establish policies that assume all students have the
11 potential to succeed in college, and that we prepare them accordingly. I am
12 proposing a seamless system of expectations, policies and tools that thread their
13 way from pre-school to college. We must ensure that every classroom in
14 Colorado is providing a rigorous and relevant education, and that students are
15 learning skills that effectively prepare them for success in the 21st century.
16

17 Imagine a day when all curriculums are better designed to prepare students for
18 college and good-paying jobs. When admission to college is based not just on
19 a transcript, but also on the demonstration of skills. When cross-system policies
20 and content standards are transparent and coordinated so that educators
21 understand how to help students succeed.
22

23 Where will this lead? To dramatically expanded opportunities for post-
24 secondary education and training. To dramatically expanded opportunities for
25 better jobs and better pay. To a stronger economy, to stronger communities and
26 to stronger families everywhere in Colorado.
27

28 The P-20 Council, the Department of Education and the Department of Higher
29 Education, local stakeholders and lawmakers are beginning to work hard on
30 this. As this moves forward, let there be no doubt that this is a bold and
31 ambitious path to a revitalized education system. It will be meaningful reform
32 now, and it will lay a solid foundation for the work we must continue to do in
33 the future.
34

35 CONCLUSION

36
37 Finally, let me close by thanking you to the people of Colorado and to those of
38 you in this chamber for your service to the people of this state. As public
39 servants, you all have made sacrifices, but they are far outweighed by the good
40 we can do for the people of Colorado.
41

42 The work we do for the people of Colorado in this 66th General Assembly can,
43 and must, be forward-looking and fruitful. It must be worthy of your sacrifices,
44 and those made by other Coloradans - in Iraq and Afghanistan, on our streets,
45 in everyday life. Our vision is clear, and we must make steady, even historic,
46 progress toward our goals.
47

48 One hundred and one years ago, former Governor Henry Augustus Buchtel
49 delivered opening remarks to the 16th General Assembly. His words still
50 resonate: "Give these precious days to making wise laws which will be a
51 blessing to the millions of future citizens of Colorado. That is what we are here
52 for: to make the State."
53

54 This year or next, for the first time in Colorado, our population will reach 5
55 million people. When Buchtel was governor, the population was about 700,000.
56

1 Colorado is a special place, unmatched as a place to live, work and raise a
2 family. Working in collaboration, we have a unique chance to ensure that in 10,
3 20 or 50 years Colorado remains a special place, a place full of hope and
4 possibility and opportunity. We have our chance "to make the State," to fulfill
5 the Colorado Promise.

6
7 God bless you all ... and God bless Colorado.
8

9
10 The Joint Committee escorted the Governor from the Chamber.
11

12 On motion of Representative Madden, the Governor's message was
13 ordered printed in the House Journal.
14

15 On motion of Senator Gordon, the Joint Session was dissolved.
16

17
18 House reconvened.
19

20
21
22 **PRINTING REPORT**
23

24 The Chief Clerk reports the following bills have been correctly printed:
25 **HB08-1038, 1039, 1040, 1041, 1042, 1043, 1044, 1045, 1046, 1047,**
26 **1048, 1049, 1050, 1051, 1052, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058,**
27 **1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1069,**
28 **1070, 1071, 1072, 1073, 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1079.**
29

30
31
32 **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**
33 **First Reading**
34

35 The following bills were read by title and referred to the committees
36 indicated:
37

38 **HB08-1080** by Representative(s) Madden; also Senator(s) Veiga--
39 Concerning a limitation on the applicability of the
40 exception from compliance with employment
41 nondiscrimination laws for certain religious entities that
42 accept public dollars to fund services provided by the
43 entities.
44 Committee on Business Affairs and Labor

45
46 **HB08-1081** by Representative(s) Lundberg--Concerning property tax
47 credits to support education in the state.
48 Committee on Finance

49
50 **HB08-1082** by Representative(s) Ferrandino; also Senator(s) Bacon--
51 Concerning the sealing of criminal justice records, and
52 making an appropriation in connection therewith.
53 Committee on Judiciary

54 Committee on Appropriations
55
56

- 1 **HB08-1101** by Representative(s) Gardner B., Gardner C.; also
2 Senator(s) Renfroe, Spence--Concerning increased state
3 funding for services for persons with developmental
4 disabilities for the purpose of reducing waiting lists for
5 such services, and making an appropriation therefor.
6 Committee on Health and Human Services
7 Committee on Appropriations
8
9 **HB08-1102** by Representative(s) Labuda; also Senator(s) Johnson--
10 Concerning an increase in the reserve requirement for the
11 liquor enforcement division and state licensing authority
12 cash fund.
13 Committee on Finance
14
15
16 **HB08-1103** by Representative(s) Kerr J., Marshall, Mitchell V.,
17 Primavera; also Senator(s) Isgar, Takis, Taylor--
18 Concerning the regulation of amusement rides by the
19 division of oil and public safety.
20 Committee on Business Affairs and Labor
21
22 **HB08-1104** by Representative(s) Marostica; also Senator(s) Brophy--
23 Concerning violations of traffic rights-of-way resulting in
24 bodily injury or death.
25 Committee on Judiciary
26
27
28 **HB08-1105** by Representative(s) Frangas, Judd, Ferrandino, Fischer;
29 also Senator(s) Sandoval--Concerning permitting an art
30 gallery to serve alcohol beverages under certain
31 conditions.
32 Committee on Business Affairs and Labor
33
34 **HB08-1106** by Representative(s) Carroll T., King; also Senator(s)
35 Tupa--Concerning peace officers employed by institutions
36 of higher education.
37 Committee on Judiciary
38
39
40 **HB08-1107** by Representative(s) Levy, Fischer, Green, McFadyen,
41 Pommer, Solano--Concerning measures to promote energy
42 efficiency by retail electric utilities in which ultimate
43 managerial control is vested in customers of such utilities.
44 Committee on Transportation & Energy
45
46 **HB08-1108** by Representative(s) Riesberg; also Senator(s) Morse--
47 Concerning an increase in the funding to the older
48 Coloradans cash fund from the receipts collected from the
49 state sales and use tax, and making an appropriation
50 therefor.
51 Committee on Finance
52 Committee on Appropriations
53
54
55
56
-

1 **INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION**

2
3 The following resolution was read by title and laid over one day under
4 the rules:

5
6 **SJR08-002** by Senator(s) Gordon; also Representative(s) Madden--
7 Concerning changes to the joint rules of the Colorado
8 general assembly establishing the deadline schedule.

9
10

11 Correction
12

13 H.J. page 27, after line 10 insert the following:

14
15 **"HB08-1076** by Representative(s) Ferrandino--Concerning fees for copies of
16 criminal justice records.

17 Committee on State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

18
19 **HB08-1077** by Representative(s) King--Concerning the payment of moneys from
20 the state general fund to the Colorado state veterans trust fund.

21 Committee on Finance

22
23 **HB08-1078** by Representative(s) Buescher; also Senator(s) Morse, Shaffer--
24 Concerning a transfer of moneys from the state general fund to the
25 Colorado state veterans trust fund.

26 Committee on Finance

27
28 **HB08-1079** by Representative(s) Jahn--Concerning state assistance for
29 vocational education.

30 Committee on Education".

31
32
33
34 On motion of Representative Vaad, the House adjourned until 9:00 a.m.,
35 January 11, 2007.
36

37 Approved:
38 ANDREW ROMANOFF,
39 Speaker

40 Attest:
41 MARILYN EDDINS,
42 Chief Clerk