



Testimony by Tom Clark, CEO of Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation
Regarding Open Primaries

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This idea for open primaries initially came from a focus group of aerospace executives. The Denver Metro Chamber and the Metro Denver EDC were conducting focus groups with another seven industries during the Summer of 2013. But the aerospace group was so enthusiastic that we included this question in our other seven. The idea was endorsed enthusiastically by all eight groups.

I've spent virtually my entire career watching the changes in the criteria companies have used to filter out one state, one community from another as the company searches for a new home.

A couple of decades ago the #1 criterion was "Quality workforce." But today "talent" in the workforce is superseded by airports located within 60 minutes of the company's location and airports that have non-stop international flights to major economic centers.

The term "political climate" or "stable political climate" ranked 8th or 9th in companies' Top Ten back then. Today that criterion has moved up – around 5th or 6th. Companies prefer states that govern from the middle; states that have a political environment that is not extreme on either end of the spectrum, and that are capable of crossing the political divides to move the state forward.

Having listened to these eight industry representatives, I heard their concerns. They saw a significant percentage of voters who were not members of either of the two major parties – many of them their employees who had little interest or respect for the existing political climate.

These companies embrace the excitement that would enfranchise more voters in the exercise of their democratic right and responsibility as citizens. We're excited too. We urge your support.

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