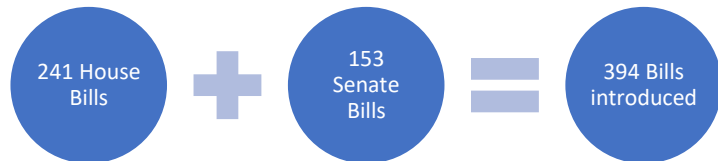


## Under the Dome, Week 4

### Highlights of the Week

On Monday, a bill to repeal the death penalty in Colorado was heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill passed Committee and on Thursday an emotional debate by the full Senate

lasted well into the afternoon. Democrat Senator Rhonda Fields and Republican Senator Bob Gardner led much of the opposition. They argued that Colorado's death penalty law differs from other states and how little the punishment is used, citing that there are only 3 people currently on death row and that aggravating factors are required to be sentenced with the death penalty. They also pointed out that the death penalty is a deterrent for criminals and can be used as leverage for prosecutors. Several amendments, including an amendment to let the voters decide, were debated but ultimately not added to the bill. Proponents argued that capital punishment is costly, and they cited situations when people on death row have been found innocent. Proponents also shared that capital punishment is disproportionately sought against minorities. One of the bill's sponsors, Senator Julie Gonzales, defended SB20-100 and the process that she went through to gain support. She often repeating the phrase that she hoped members would find themselves on the right side of history. The bill passed with on a vote of 19-15.



On Thursday, the Senate Health and Human Services Committee did not begin their work until 4:30pm, an hour after debate on the death penalty repeal concluded. Two of the opioid interim committee bills were under consideration, SB 028 Substance Use Recovery and SB 007 Substance Use Treatment. Both bills included components to tackle the opioid crisis in Colorado. One big change in SB 028 changes the procedures followed when a baby tests positive for substances at birth to remove the automatic finding of child abuse and neglect. This compromise was a long time coming after years of negotiations between the counties, child advocacy and medical marijuana advocates. SB 028 passed with the support of Senator Crowder along with the committee Democrats and SB 007 passed on a party line vote.

On Wednesday, SB 044 Sales and Use Tax Revenue for Transportation, was heard by the Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee. The bill proposed diverting 10% of the sales and use tax revenue from the General Fund to the Highway Users Tax Fund, which splits funding between state funded transportation projects and city and county transportation projects. The bill died in committee on a party line vote over concerns about where the cuts from the General Fund budget would come from. However, conversations continue under the gold dome about how to increase funding for transportation infrastructure through new and existing revenue streams.

HB20-1153 Colorado Partnership for Quality Jobs and Services Act passed the House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee this week along party lines. It would allow state employees to collectively bargain and the bill sets rules for how those negotiations would take place. Labor advocates

and state employees testified to the low pay that many state employees receive compared to their private sector counterparts and that the state has a high vacancy rate for many positions.

Representative Julie McCluskie, a Democrat lawmaker from Summit County, now sits on the Joint Budget Committee, filling the vacancy created when now-Senator Chris Hansen filled Lois Court's seat. Next week the Joint Budget Committee will continue with figure setting for the FY2020-21 budget and the General Assembly will take up supplemental bills. The Capital Development Committee and Joint Technology Committees will both take up discussions to set their recommendations for funding for FY 2020-21. Their recommendations will then go to the JBC. There still has not been an official announcement on who will replace Representative Beckman on the CDC and the vacancy committee to for HD 6 is scheduled to take place on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

### *Bills of the Week*

## HB20-1007 Diverse K12 Educator Workforce Report



Representative James Coleman (D), Senator Rhonda Fields (R)

On Tuesday, the bill passed House Education unanimously and now goes to the House Appropriations Committee.

The bill would create a workgroup to study how to increase the diversity of K-12 teachers. Many education advocates testified in support of the bill, citing research that shows that students of color see greater academic success and have higher graduation rates when they are taught by teachers of color. They also testified that having teachers in the classroom who mirror the student body improves the classroom culture and morale of students.

## HB20-1195 Consumer Digital Repair Bill of Rights



Representative Brianna Titone (D), Representative Jonathan Singer (D), Senator Jeff Bridges (D), Senator John Cooke (R)

The bill was introduced on January 30, 2020 and was assigned to the House Business Affairs and Labor Committee.

The bill would provide protections of owners of electronic devices—cell phones, tablets, etc.—to repair a broken device on their own or take it to an independent electronics repair shop. Manufacturers would be required to provide parts, software, or diagnostic and repair information for owners or independent shops. Current practice is for manufacturers to require that they are the ones to do any repairs or that owners are required to use of authorized repair shops. Refusal of the manufacturer to provide the information would be classified as an unfair or deceptive trade practice.

## HB20-1192 Petroleum Redevelopment Fund Electric Vehicle



- Representative Dominique Jackson (D), Representative Perry Will (R), Senator Foote (D)
- The bill was introduced on January 30 and it has been assigned to the House Energy and Environment Committee.
- The bill would allow up to \$2 million from the Redevelopment Fund to leverage against private dollars to fund fuel cell electric vehicle fueling infrastructure. Fuel cell electric vehicles are powered by hydrogen.