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Graduated Income Tax Ballot Measures Move Forward

Protect Colorado's Future coalition overcomes important hurdle before beginning signature collection for November ballot question

DENVER, CO — Feb. 4, 2026 — The Colorado Title Board on Wednesday approved eight versions of a graduated income tax ballot question proposed by Protect Colorado's Future, the final hurdle before the coalition can begin collecting signatures to get a question on the November ballot. The measures would cut income taxes for 97 percent of Coloradans and raise them for people making more than \$500,000 to raise at least \$2 billion per year for education, health care, and child care.

The coalition, led by 16 Colorado nonprofits, will choose among the approved questions and in the coming weeks will begin a grassroots signature-gathering effort to meet the requirements to put a graduated income tax question before voters.

"We are thrilled to get the green light from the Title Board so we can ask voters to reshape Colorado's income tax structure to give working people a tax break, and those making more than \$500,000 a year will pay more," said Chris deGruy Kennedy, Bell Policy Center President & CEO and co-chair of the coalition's executive committee. "The additional dollars will go into better neighborhood schools, backfilling federal health care cuts, and making child care more affordable. We are confident voters will be with us in bringing fairness to our tax system."

Protect Colorado's Future has had to fight efforts by conservative, dark money groups that have filed repeated challenges in an effort to keep a graduated income tax question from reaching voters. Coalition members expect these efforts to continue, but also are confident that they will succeed.

"Coloradans deserve a system rooted in fairness that will pay for the things we all need to not only live, but to thrive in this state. We won't be intimidated by those deep-pocketed interests who want to keep us from creating a tax system that favors all of us, not just the wealthiest," said

Christina Soliz, Executive Director of New Era Colorado and co-chair of the coalition's executive committee.

The coalition has been methodical and strategic in working through the Title Board to ensure the question that ultimately goes to voters has been thoroughly vetted and meets procedural rules and constitutional standards. That, along with tight timelines, is why the coalition has submitted more than a dozen iterations of the graduated income tax question. The goal has always been to craft a question that will survive scrutiny from a well-funded opposition and to do so with enough time to collect the amount of signatures necessary to get the question onto the ballot.

The graduated income tax measure couldn't come at a more critical time in Colorado's history. Colorado is a wealthy state yet has been experiencing a budget crisis artificially driven by TABOR's spending limits. The state's budget crisis hit a new extreme in 2025 following the passing of the federal H.R. 1 budget reconciliation bill, known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act." H.R. 1 included devastating cuts to state Medicaid funding, forced the gutting of crucial state programs and major cuts to health care providers. This was done to support tax breaks for large corporations and the wealthiest Americans.

By clearing the Title Board, Protect Colorado's Future can bring its solution to the budget crisis directly to Coloradans. Coalition members will now visit every corner of the state with its simple, common-sense appeal: It's time to fix the state's tax system.

The measure, if approved by voters, would serve as a return to form for Colorado. For 50 years, Colorado used a graduated income tax system, like most states across the U.S., in which those with higher incomes paid higher taxes. This system ended in 1987, when an anti-tax legislature replaced it with an inequitable "flat tax," lowering taxes on those making the most. The flat tax, along with the strictures of TABOR, have gradually drained the state budget. The ballot measure, when it reaches voters in November, will ask them to return to a fairer, smarter form of taxation.

Lydia McCoy, CEO at Colorado Center on Law and Policy, and a member of the coalition said: "The Title Board has affirmed that regular Coloradans have the right to correct the state's catastrophic tax laws — allowing the people to decide what a fair tax looks like now, forty years into the failed experiment of flat tax."

About the Protect Colorado's Future coalition

Protect Colorado's Future is a coalition of concerned Coloradans led by the following nonprofit organizations:

[Bell Policy Center](#)

[Colorado Center on Law and Policy \(CCLP\)](#)

[Colorado Children's Campaign](#)

[Colorado Consumer Health Initiative \(CCHI\)](#)

[Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition \(CCDC\)](#)

[Colorado Fiscal Institute \(CFI\)](#)

[Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition \(CSPC\)](#)

[Great Education Colorado](#)

[New Era Colorado](#)

[Provecho Collective \(formerly Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger\)](#)

[Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights \(COLOR\)](#)

[Counties & Commissioners Acting Together \(CCAT\)](#)

[Conservation Colorado](#)

[Colorado Works for Innovative and New Solutions \(COWINS\)](#)

[Progress Now Colorado](#)

[Hunger Free Colorado](#)

