Colorado Chamber FOUNDATION



2026 IMPACT REPORT


Colorado Chamber
FOUNDATION



Mission

The Colorado Chamber Foundation supports research, programs and solutions that drive opportunity and growth for Colorado's economy and advance the well-being of our communities through outreach and education.

Colorado is at an inflection point. For many decades, the state was proud to rank in the top 10 states in the country to do business, but we have steadily declined in more recent years. This year, CNBC ranked Colorado #25.

When businesses thrive, Coloradans have good jobs, a high quality of life, and funding for community priorities. We must work together to take decisive action to address the factors harming our business climate and standing in the way of these shared goals.

For the past two years, the Colorado Chamber Foundation has worked proactively to improve Colorado's business climate and economy through our 10-year strategic action plan, Vision 2033. Partnering with businesses, elected officials, and other nonprofits, we've already made progress, as you'll read in this report.

Colorado has always had a culture of collaboration and a roll-up-our-sleeves-and-get-to-work ethos. I'm confident that if we put that ethos to work addressing the challenges that led to our drop in the rankings, we can return our state to a place where businesses thrive.

Rachel Beck

Rachel Beck
Executive Director
Colorado Chamber Foundation

Vision 2033

BLUEPRINT FOR COLORADO'S FUTURE

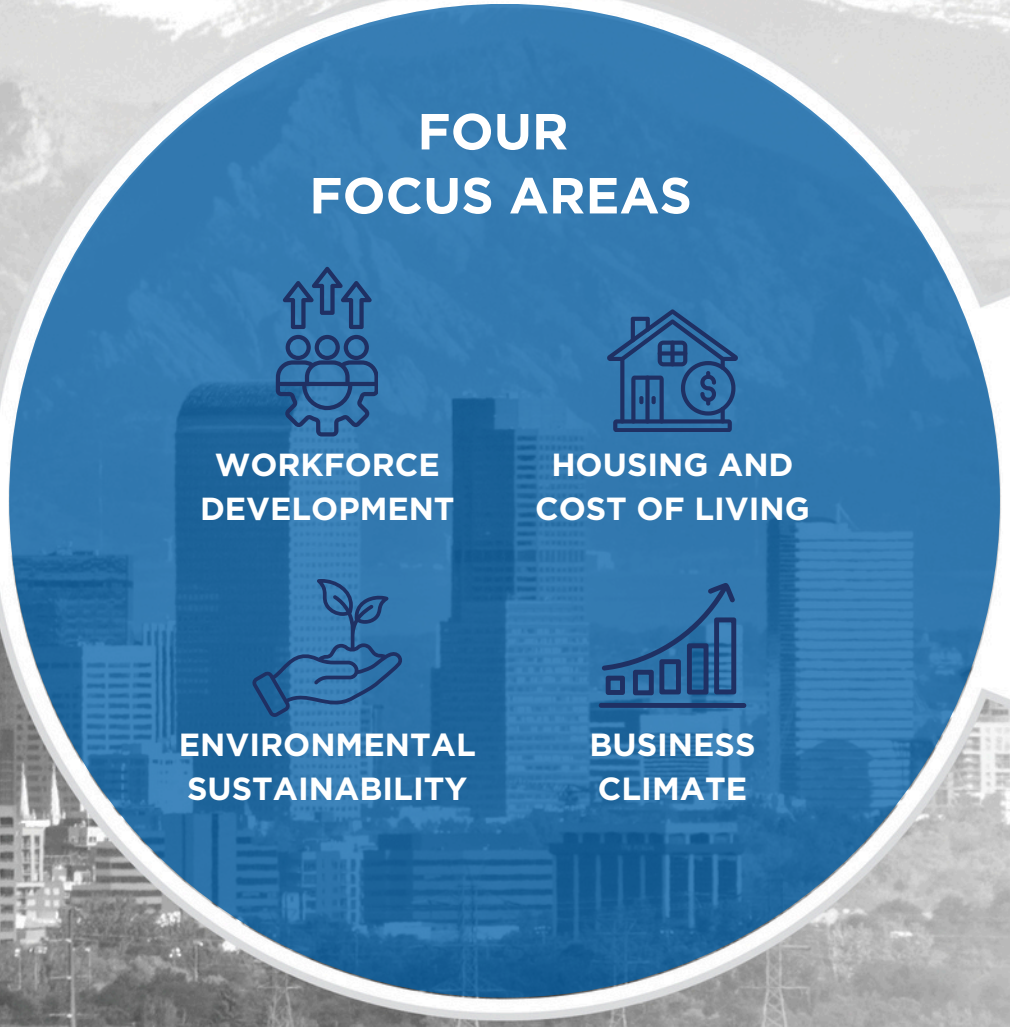
The Colorado Chamber of Commerce operates with a simple and compelling vision: Make Colorado a top state in the nation to do business, where dynamic business leaders choose to invest, innovate, and create opportunities and prosperity for Coloradans. That's why the Chamber set out to explore our state's current strengths, gaps and opportunities of the state's business climate. The result was a comprehensive 10-year strategic action plan to foster sustained growth in Colorado – Vision 2033.

Vision 2033, guided by Colorado's business leaders, establishes a foundation for improving the state's competitiveness. Each focus area contains specific goals, actions, and metrics for success. The Colorado Chamber Foundation is now poised with dynamic initiatives that provide business direction, leadership and bold solutions to drive Colorado's growth for decades to come.



"For the past four years, the Colorado Chamber has tracked and released reports on Colorado's competitiveness through extensive research, state-by-state rankings, and annual business surveys. This advance work clearly proved that public policies adopted over the past decade has made Colorado less competitive. We've not only identified these challenges but also advanced bipartisan legislation and a strategic plan to strengthen Colorado's business climate."

Loren Furman
President & CEO
Colorado Chamber of Commerce



Workforce Development

- Comprehensive Workforce Legislation Passed 2024
- Seven regional talent summits conducted statewide
- Talent Pipeline Report with two- and five-year plans released 2025

Housing & Cost of Living

- Creation of Child Care Access Alliance
- Distribution of Grants to Local Chambers for Child Care Innovation Labs
- Creation of Property & Casualty Insurance Subcommittee to lower home insurance
- Strategic housing alliance currently in development

Environmental Sustainability

- Chamber's environmental task force formally transitioned into state working group by Governor's Office.
- Passage of nuclear, carbon capture and underground storage legislation
- Executive orders issued by governor to expedite permitting in conjunction with Chamber working group

Business Climate

- Comprehensive Regulatory Impact Study
- Bipartisan Regulatory Reform passed 2025 & 2026
- Creation of Tech, Aerospace, Legal Reform Alliances to bolster key industries
- Chamber relocations report prompted creation of Governor's Competitiveness Council

Research

RESEARCH FUNDING CRITICAL STUDIES AND REPORTS

The Chamber Foundation drives sound policymaking by funding research and analysis of Colorado's economy. These reports are publicly available on our website.



> **"The regulatory landscape in Colorado continues to have a negative impact on the state's economy. It is our hope that seeing these numbers will encourage public policy decision makers to take action."**
>
> **Dr. Memo Diriker**
> *President and CEO at the StratACUMEN Group & Lead Economist for Chamber Regulatory Research*

Colorado Scorecard

Updated Annually

The Scorecard is a digital dashboard tracking more than 60 data points related to Colorado's competitiveness, economy and key industries. The scorecard compiles annual rankings, statistics and surveys to assess where Colorado stands and monitor progress over time.

Job Market Reports

Released Quarterly

These reports provide insights into job vacancies and workforce trends across the state. This real-time data helps us to better understand Colorado's economic landscape and informs the Chamber's workforce initiatives.

Talent Pipeline Report

December 2025

A result of the Chamber's work on seven regional statewide workforce summits, this report identifies areas of growing demand and opportunity for boosting career pathways to help employers fill in-demand jobs.



Colorado Regulation Impact Analysis

Published Nov 2024, Updated Feb 2026

A team of peer-reviewed economists launch a comprehensive study of the state's regulatory climate, revealing that Colorado is the sixth most regulated state in the nation, with 45% of its nearly 200,000 regulations excessive or duplicative.

Colorado Lost Opportunities & Corporate Relocations Tracker

Published March 2026

A comprehensive review of all public announcements of corporate relocations, expansions out of Colorado, or site selection opportunities, as well as an analysis of company headquarters in the state. The report utilizes public data from SEC reports, WARN listings, and news articles to understand the volume of companies leaving the state and where they are relocating.

Aerospace and Defense Competitiveness Analysis

Published September 2026

As part of the Chamber Foundation's Aerospace and Aviation Alliance, a national economic development consultancy developed a competitive intelligence report on the strength and broader impacts of this industry, measuring how Colorado compares to other states, and making a series of actionable recommendations to ensure the aerospace and defense sector continues to grow in Colorado.

Child Care Access Report

Expected 2027

As part of the Chamber's Child Care Access Alliance, this statewide report will offer a clear picture of Colorado's child care challenges and will propose solutions.

Workforce

IMPROVING COLORADO'S TALENT PIPELINE

Workforce challenges have consistently ranked among the top two issues for employers in Colorado Chamber Foundation business surveys. Through Vision 2033, a key focus for the Foundation is to equip our workforce with the skills needed to take on the jobs of the future.

This year, we saw our efforts in working with the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade to organize seven Opportunity Now Regional Talent Summits across the state in 2025 come to fruition through the December release of a report recommending 232 proposed action plans to boost talent pipelines in nine key industries. In June, state leaders then kicked off an initiative to implement those tactics with the help of regional business leaders, and the Chamber remains involved in that process.



Staff sat on an advisory panel to the Speaker of the House to develop a measure passed in the 2026 legislative session that consolidates Colorado's siloed higher-education and workforce development initiatives. This new state agency will offer a one-stop shop for employers and students to learn about career pathways and for employers to work with the state on everything from apprenticeship grants to curriculum development. A commission is putting together that agency, and the Chamber is working closely with commission members to ensure that the voice of the business community is heard.

The Chamber worked in partnership with The College Board and local chambers of commerce to get The College Board's new AP Kickstart classes into more Colorado school districts. These classes prepare students for direct entry into the workforce, including a cybersecurity curriculum and classes that teach students how to acquire capital, market and develop products, and take other steps needed to run a business.





The 2025 edition of Colorado's annual Talent Pipeline Report — tracking the data and driving the strategies that align talent supply with demand statewide.

Child Care Access and Affordability

Tackling a key barrier to workforce



Child care is a critical workforce issue identified in Vision 2033. When parents struggle to find reliable and affordable care, it disrupts their ability to work and creates real challenges for employers, from higher turnover to reduced productivity and hiring shortages.

The Colorado Chamber Foundation, Gary Community Ventures and Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC) formed the Child Care Access Alliance in May to improve the affordability and availability of child care across Colorado.

As part of this partnership, the alliance announced the selection of seven local chambers of commerce to receive $140,000 in grant funding to understand and address regional child care challenges. **Grant recipients:**

- Adams County Regional Economic Partnership
- Aurora Chamber of Commerce
- Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC
- Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce
- Greeley Chamber of Commerce

> **“Colorado’s child care challenges affect families, employers and the state’s economy, which is why business leadership is so important to advancing solutions.”**

Alethea Gomez,
Executives Partnering to Invest in Children

Housing and Cost of Living

COLORADO CURRENTLY RANKS 49TH IN THE NATION FOR OUR COST OF LIVING, AND 44TH FOR HOUSING.

We began to address the policy drivers of these costs by partnering with industry experts and thought leaders through several efforts:

- Our day-long housing roundtable brought together public and private partners with a slightly different spin: we asked each participant to share a policy or program to increase housing availability or reduce cost that's working, and that they had firsthand experience with. Through this discussion, we identified a number of themes and approaches that can be scaled to made a real impact.

- Colorado's property and casualty insurance bills have doubled since 2020, significantly impacting the costs of living, housing, and doing business. Our property and casualty insurance committee, an effort of our Legal Reform Alliance, identified short- and long-term ways to lower rates and increase community resiliency to natural disasters.



Environmental Sustainability

LEADING ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDUSTRY, THE STATE, AND NGO GROUPS

We believe that working together, we can protect our natural environment without sacrificing economic growth.

Businesses across the state are highly invested in a clean environment and healthy economy for our communities and the future of Colorado. The Colorado Chamber Foundation is leading on collaborative efforts to establish policies that balance responsible energy production, tools businesses need to meet additional regulatory requirements, and cost management.

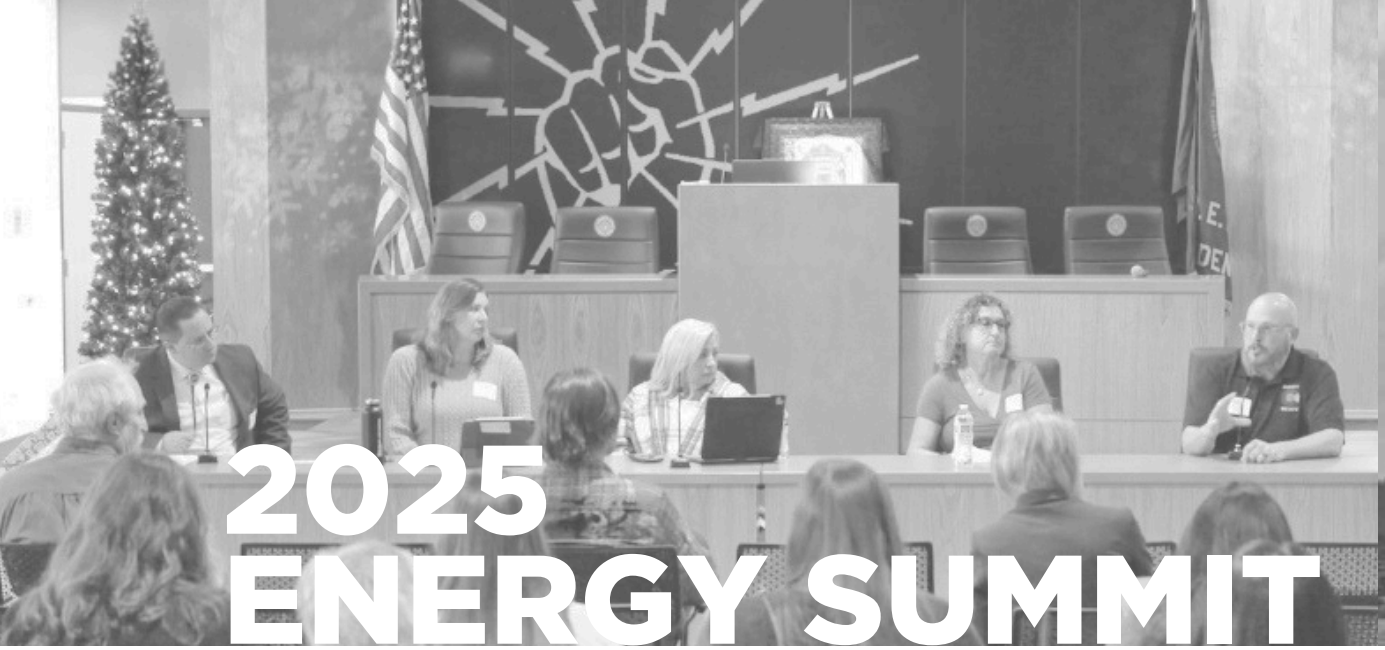
After extensive discussions with Gov. Jared Polis' office, the Colorado Chamber of Commerce and the governor formed the Environment & Sustainability Working Group, bringing together six Chamber members and eight members of the Polis administration, as well as three environmental groups, to discuss how to streamline permitting for projects that seek to reduce emissions from facilities.

This was the top recommendation of the Chamber's Environmental Sustainability & Climate Action Task Force, and Polis has committed to taking suggestions from the working group on actions he can proceed with administratively as well as recommendations needing legislative approval that he can leave to his successor. The group began meeting in late April and is developing proposals that will be presented to Polis in the fall.

46%

Of Colorado businesses say that meeting environmental regulations are one of their top 3 regulatory concerns.







2025 ENERGY SUMMIT

Chamber staff co-chaired a coalition that brought together businesses, labor unions, utilities and consumer advocates to work together to prevent legislation which would have significantly increased utility costs and bills. The group also successfully advocated for significant amendments in the PUC sunset process to allow more flexibility for utilities. The group is now looking forward to proactive opportunities to protect jobs in the energy sector and decrease the cost of utilities.

The Chamber Foundation funds an entire staff position to monitor regulatory processes and advocate for business needs in air quality, manufacturing, energy production, and other rulemaking processes. This year, we participated in six rulemaking processes.

The Chamber Foundation also funded legal analysis and supported the state's application to the EPA to protect Colorado from being reclassified into higher air quality regulation nonattainment statuses due to ozone pollution from wildfires, other states, altitude, and other sources outside our control. If successful, we will protect businesses and residents from new fees.

Business Climate

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE BUSINESSES CAN INNOVATE AND GROW

In October, the Chamber Foundation formed a new alliance focused on Colorado's aerospace and defense industry. Vision 2033 identifies this industry cluster as one of Colorado's strongest: Colorado is home to the nation's second-largest aerospace concentration and ranks #1 in aerospace employment per capita. With a diverse network of more than 2,000 aerospace companies statewide, the industry directly employs over 55,000 Coloradans and supports another 184,000 jobs indirectly.

The Alliance unites Colorado's aerospace and defense community behind a solutions-driven effort to support state and federal policies that maximize the state's position as an industry hub. The alliance serves as a strong state and federal voice to bring awareness of these industries through research, policy and education. One of the first initiatives of the alliance was to develop a competitive intelligence report on the aerospace industry in Colorado, providing recommendations to ensure the sector remains strong. The report is available on our website.



To recognize Colorado companies who contributed to the Artemis II mission to the moon, the Chamber Foundation's Aerospace and Defense Alliance hosted an Artemis splash-down watch party, attended by more than 90 industry leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders.

Regulatory Reform

Addressing the top barrier to business

At the beginning of 2024, the Colorado Chamber Foundation commissioned a team of peer-reviewed economists to study Colorado's state-level regulatory climate. The team with StratACUMEN spent approximately 10 months assessing the impact of regulatory practices on the state's business landscape and economic health.

The Chamber Foundation continued to monitor the state's regulatory landscape, updating our comprehensive 2024 study that brought widespread attention to the state's growing regulatory burden.

6th MOST REGULATED STATE

205,000 TOTAL STATE REGULATIONS

45% OF STATE REGULATIONS ARE DUPLICATIVE OR EXCESSIVE

36,000 LOST JOBS FOR EVERY 10% INCREASE IN REGULATIONS

9,000 LOST FIRMS FOR EVERY 10% INCREASE IN REGULATIONS

> **"The regulatory landscape in Colorado continues to have a negative impact on the state's economy. Business creation, business retention, innovation and jobs are still feeling the unintended consequences of the duplication and compliance costs that come with new regulations. This 2025 update of Colorado's regulatory landscape shows that the state is adding rather than reducing these impediments. It is our hope that seeing these numbers will encourage public policy decision makers to take action. This can be done without taking away from the positive impacts of regulations if the focus is on the unintended consequences.**
>
> DR. MEMO DIRIKER, TOP ECONOMIST FOR CHAMBER REGULATORY WORK

Alliances

STRATEGIC INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

As an initiative of Vision 2033, several new Colorado Chamber alliances have been created to target priority focus areas and allow a space for industry leaders to collaborate. These alliances address key challenges facing each sector and formulate future-focused solutions to improve our state's economic growth. Each alliance holds regular meetings throughout the year.





Legal Reform Alliance

This alliance includes representation of legal counsel and businesses committed to reversing the trajectory of Colorado's legal climate. Recent work includes helping to pass a bill barring financial interests from owning law firms and influencing the outcome of legal proceedings.

65 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Tech Alliance

This alliance unites the voice of the statewide tech industry to advance industry growth.

115 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Environmental & Sustainability Task Force

This alliance brings together diverse business interests to collaborate on environmental regulations and improving emissions.

72 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Aerospace and Defense Alliance

Launched in DATE, this alliance convenes aerospace and defense sector businesses, research institutions, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to advocate for industry growth in Colorado.

60 ACTIVE MEMBERS

Child Care Access Alliance

A partnership of the Chamber Foundation, Gary Community Ventures, Executives Partnering to Invest in Children (EPIC), and seven local chambers of commerce, this alliance analyzes child care gaps at the regional level and identifies employer, local and statewide strategies to address these challenges.

10 PARTNERS

Property and Casualty Insurance Working Group

A subcommittee of the Legal Reform Alliance, this group examined the drivers of Colorado's skyrocketing insurance costs and identified short- and long-term policy solutions. Bipartisan sponsors carried two of the group's proposals in the 2026 legislative session.

15 ACTIVE MEMBERS

National Civics Bee

ENGAGING COLORADO YOUTH IN CIVIC EDUCATION

In partnership with the Daniels Fund and the Civic Trust of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Civics Bee in Colorado continues to expand.

The National Civics Bee is a nationwide initiative that inspires middle school students to become active, informed citizens. Students begin by submitting essays on community issues, with the top 20 entries advancing to regional chamber-hosted competitions across Colorado. The top three finalists then compete at the Colorado State Finals, hosted by the Colorado Chamber Foundation. The Colorado State Champion advances to the National Civics Bee Championship in Washington, D.C.

Now completing its fourth year, the Colorado Civics Bee brings together students, families, educators, and civic and business leaders to foster civic knowledge, leadership, and community engagement across our state.



“The National Civics Bee proves that when we give young people the opportunity to learn about our country and tackle real challenges in their own communities, they rise to the occasion. At a time when 80 percent of Americans say they want more civics education in our schools, these Colorado students remind us why. They aren't just learning how our republic works. They're preparing to strengthen it.”

Hanna Skandera
President & CEO
Daniels Fund



BROADCAST MEDIA EXPOSURE

TOTAL TV COVERAGE VIEWERSHIP

974,000

TV COVERAGE PUBLICITY VALUE

$498,000

GROWING STUDENT PARTICIPATION

STUDENT APPLICATIONS STATEWIDE

800+

REGIONAL CIVICS BEE PARTNERS

9 Regions

> **"The National Civics Bee is an inspiring reminder that civic leadership starts early. These students have shown an impressive understanding of how our government works and how thoughtful participation can make a real difference in our communities. We are proud to recognize this year's finalists and congratulate Peter Daniell on advancing to represent Colorado at the national competition."**

Loren Furman
President & CEO
Colorado Chamber of Commerce

Leadership Colorado

STRENGTHENING COLORADO'S BUSINESS AND SHAPING THE STATES FUTURE

Leadership Colorado 2026 launched in February with its largest class ever, bringing together 35 emerging leaders from 17 industries who share a commitment to strengthening Colorado's business community and shaping the state's future.

Through immersive business tours at businesses ranging from farms to pharmaceutical manufacturers, conversations with top executives, and firsthand exposure to the opportunities and challenges facing businesses across Colorado, participants are building the knowledge, relationships, and leadership skills needed to make a lasting impact.

2026 Cohort Programming

- Colorado Capitol and Government 101: *Civics in Action*
- Workshop: *The Framework for Connection*
- Colorado Symphony: *Conducting Business Leadership*
- Craig Hospital: *The Business of Hope*
- Monarch Casino Resort Spa: *Leadership in Gaming, Hospitality, and*
- *Customer Experience*
- Exploring Innovation in Northern Colorado's overnight program
- Amazon DEN3 Fulfillment Center: *From Click to Doorstep*
- Lockheed Martin Space: *Innovation with Integrity*
- Denver Summit FC: *A Game Plan for Leadership*
- Denver International Airport: *A Hub of Opportunity*



"Leadership Colorado is more than a leadership program; it's an investment in the people who will help shape the future of business in our state."

Molly Kostka
Program Director

Thank you

TO THE COLORADO CHAMBER FOUNDATION'S INVESTORS

Lead Sponsor

KODIAK BUILDING PARTNERS

Key Sponsors

THE ANSCHUTZ FOUNDATION

FCI Constructors, Inc.

TRI-STATE

PCL CONSTRUCTION

amazon

TRANSWEST

the human energy company™ Chevron

WAGNER CAT

Thiry O'Leary Foundation

SUNCOR ENERGY

Supporting Sponsors

LIBERTY

ENCORE electric

FARMERS INSURANCE

Climax Molybdenum A Freeport-McMoRan Company

HERCULES INDUSTRIES 60

UNITED AIRLINES

Southwest

KRAEMER NORTH AMERICA

WOODWARD CHARITABLE TRUST

DOORDASH

Rocky Mountain Natural Meats

verizon

WELLS FARGO

Board of Directors

2026



Bev Razon
Board Chair
COPIC Companies



Kreg Brown
Board Treasurer
Plante Moran, *Retired*



Lisa Reeves
Board Secretary
Colorado Chamber of Commerce



Brad Cofield
Board Member
Wagner Equipment Company



Darius McCurty
Board Member
Kodiak Building Partners



Lisha Burnett
Board Member
Suncor Corporation



John Jacus
Board Member
Davis Graham and Stubbs



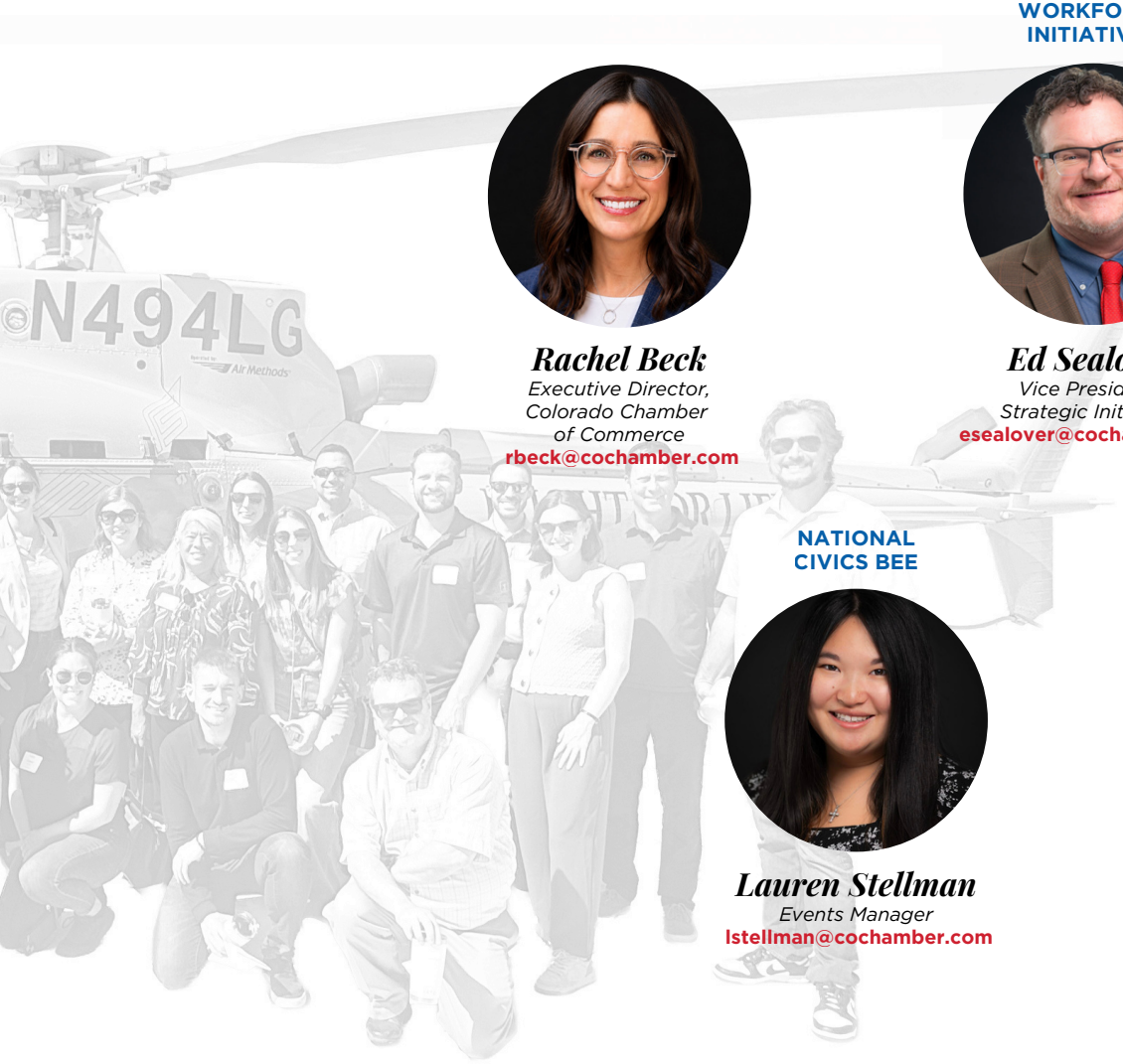
Dave Tabor
Board Member
Tabos Tech



Loren Furman
Board Member
Colorado Chamber of Commerce

Get Involved

CONNECT WITH US!



Rachel Beck
Executive Director,
Colorado Chamber
of Commerce
rbeck@cochamber.com

WORKFORCE INITIATIVES

Ed Sealover
Vice President,
Strategic Initiatives
esealover@cochamber.com

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES



Meghan Dollar
Senior Vice President,
Governmental Affairs
mdollar@cochamber.com

NATIONAL CIVICS BEE

Lauren Stellman
Events Manager
lstellman@cochamber.com

LEADERSHIP COLORADO



Molly Kostka
Program Director,
Leadership Colorado
mkostka@cochamber.com

Join Us in Advancing Economic Growth to Drive Opportunity for All Coloradans

Colorado Chamber
FOUNDATION

