Excellence in Leadership Program
State Legislative Overview
Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021

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ALL FOUR:ONE

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State team overview

- The Office of Government Relations supports the University of Colorado by building effective partnerships between the university and state and federal governments. This is achieved through representation and advocacy of CU's needs and interests with state officials in Colorado.

- We have a team of lobbyists and policy experts who lobby at the Capitol during the state legislative session.

Policy and Legislation 101

Colorado State Legislature is in session from January – May

There are 100 legislators; 35 Senators and 65 Representatives

Close to 700 bills are introduced each year

Each legislator can introduce five bills

To pass a bill requires 33, 18 & 1

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2021 Chamber breakdown

House:

- Democrats: 41
- Republicans: 24
- New legislators: 15

Senate:

- Democrats: 20
- Republicans: 15
- New legislators: 3

- Total new legislators: 18

What is our process?

- Setting state legislative agenda before the session begins.

- Sending out legislation to campus stakeholders.

- Reviewing feedback, determining which bills we will support, oppose, amend, or remain neutral

- Typically tracking 100+ bills throughout the session

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Legal Origins of the University

- Established by first territorial legislature in 1861

- UCB established as a "state institution" in original constitution

- UCD and UCCS added in 1972

- Colo. Const. provides for nine *elected* Regents and the President—1 of only 4 states

Legal Origins of the University

- Separate from State Gov.

- Colo. Const gives Regents "general supervision" of the university and "exclusive control and direction of all funds of and appropriations to" the institution, "unless otherwise provided by law"
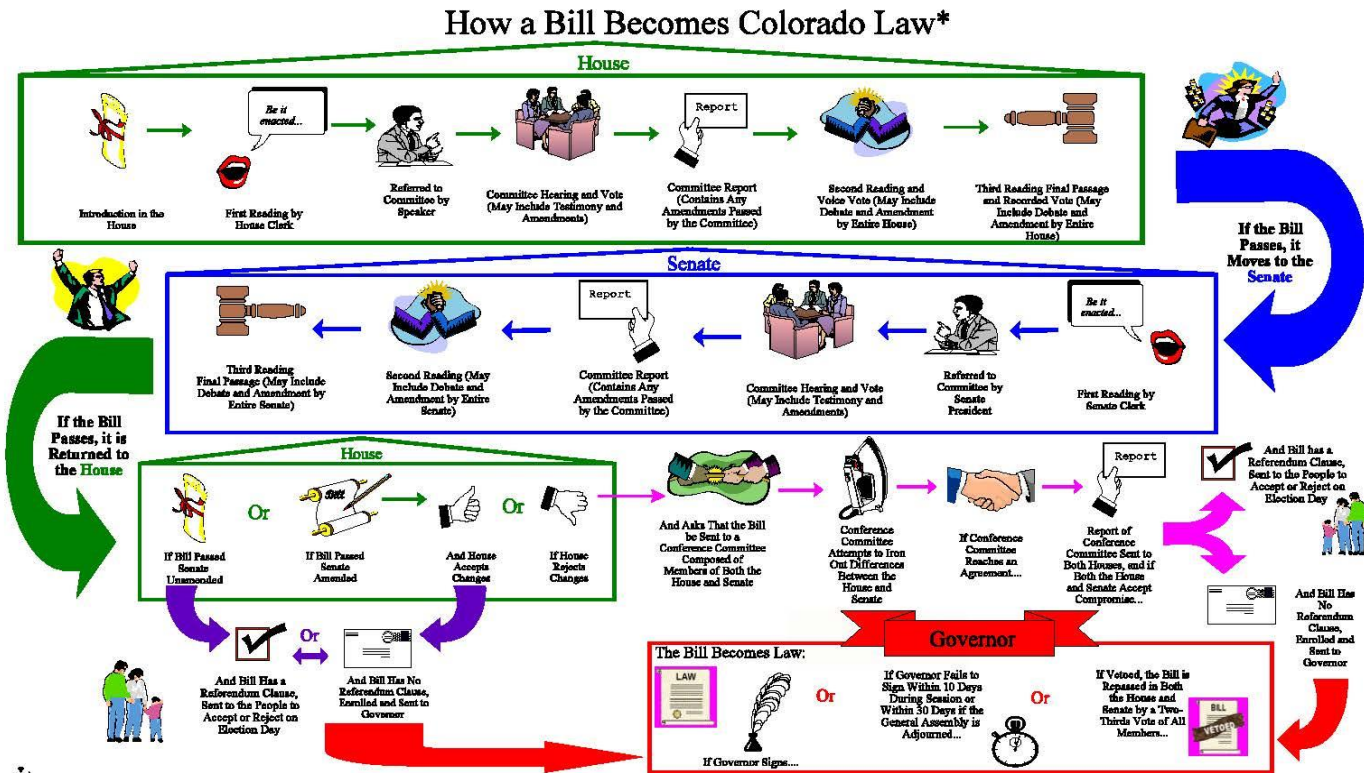
The Colorado Legislative Process

How a Bill Becomes Colorado Law*

House of Representatives

- Chamber of origin for House Bills

- Introduction and First Reading

- Assigned to Committee by Speaker of the House.

- Committee Hearing

- Public testimony & amendments offered

- Committee Report

- House floor Second Reading

- House floor Third Reading and Final Passage

Senate

- Second chamber for House Bills

- Introduction and First Reading

- Assigned to Committee by Speaker of the House.

- Committee Hearing
  - public testimony & amendments offered

- Committee Report

- Senate floor Second Reading

- Senate floor Third Reading and Final Passage

Divided Chambers

- Conference committee – reps from both chambers try to iron out differences

- Rules

- Limits on changes

- Bill can die here

- Or, concurrence

CU 2021 State Policy Priorities

CU Initiated Legislation:

• In-state tuition for American Indian students from tribes with historic ties to Colorado (Fenberg/Garnett & Benavidez); and

• Permanent ACT/SAT test optional flexibility for college admissions (Story/Bird)

Academic:

– Stackable Credential Pathways (DHE)

> On hold. Community Colleges in discussion with DHE to add language on role and mission expansion.

Legacy issue

Withholding transcripts

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Role of Lobbyists

- Because the legislators don't have many staff, unlike in Washington where they have committee staffers in different policy areas such as transportation, healthcare, education, etc…lobbyists are used by the members of the General Assembly to provide and prepare pertinent information to the legislation that legislators are working on. Pertinent information includes:
    - Expert witnesses to provide testimony
    - Preparation of fact sheets and legislation talking points
    - Vote counting along the legislative process including the house chamber, senate chamber and the governor's office.
- Lobbyists also help to convene stakeholder meetings and assist the legislators in getting good feedback on both sides of an issue.
- Legislators also request lobbyists to track and work on committee vote counts.

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Relationships, Relationships, Relationships!

- ## Why is this so important?
  - Key to success in the political arena
  - Trust
  - Education of elected officials & networking
  - Majority party rules the chambers & committee assignments
- Navigating conflict
- Saying thank you

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Questions?