Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

State and Federal Relations: A Look Ahead at 2017 [1]

January 24, 2017 by Natalie Barry [2]

State

The State Relations team continues to cultivate relationships with legislators and promote the endeavors of each of the CU campuses through tours, meetings and outreach activities in legislative districts. This work is critical to our efforts during the 2017 state session, which convened on Wednesday, January 11. The opening day speeches exuded a hopeful tone from both sides of the aisle as the legislators will work to tackle major policy issues this session including budget, transportation and infrastructure needs. Full speech text available: Governor Hickenlooper's State of the State [3]; Senate President Kevin Grantham [4]; Senate Minority Leader Lucia Guzman [5]; House Speaker Crisanta Duran [6]; House Minority Leader Patrick Neville. [6]

CU's legislative priorities this year will continue to be targeted towards efficiencies and cost savings for the university, including flexibility with auxiliary employee contracts and higher education access for Olympic athletes. Major policy issues coming down the pike that will impact CU include expansion of the Colorado Open Records Request; sexual assault; freedom of speech on college campuses; teacher shortages in and expanding access to teachers and health care in rural areas, including the expansion of treatment for opioid-dependence. Additionally, in collaboration with CU Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Todd Saliman, we are working to support the Governor's budget request highlighted below.

State Funding Initiatives:

- $20.5 million increase for higher education, including $3.8 million for financial aid. Of the $20.5 million increase, CU's four campuses would receive an estimated $7.8 million, an increase of 4.18 percent over last year's funding from the state. The statewide average increase for public higher education institutions would be about 2.5 percent.?
- $20 million for Level 1 controlled maintenance projects on state college and university campuses.
- No state funding for new higher education construction projects.

We look forward to working with our friends in the Governor's office and at the legislature this year, including 32 newly elected members, and we are thankful for their support of higher education.



Gov. Hickenlooper delivers the State of the State address.

Angela Rennick, Office of Government Relations

Federal

On January 20, 2017, Donald J. Trump was sworn in as the 45th President of the United States. Meanwhile, the 115th Congress convened on January 3, 2017, with new members

being sworn in. The new Congress will remain under Republican leadership, with the U.S. Senate comprising of 52 Republicans, 46 Democrats and 2 Independents (both of whom caucus with the Democrats). The Senate Majority Leader is Mitch McConnell and the Senate Minority Leader is Charles “Chuck” Schumer. Colorado’s U.S. Senators are Michael Bennet (D) and Cory Gardner (R). The U.S. House of Representatives will be under the leadership of Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R), House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R), and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D). The House comprises of 241 Republicans and 194 Democrats. Colorado’s members of the U.S House of Representatives include Representative Diana DeGette (D-1), Representative Jared Polis (D-2), Representative Scott Tipton (R-3), Representative Ken Buck (R-4), Representative Doug Lamborn (R-5), Representative Mike Coffman (R-6), and Representative Ed Perlmutter (D-7).



President Trump was sworn in by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.

The New York Times

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