

**COLORADO  
CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE  
REFORM  
COALITION**

**MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT**

*Be Sure To Vote*

**ALL  
THE  
WAY  
DOWN  
YOUR BALLOT**

**DENVER JUNE PRIMARY**

**CANDIDATE GUIDE**

**BALLOTS ARE MAILED OUT: JUNE 3RD**

**IN-PERSON VOTING AT DDC: JUNE 17TH & 18TH**

**IN-PERSON VOTING AT DENVER COUNTY JAIL: JUNE 20TH**

**Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition**  
821 22nd St Denver, CO 80205  
Phone: 303-825-0122  
[info@ccjrc.org](mailto:info@ccjrc.org); [www.ccjrc.org](http://www.ccjrc.org)

**Denver Election Hotline**  
Toll Free: 720-913-8683



## INTRODUCTION

Dear Voter,

Since 2006, CCJRC has helped educate people with a criminal record about their right to vote. A lot of people think that once you have a criminal record, you can't vote, and that's not true in Colorado. While inside the Denver jail or detention center, people have the right to vote as long as they are not currently serving a felony sentence. CCJRC has worked closely with the Denver Election Division and the Denver Sheriff's Department to ensure that all those who are eligible to vote have an opportunity to easily register to vote and cast a ballot during an election.

Over the years, we have heard from people in jail that they need more information about candidates. We hear you. CCJRC has developed this nonpartisan candidate guide on the candidates for this upcoming June primary election. The winners of the primary will determine the candidates for the November general election.

The information in this guide was gathered directly from the candidates' websites. Outside of formatting it to fit into this document, nothing has been altered. CCJRC is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan organization, which means we do not endorse candidates, nor can we encourage you to support one candidate over another. CCJRC just wanted to provide information about the Denver candidates so you can make a more informed decision when voting.

We hope you know that your vote and your voice matter. Your experiences and insights are important in deciding who is elected to public office and helping shape public policies.

As our state and nation's landscape faces new challenges and opportunities, the role our elected representatives play is more critical than ever. They are entrusted with making decisions that impact not only our daily lives but our communities, state, and nation.

If you are an eligible voter in the Denver County Jail or Detention Center, we hope you will use your voice and VOTE this June. If you have any questions about whether you are eligible to vote or how to register to vote, please send a kite to programs or contact us.

In Solidarity,

Kyle Giddings & Jasmine Ross  
CCJRC Civic Engagement Team



# PRIMARY ELECTIONS

## QUICK FACTS ABOUT PRIMARIES

The election this June is a primary election. A primary election is when the candidates from each political party compete for the nomination of their party to be on the general election ballot. In Colorado, anyone who is registered with a major party (Republican or Democrat) can cast a ballot for candidates from the party they belong to. In other words, registered Republicans vote in the Republican primary and registered Democrats vote in the Democrat primary. People can also register as "unaffiliated" voters, meaning they don't belong to either major party. Unaffiliated voters get to choose to vote in the Republican or Democrat primary. This is something unique in Colorado. Not all states allow unaffiliated voters to vote in the primary election. However, if they decide to vote in the Democratic primary, they can't vote in the Republican primary or vice versa.

### Here are some things to keep in mind when voting in this year's primary:

- If you are an unaffiliated voter, you will receive two ballots: a Republican ballot and a Democratic ballot. Only vote on ONE ballot. You can keep the other and do whatever you want with it.
- If you are registered with a major party (Republican or Democrat), you will receive only ONE ballot. You will not be able to vote in the other party's primary.
- Voters affiliated with a minor party (ie. libertarian): If there is a minor party contest, those affiliated with that minor party may cast a ballot for those candidates. Often, minor parties do not hold primaries.

**Important Note:** Not all races in Denver this year are contested. Out of all of the races in Denver, only four actually have more than one person running for the nomination. To keep this guide simple, we have only included the races that have a contested primary. All candidates who don't have a contested race are listed below by party. Two races don't have candidates from the Republican party.

### DEMOCRATS RUNNING UNOPPOSED

- Diana DeGette, US Congress District 1
- Jason Crow, US Congress District 6
- Jeff Bridges, State Senate District 26
- Chris Hansen, State Senate District 31
- James Coleman, State Senate District 33
- Javier Mabrey, State Representative - District 1
- Steven Woodrow, State Representative - District 2
- Meg Froelich, State Representative - District 3
- Alex Valdez, State Representative - District 5
- Jennifer Bacon, State Representative - District 7
- Lindsey Gilchrist, State Representative - District 8
- Emily Sirota, State Representative - District 9

### REPUBLICANS RUNNING UNOPPOSED

- Valdamar Archuleta, US Congress District 1
- John E. Fabbriatore, US Congress District 6
- Bob Lane, State Senate District 26
- Max Minnig, State Senate District 33
- Barbara DeHaan, State Representative - District 1
- Michael DiManna, State Representative - District 2
- Mickey Neal, State Representative - District 3
- Jack Duhaus, State Representative - District 4
- Johnnie Johnson, State Representative - District 5
- Tom Swift, State Representative - District 7
- Phillip Borrelli, State Representative - District 8
- No Republican candidates for SD 31 and HD 9

# REGENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO - AT LARGE

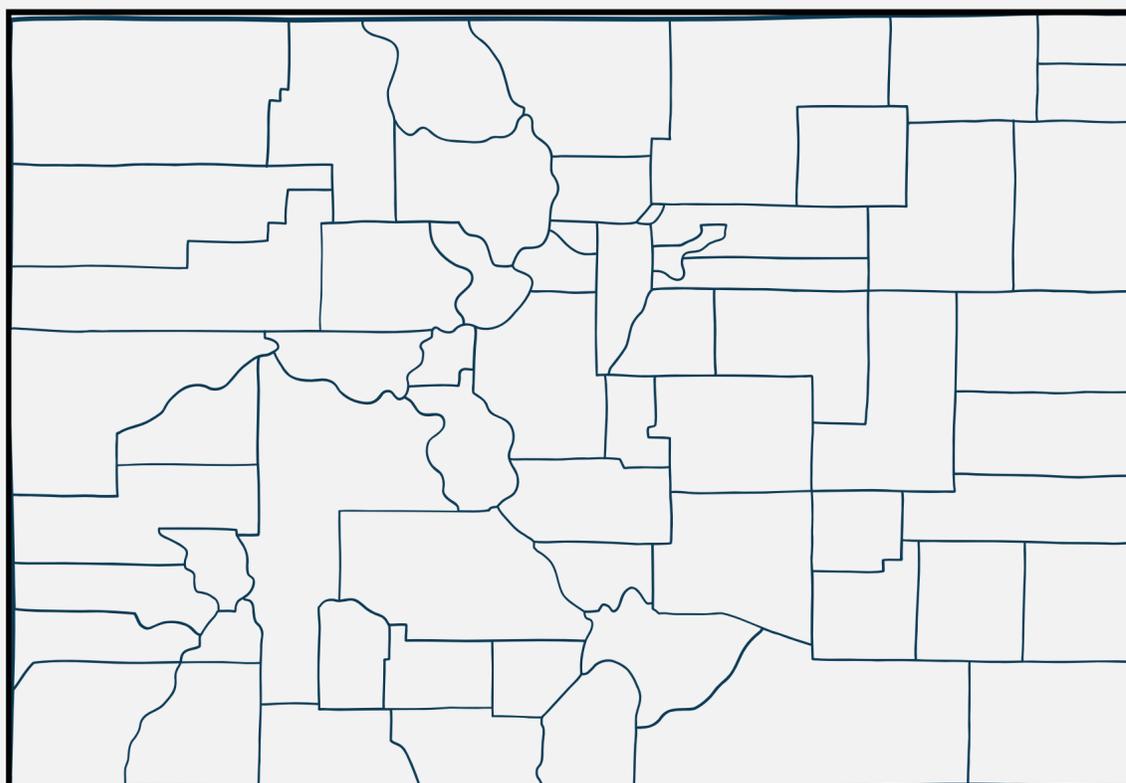


**ELLIOT HOOD (D)**



**CHARLES "CJ" JOHNSON (D)**

## **AT-LARGE ELECTED OFFICIALS COVER ALL OF COLORADO**



## **BIOGRAPHY**

I have dedicated my life to public education and serving my community. And that all started with an education at CU-Boulder. After graduating from CU, I taught fifth grade in a low-income community, managing classrooms of adorable, brilliant, and diverse students, most of whom were first-generation Americans whose parents came to this country seeking a better life. As a teacher, I emphasized to my students that education and a college degree is the best way to pursue and achieve their dreams. I plastered my classroom walls with photos of CU and other universities and talked often about how, if they worked hard, they too could attend and graduate from college. I still believe deeply in the promise of higher education.

As a school attorney, I advocate for school districts and educators across Colorado, from large districts on the Front Range to smaller districts on the Eastern plains and Western slope. I have advocated for teachers, stood up for gender inclusion and anti-racism efforts, and fought for students with disabilities. I have handled several high-profile education cases, including leading Douglas County School District's defense of their COVID-19 safety protocols and Boulder Valley School District's rejection of Heidi Ganahl's proposed charter school that refused to adopt the district's non-discrimination policy. I both advise and serve on public boards. I am the Chair of the Boulder Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Vice Chair of the I Have a Dream Foundation of Boulder County. I previously served as the Vice Chair of the Colorado Disability Funding Committee, a state commission.



While I wear many hats, my most important role in life is being dad to my two incredible and energetic young boys, Alden and Michael, and spouse to my brilliant wife, Caroline, who herself fights for educational equity by helping expand access to free, high-quality preschools across the nation. My family means everything to me, and, like all parents, I care deeply about my kids' future, and I will do all that I can to make it as bright as possible. As your next CU Regent, I will marshal this experience to make CU affordable and accessible, ban concealed carry and get guns out of our classrooms, push CU to be more sustainable, stand up for collective bargaining rights for our workers, and promote diversity, inclusion, and civil discourse on campus.

I would be honored to have your support.

## **ISSUES**

**Make CU more affordable and accessible** A college education can transform lives. We must ensure that every qualified scholar in CO can get a college degree without being burdened with debt. Let's keep tuition in check, provide more affordable student housing, lower the cost of books, lock in tuition rates starting Freshman year, and build up our endowment and use that money to drive down the cost of tuition. Let's promote programs that help students bridge to college and persist to graduation, especially for first-generation college students and students from low-income backgrounds. We also need to push for more state funding and fix TABOR so we can better fund higher education in CO, now ranked near the bottom in the nation in higher-ed funding.

**Ban concealed carry on campus-** CU permits concealed carry on campus. This is fundamentally wrong. No matter how you feel about guns—whether you are an ardent defender of the 2nd Amendment or think all guns should be banned—we can all reasonably agree that there are certain sensitive places that guns simply do not belong, and campuses and classrooms are among those places. We have the authority under state and federal law to ban conceal carry, and as Regent I will be a voice for doing so.

**Make CU more sustainable** I will push the university to become a more sustainable enterprise. To start, we need address the climate crisis by setting ambitious and measurable targets for reducing our carbon emissions. As CU Regent, I will push the university system to set a goal of net zero emissions by 2050 and eliminating direct emissions by 2040. To accomplish this goal, we will need to invest in clean, renewable energy sources for our buildings, divest from fossil fuel securities, and use our multi-billion procurement power to contract with green businesses. We also need to better conserve water—our planet's most precious natural resource—and protect our environment.

## **ISSUES**

**Support collective bargaining for our workers** - As a former union worker myself, I believe that every employee deserves a voice in the workplace and should have the right to collectively bargain and join a union. Unions help employees obtain fair wages, working conditions, and benefits, including healthcare and retirement plans. Union workers are happier, more invested in their employer's success, and often stay on the job longer. They also can partner with employers to efficiently address concerns or maximize opportunities in the workplace. Some employees at CU are currently unable to collectively bargain and unionize. As regent, I will work to change this policy and support the ability of all CU workers to collectively bargain and unionize. It's the right thing to do for our workers, who are essential to our university's success.

**Protect academic freedom**- Academic freedom ensures that students and faculty can pursue knowledge without interference from politicians—a core value of higher education. Yet academic freedom is under assault in states across the country: conservative leaders are banning what can be taught and limiting faculty and student speech in pursuit of a partisan political agenda. As Regent, I will fight for academic freedom and ensure that CU continues to protect this core value of our university system.

**Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion**- We must build a more diverse body of students, faculty, and staff and address lingering gaps in recruiting, achievement, and graduation. We also must build a welcoming environment for everyone to share perspectives and learn from differences. That is what DEI is all about. The Regents recently enacted a policy that commits the university system to promoting DEI and directs our campuses to set ambitious and measurable goals for DEI. I celebrate this policy, but now the hard work begins to give it some teeth. As Regent, I will work with our administrators, faculty, and students to make strides in diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially in areas where the data shows we need to do better, such as improving our retention rates for students and faculty of color and increasing geographic diversity among students.

**Support athletics and our student athletes** CU athletics is a big part of the university's culture, is a huge driver of alumni engagement, and generates revenue for the university. Our student athletes, whether in NCAA or club sports, not only make us proud but also learn important skills like diligence and leadership that will serve them well in career and in life. As Regent, I will be a strong supporter of CU athletics and our student athletes.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

My name is Charles S. Johnson, aka CJ, candidate for CU Regent at-Large! Hailing from Detroit, my educational journey led me to the University of Colorado Boulder, where, amongst other things, I was honored to play quarterback on the 1990 National Championship team. With a commitment to CU that spans 35 years from student government to athletic director to my current role as a member of the Board of Trustees, my drive to provide greater access and opportunities for all students is well established. Currently as the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Ball Corporation, I tirelessly advocate for equal opportunity and access for all. Please join me in my campaign to ensure that CU continues to be a beacon of educational, social and economic excellence for our great state of Colorado.



## **ISSUES**

**AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY-** CU faces financial challenges due to decreasing state funding and rising costs. We must find innovative ways to manage finances to ensure the quality of education while also addressing rising tuition costs and financial aid availability.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION-** There is an ongoing need to address issues of underrepresentation, promote inclusivity, and foster a welcoming environment for students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds.

**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING-** We must prioritize mental health services, resources, and support systems to secure the well-being of its students and promote a healthy campus environment.

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY-** CU will need to continue its efforts in research, and education to mitigate environmental impact and promote sustainable practices among students, faculty, and staff.

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE - DISTRICT 4

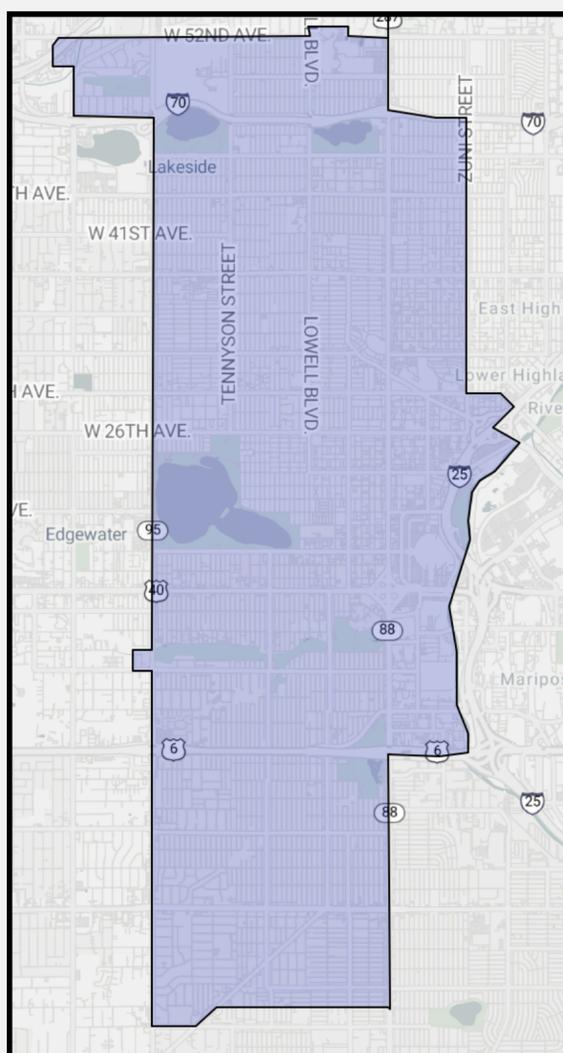


**TIMOTHY MARIANO  
HERNÁNDEZ  
(D-INCUMBENT)**



**CECELIA ESPENOZA (D)**

## HOUSE DISTRICT 4



**BIOGRAPHY**

Tim Hernández is a teacher, a Chicano, and a proud Northsider. Like so many Denver families, Tim experienced firsthand the impacts of poverty, instability, and displacement. Born in Pueblo and raised in several communities across Colorado, he went to seven schools in seven years before finding stability and a home in Denver's Northside. His dad worked a minimum wage job seven days a week delivering car parts and hospital samples around Denver, and Tim waited tables at Javier's Diner in high school to save enough money to become the first person in his birth family to attend a four-year university. Now, Tim spends over 60% of his teacher salary on rent to live in the neighborhood he grew up in.

**Teaching & Community**

However, Tim's perspectives are not solely informed by hardships; he has also experienced firsthand possibility, solidarity, love, and power in our community. As a teacher at North High School, his students created a book now permanently held in the Denver Public Library. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Denver. As a community member, he has witnessed the power of the people, particularly youth, coming together to demand justice and bold solutions from our elected officials.

He has marched alongside DACA students at universities and followed the lead of high school students in the wake of gun violence to advocate for common-sense gun violence prevention legislation at the Capitol. Tim has felt and known the revolutionary love of his community—our community—from the time he went to the La Raza Youth Leadership Conference during his freshman year of high school and from elders, students, community members, parents, friends, allies, and family at La Raza Park just over a year ago.

**Political Experience**

Tim will work to ensure that we live up to our values and our platform in the Democratic Party. He interned for U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (NY) in Washington D.C. as their office sought to remove Donald Trump as President of the United States in 2020. Tim has testified on pro-labor, education, and tenants' rights bills at the Capitol. He has knocked doors for Democratic candidates across Colorado to build our democratic power statewide. Tim also served as the HD4A Captain on the HD4 Leadership Team, where he helped build an HD4A team of POs that holds the torch as the most fully represented sub-district in the entire Democratic Party of Denver. As the current State Representative for House District 4, Tim is a statewide leader in the Democratic Party. He runs policies alongside leaders in the House Democratic Caucus, including the Majority Leader, and the Colorado Democratic Latino Caucus. His progressive legislation includes: Assault Weapons Ban (HB24-1292) Worker Freedom Act (HB24-1260) Chicana/o License Plate (HB24-1105) Justice-Engaged Student Bill of Rights (HB24-1216) Cultural Items at Graduation (HB24-1323)

**ISSUES**

**Protecting Public Education-** Tim will stand fiercely in support of strong public schools in every community and resist efforts to privatize education in Colorado. He is a member of an entire generation of Colorado students who never received a fully funded day of their K-12 education. As a teacher himself, he has had to ask for community donations to fund classroom book sets for students. It's past time we fully fund our public schools, invest fully in our teachers and their workplace conditions, and transform the educational experience of our students to ensure they receive a quality, truthful, and empowering education regardless of where they grow up. We must invest in our children because our communities depend on their growth and success.

**Policy Approaches:**

- Completely eliminate the Budget Stabilization factor that divests from the education of all Colorado students
- Resist efforts to expand the influence of charter schools, innovation networks, and other forms of non-public education
- Advocate for tuition-free higher education in the state of Colorado
- Stand in solidarity with CEA priority bills relating to teacher contracts and pay, bargaining agreements, improving workplace conditions for teachers, and the rights of all teachers to unionize
- Develop policy approaches to incentive and retain BIPOC teachers
- Expand access to and bandwidth of trade programs and technical programs for all students in Colorado

**ISSUES**

**Housing Justice-** Housing is a human right, the rent is too damn high, and there is no end in sight. The Northside of Denver is the most gentrified Latino neighborhood in the country, and as Tim began his teaching career at North High School during the pandemic, he witnessed his students take his class from their bathtubs and become the primary breadwinner responsible for their family's housing at 15 years old. To keep our communities together, especially our most vulnerable, poor, and working class communities, we should expand access to attainable, sustainable, and permanently affordable housing across the city of Denver and the state of Colorado. Nearly half of all Colorado renters are housing burdened and paying an unsustainable amount of their income on rent (including Tim), and we still lack renters' protections. Having access to consistently available, attainable, and affordable housing is foundational to the success and opportunity for all in our community.

**Policy Approach**

- Repeal the statewide prohibition on rent control for local municipalities
- Implement just cause eviction to prevent dehumanizing and unjust evictions for Colorado residents
- Invest in anti-gentrification housing expansion that allows us to build directly after and/or with protections for communities that are poor, working class, or have cultural connection to their neighborhood
- Mandate that a designated threshold of all new development in Colorado must be permanently built as affordable housing/units
- Expand mortgage programs and homeowner programs for any state worker or worker on a public salary

**Gun Violence Prevention-** Tim's generation is the generation of mass shootings, lockdown drills, and our country leading the world in gun violence. He has sat with students on the floor of his classroom and deescalated their anxiety attacks during a lockdown drill and marched with his students on the Capitol to demand common-sense gun violence prevention policy from our state legislators. But, mass shootings and school shootings are microcosms of gun violence prevention because school shootings only account for 2% of all gun violence in the United States. Gun violence is a problem in schools because schools are a reflection of society. While Tim supports responsible gun ownership, our societal response to harm in communities following a direct path to guns remains a widespread, layered issue.

**Policy Approach**

- Use data-driven approaches to prevent gun violence, like investing in housing, education, wages, etc. and distance ourselves from "school hardening" measures (arming teachers, armed SROs, etc.) as blanket solutions to gun violence
- Pass an assault weapons ban in the state of Colorado, no matter the trajectory, action, or inaction of the federal government
- Support legislation that passed the State House this year, like extreme risk protection orders (red flag laws), extended waiting periods, etc.
- Expand gun violence prevention law to apply directly to law enforcement officers in Colorado
- Hold gun manufacturers and sellers liable and accountable for the enforcement of gun laws

**Criminal Legal System-** As an abolitionist, Tim understands that our criminal justice system is not a just system because it is predicated on systemic racism and the criminalization of poverty. The school-to-prison pipeline is real, oppressive, and built to disproportionately police, sentence, and incarcerate black and brown youth. Colorado imprisons more people per capita than Mexico, and our prisons are built to institutionalize, exploit, and degrade incarcerated community members, not heal them. We must identify ways to decrease unnecessary law enforcement contact, dismantle the prison-industrial complex, and build humanizing approaches to harm that address the root causes of crime.

**Policy Approach**

- Expand funds for approaches that address the root causes of crime in our communities, such as mental health, harm reduction, restorative justice, youth, workforce training, and adult education programs
- Demilitarize Police and institute accountability measures, public reporting, and community oversight systems for all instances of use of force for Police Departments in Colorado
- End solitary confinement, orange collar labor, and economic exploitation for incarcerated community members in prisons
- Meet drug abuse as a health crisis, not a criminal choice
- Oppose wealth-based detention, incarceration of unhoused community members, and other norms of the criminal justice system that further criminalize poverty

**ISSUES**

**Healthcare & Reproductive Justice**– We live in a healthcare system that works for those who can afford it, and doesn't for those who can't. That's unacceptable. Tim has been on Medicare, and he knows that healthcare is a human right. More than that, our communities deserve to have access to safe, affordable, affirming, and reliable healthcare experiences that humanize their pain—not profit from it. This means that we must hold accountable the groups, moneyed interests, and companies seeking profit instead of healing for our community. We must also ensure that our conversations surrounding healthcare in Colorado actively include mental health, abortion care, and gender-affirming care so that we may one day have a single-payer healthcare system.

**Policy Approach**

- Explore a single payer system for healthcare in the state of Colorado
- Cap the prices of direly needed and necessary prescription drugs by holding pharmaceutical companies accountable for price gouging
- Expand protections for healthcare workers in the state of Colorado
- Strengthen access to gender affirming care for all people in the state of Colorado who want it, including students in schools
- Enshrine the right to bodily autonomy when it comes to healthcare decisions about abortion and birth control in the state of Colorado

**Migration Justice**– Migration is a human right, and borders are an invention to justify violence over stolen land using imaginary, colonial lines. The immigrant students in Tim's classroom often share their fear and anxiety about their present and their futures because of their immigration status. That's intolerable.

Immigrants who come to our city deserve dignity, respect, care, and welcoming beyond their school and into our community. Instead, our communities are forced to endure the systemic violence, intimidation, and fear of a broken immigration system. Immigrants make our communities great and all people should have access to basic paths of participation in a democratic country and to a path towards citizenship that is not exploitive.

Tim supports responsible gun ownership, our societal response to harm in communities following a direct path to guns remains a widespread, layered issue.

**Policy Approach**

- Work to end state and local cooperation with ICE, including ending contracts with detention centers in the state of Colorado
- Fight for investment in immigrant legal defense funds
- Ensure that immigrants in our community have access to safe, protected, and accountable job sites that prevent their exploitation
- Allow immigrants in our community have access to a driver's license, healthcare, and basic human resources, regardless of nationality status
- Develop alternative state policy that meets the needs of the 13,000 DACA recipients in Colorado to sustain unfettered access to education and workforce participation for DACA recipients

**Environmental Justice**– Wildfires rage more widely, water rights become more restrictive, and polluters continue to profit every day that we are not boldly addressing the existential threat of climate change in Colorado. Climate change will impact all of us, but those most disproportionately impacted by it now are low-income communities and communities of color. Tim believes in addressing climate change now so that we may ensure that all people in Colorado have the right to access clean air, drinkable water, fertile soil, and healthy foods. Small scale solutions like a recycling bin in Tim's classroom isn't going to stop a climate crisis exacerbated every day by the non-renewable energy industry and profit.

**Policy Approach**

- Hold polluters (like SunCor) accountable and liable for the threats they create to our air, water, and land
- Enshrine sovereignty for Indigenous peoples over sovereign lands, especially with regard to water rights endowed to Indigenous peoples over the Colorado River
- Expand zoning laws to slow the production of raw materials and nonrenewable resources
- Develop and invest in a sustainable industry transition that puts workers first in a green economy
- Advance the just, ethical, and necessary path to a 100% renewable Colorado by 2040

## **ISSUES**

**Economic Justice-** Alejandro Jimenez says “Mexican boots don’t have straps.” He’s right. “Picking ourselves up by our bootstraps” is a myth created to justify our exploitation and blame us for our own poverty. But, poverty is a policy choice. Tim has lived in poverty, still lives in poverty, and works in schools with young people who experience levels of poverty that are inhumane and overwhelming for students, families, and communities. Meanwhile, the wealth gap only widens between the rich and poor. Tim will fight to dismantle systems intentionally designed to criminalize, exacerbate, and systemize poverty in our communities, fight for an economy that ensures the rights and dignity of all working families, and work to ensure that the rich pay their fair share in Colorado.

### Policy Approach

- Abolish the Colorado Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)
- Stand with workers against all forms of exploitation and expand the right of all workers to unionize, collectively bargain, and call for expanded worker protections across Colorado
- Fight to pay a thriving wage and to end wage theft in the state of Colorado
- Ensure that people in Colorado who make or own a home over \$2,000,000 pay their fair share
- Advocate for the right of workers to have a fair work week with clear, communicative scheduling that is given in advance

**BIOGRAPHY**

My parents were migrant farmworkers from Colorado, who settled in Utah to raise a family. They overcame discrimination and adversity to give me and my 5 siblings a chance to follow our dreams. They instilled in us the values of hard work, education, and community service. At 11, I raised money through the "Little Miss Mexico" contest to build the Mexican Civic Center. We participated in boycotts of grapes and beer and I served as a junior officer in the American GI Forum. In addition to service we were taught to dream big.

I took my families values to heart and became:

- The first in my family to graduate college.
- The second Latina to pass the bar in Utah and become a migrant attorney.
- The first tenure-track Latina to teach law in Colorado at the University of Denver.
- The first Mexican-American to become an appellate judge on the highest immigration court in the country.

I have spent my entire life in rooms where no one else looked like me. I had to figure out how to navigate spaces that weren't created with women or minorities

in mind, and how to be in places where others thought I didn't belong. I never walked away from the challenges and always built a path for others to actualize their potential with less trauma than I faced. I became the chair of the National Hispana Leadership Institute to address the underrepresentation of Latinas in the senior-levels of government, business, nonprofit and politics. I developed leadership programs for youth in high schools and college and got to introduce Justice Sotomayer and Rita Moreno during their DC book tour.

My husband Michael and I made HD4 our home 32 years ago. It's where our amazing son was born, and we became deeply invested in our community. I have spent countless hours volunteering in the Democratic Party of Denver, sitting on the Executive Committee, and chairing the Diversity and Inclusion and Platform Committees.

Our community has seen me in action and knows I have the experience and skills to deliver real results. Leadership is not about raising problems and hoping for solutions, it's about having the courage and tenacity to wake up every day committed to working for a better future. As your HD4 representative, I will never waiver in my determination to make a positive difference in each and every one of your lives.

I want to bring your voices into the decisions being made at the state legislature. As your representative, I will always listen to you. I encourage you to call, text, or email me with your questions, concerns and dreams. I hope to earn your trust and support, and would love for you to join us on the campaign trail.

**ISSUES**

**Housing and Homelessness-** Colorado's housing crisis has gotten out of control. People cannot afford rent or save enough money to buy a first home. Homeowners are faced with skyrocketing tax increases. As a result, working class people and those on fixed incomes are being forced out of their homes and our community. To address the root causes we must change land-use laws, expand public/private partnerships, and incentivize the building of safe, affordable housing. We must: invest in proven programs that support renters and minimize displacement; repurpose abandoned or misused buildings; and stabilize taxes to keep those on fixed incomes from being pushed into homelessness.

My Ideas:

- Create the option to pay property taxes in more than one or two payments.
- Protect tenants from massive rent hikes and surprise fees by regulating corporate landlord practices.
- Implement a land use plan that makes sense and gives more opportunity for homeowners to build apartments or cottages on their properties to increase the housing supply.
- Expand the Senior Property Tax exemption and make it portable, to help protect seniors on a fixed income from rising property taxes.
- Expand programs that help first-time homebuyers and eliminate the hurdles that keep young people from being able to purchase a house when they want to.

**ISSUES**

Education: Our school system needs to successfully provide every student in Colorado with a world-class education. We have to make the right investments in student success through technological innovations, making sure our school buildings are modern and safe, and paying our teachers the salary they deserve. As a former educator I know how critical it is that students are prepared for post-high school opportunities. Teachers need financial and emotional support and Colorado owes it to our kids to make sure they have every chance to succeed.

My Ideas:

- Fully eliminate the Budget Stabilization factor that short-changes our kids and fight to make sure every future budget meets our obligations to our schools.
- Make investments in building upgrades and security systems so students have welcoming and safe places to learn.
- Increase pay for teachers and support staff.
- Expand programs and create partnerships around apprenticeship programs and job-skill training to make sure students are prepared for good jobs once they leave school.
- Protect our LGBTQ students from the despicable wave of GOP attacks on everything from sex-ed to gender inclusivity.

Climate- The climate crisis is here and impacts Coloradans every day through more extreme weather events, more severe storms, and a changing climate that takes away consistent jobs in agriculture, tourism, or conservation. We need to continue Colorado's transition to renewable energy, enforce our air quality standards, and continue our leadership in environmental efforts because our children deserve nothing less. We also have to recognize this as an equity issue, as it is our communities of color and lower-income areas that are hardest hit. The solutions needed to mitigate climate change require investments to protect these communities and ensure clean air and clean water for all Coloradans.

My Ideas:

- Expand Colorado's renewable energy production and manufacturing to speed up the timeline to a full transition to renewables.
- Enforce our air quality standards to protect the communities impacted by pollution, especially around our interstates and industrial areas.
- Create subsidies for low-income families who want to transition to electric appliances or vehicles.
- Fully fund our forest fire and flood prevention programs to protect communities as well as our statewide air quality.

Immigrant Rights- I have spent decades working for immigrants in our community while interpreting and enforcing the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act. As a prosecutor I trained other prosecutors and defense attorneys about the adverse consequences to immigration status due to criminal convictions, and fought to require proper advisements of those consequences before defendants entered pleas. As a law professor, I created experiential internships representing immigrants at the immigration detention center (which led to the creation of the immigrant serving non-profit RMAIN). Serving as the first and only Mexican-American Appellate Immigration Judge I know and understand the intersection of federal and state rights regarding immigration and am committed to navigating solutions for DACA recipients and all immigrants who reside in Colorado. I can also ensure that solutions consider the allocation of responsibility between the federal and state governments.

My Ideas:

- Protect Colorado immigrants from the abusive and manipulative tactics used by ICE to deport people simply trying to live their lives.
- Create data privacy laws that will keep private personal data from being mined and used to determine immigration status.
- Work to expand the Immigration Legal Defense Fund so all immigrants who are dealing with the justice system have proper representation.
- Use state agencies to regulate the GEO facility in Aurora to make sure people are being treated humanely and that the facility increases its standards.
- Collaborate with the Federal elected officials to fix the broken immigration system and provide support to states dealing with rising costs related to immigration.

**ISSUES**

Reproductive Justice- The right to an abortion is under attack by conservative judges and legislators across America. Thankfully, Colorado has remained a safe haven for abortion rights due to the amazing work of our state legislature. We need to continue the work to expand access to all of our communities, and we must address the historical harms to women of color. Reproductive healthcare equity must allow everyone in Colorado the same ability to get the services they need regarding their reproductive choices. We must also increase protections for providers who serve those fleeing Republican states to receive abortion services. Finally, we must strengthen privacy protections of patients to keep their records secure, especially from Republican Attorney Generals who have been targeting medical records.

My Ideas:

- Support a Ballot Initiative 89 to Constitutionally Amend and guarantee the right to an abortion in Colorado.
- Protect Colorado from attacks being launched by Republican lawmakers and legal activists that aim to prevent access to reproductive care.
- Join healthcare providers, racial-justice organizations, and reproductive rights groups to ensure the right of every person to access essential reproductive healthcare and to have autonomy over their bodies.
- Ensure that safe abortion is supported by policy and grounded in law, and that it's de-stigmatised, funded, and easy to access no matter what your income or immigration status is.
- Bar employers from denying reproductive healthcare in their insurance plans.

LGBTQIA Rights- Attacks on our LGBTQI+ community from the right-wing, are disgusting and dangerous. I have always fought against hatred, including opposing Amendment 2 in 1992. I will continue to fight for and uphold the rights of the LGBTQI+ community. I support legislation that protects gender-affirming care, strengthens our hate-crime laws and gives resources to LGBTQI+ youth who face discrimination and isolation.

My Ideas:

- Expand healthcare access for the LGBTQIA community, especially youth members who often face unique challenges.
- Expand the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws to ensure no one faces bigotry at their workplace, school or when finding a place to live.
- Strengthen hate-crime laws to protect our neighbors from harassment and intimidation.

Healthcare- I believe that healthcare, including mental health, is a basic human right. We need to do everything we can in Colorado to increase access, lower prices and recapture Medicaid eligible recipients who lost healthcare with the termination of the COVID emergency. Additionally, we must hold insurance companies accountable, raise the minimum standard of care, and find ways to negotiate drug prices in order to help our working-families access healthcare. I believe in the Colorado Option and want to see a robust state program to compete with insurers to keep costs down.

My Ideas:

- Make insurance and hospitals pricing more transparent and fair.
- Increase access to mental health services for low-income communities through training and placement incentives.
- Cap the price of prescription medications and work on purchasing agreements to lower costs of specialty drugs.
- Expand our Colorado Option plans to drive down the cost of insurance on the ACA marketplace.
- Create information campaigns to get more eligible Coloradans covered by Medicaid.

**ISSUES**

**Economic Opportunity-** North and West Denver have some of the most amazing and unique small businesses in Colorado. From incredible food to beautiful art, our families sustain themselves through hard-work at small businesses. We need to provide incentives for expansion and training, support our BIPOC business owners with tax credits and make sure that we raise the minimum wage. I am a strong supporter of unions and believe that we need to make the process of unionizing a workplace easier and more accessible to protect our workers.

My Ideas:

- Raise the minimum wage to make sure that every Coloradan can support themselves and their family comfortably.
- Eliminate the barriers to joining a union, including closed-door meetings, multiple votes, and burdensome thresholds for a workplace to unionize.
- Fund infrastructure investments that will improve our public transit, public schools, energy, and water systems.
- Create grants and loan-programs targeted specifically to small businesses in our community and businesses owned and operated by people of color.
- Invest in apprenticeship programs in critically needed fields where employers are struggling to find workers.
- Protect the incredible small-businesses in our district that make North and West Denver such incredible places to live.

**Preventing Gun Violence-** Gun Violence has inserted fear into our schools and public gatherings. Instinctively we all have to make plans for our safety when we enter our schools, places of worship, grocery stores and public venues. The threat of gun violence is a public health and mental health crisis. We must enact sensible legislation to prohibit the use of assault weapons, expand services to those who suffer from the trauma of gun violence and put an end to the rampant misuse of weapons.

My Ideas:

- Expand our background check, red-flag and waiting period laws to close all loopholes and ensure that violent offenders cannot purchase firearms.
- Increase requirements for scrutiny and regulation on private-party sales and gun shows.
- Expand safe-storage laws to protect children from accidents.
- Fund support programs for mental health and victim assistance to help those in domestic violence situations.
- Increase resources for suicide prevention.
- Regulate or ban the sale of assault weapons in Colorado.

**Transportation and Infrastructure-** House District 4 has many of the most dangerous streets in Denver. They include city and State roads. We must address the condition of these roads and expand opportunities for repair and other modes of transportation. Because we are so close to the city center we have opportunities to create effective solutions to meet the need of residents to safely transit in and through our neighborhoods. We must protect and expand RTD lines and expand pedestrian and multi-modal methods of travel.

My Ideas:

- Fight to maintain the election of the RTD Board to provide representation.
- Evaluate the coordination between the State Department of Transportation's collaboration with local jurisdictions to enhance requirements for collaboration and minimize the times that roads are torn up.
- Evaluate current and potential efforts to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety.

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE - DISTRICT 6

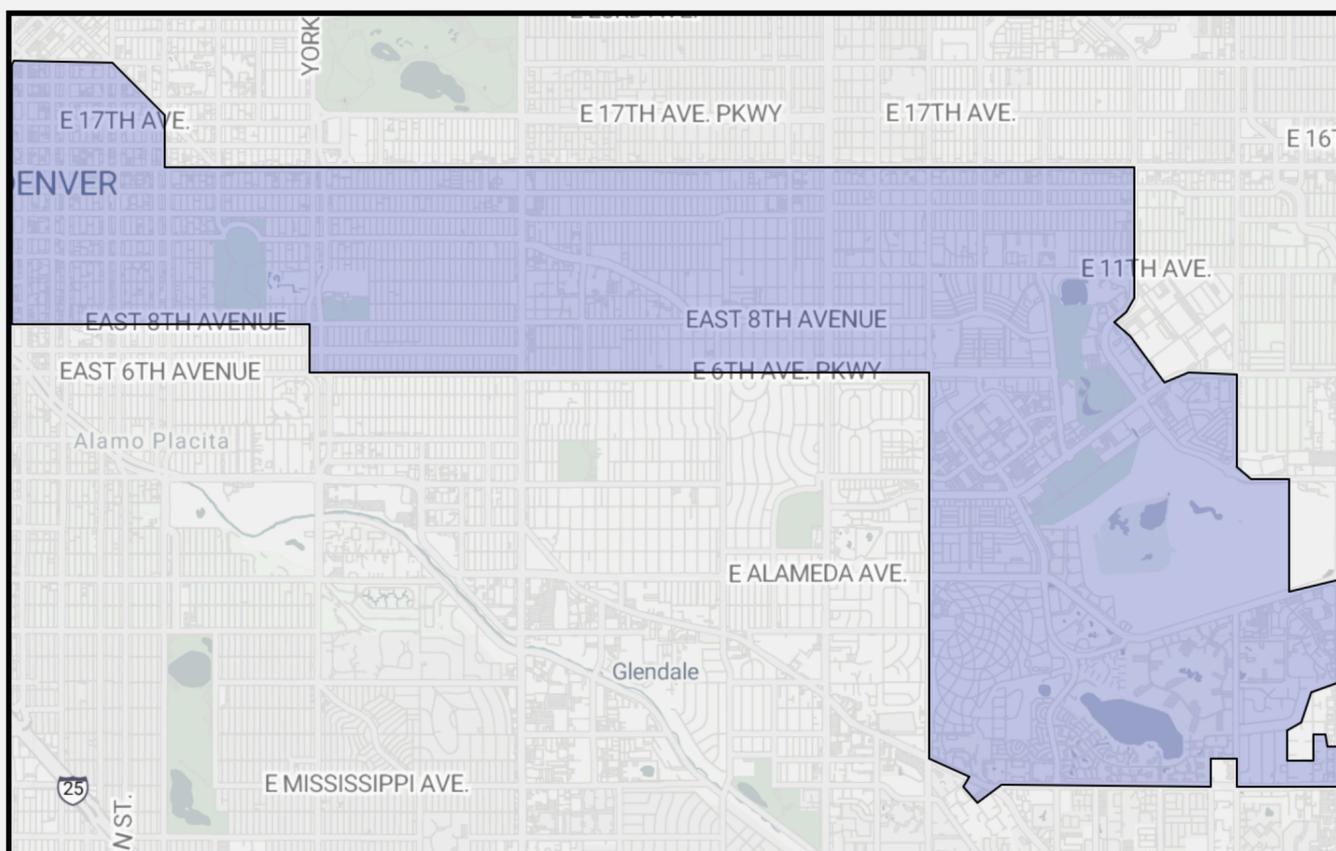


**SEAN CAMACHO (D)**



**ELISABETH EPPS  
(D- INCUMBANT)**

## HOUSE DISTRICT 6



## **BIOGRAPHY**

I grew up in a very modest home in Colorado Springs with my parents and extended family. My father was from Guam and my mother was from Puerto Rico, both came to Colorado to find opportunities and to raise our family in a place that could give us even more opportunity to succeed.

My parents worked hard. My father served in the Army for 26 years and my mother worked jobs ranging from stocking shelves to working as a unionized meat-cutter. They always taught me to work hard, be respectful of others, and that service to our community was the most impactful thing someone can do with their life.

As a teenager I decided that I wanted to go to the Air Force Academy and I worked toward that goal with a passion. I was accepted and after graduating I became an intelligence officer in the Air Force where I deployed overseas 4 times before leaving active duty to pursue a law degree using the GI Bill. I am incredibly thankful for the opportunities that I have had and will always remember the sacrifices and support from others that helped me throughout my journey.



After completing law school my wife and family moved to Lowry where we immediately fell in love with the community and the wonderful people in Denver. Since then I have practiced law, continued to serve in the Air Force Reserve, and raised our two amazing children with my incredible wife.

As a kid I was not very interested in politics, but once I moved to Denver I found an incredible community within the Denver Democrats. I began my activism by helping our local candidates knocking on doors and helping the Denver Dems raise money to talk to voters. It was inspiring to talk to voters and hear their concerns. There are so many things that our legislature can do to help regular Coloradans and after being approached by community members in our district encouraging me to run for office I decided to do so.

## **ISSUES**

**Housing**— Housing in Colorado has become a crisis. There are not enough apartments, starter homes or places for families to move into. Rent has skyrocketed even as the health and safety of some units has deteriorated. We need strong action to modernize our land-use laws, build affordable housing, and stabilize taxes for those on fixed incomes so that rising property values don't unintentionally bankrupt them.

### My Policy Ideas

- Fully fund the programs that help first-time homebuyers to afford a house.
- Prevent rent hikes and the shifting of maintenance costs onto renters through strong regulations on corporate landlords and rent stabilization to cap the rate of rent increases.
- Support Gov. Polis' land use plan that will make it easier to convert unused land into new homes while protecting the landmarks and character of our neighborhoods.
- Incentivize building housing along transit lines to use land most efficiently and leave room for our amazing parks and recreation areas.
- Strengthen eviction protections to prevent people from getting kicked out of their home.
- Increase enforcement of our anti-discrimination laws to make sure no one is denied a place to live based on their race, gender, sexual orientation or physical abilities.
- Invest in support services around mental health and treating addiction to prevent people from losing their home or help them break the cycle of homelessness.

**ISSUES**

**Education:** Colorado schools need the resources to provide kids a great education. Unfortunately due to TABOR we have been short-changing our educational system for more than 30 years. We have to prioritize our state budget to fully eliminate the Budget Stabilization factor and make new investments in our educational infrastructure so students can learn in state-of-the-art facilities. Working with teachers, students and parents we can help schools innovate and make sure no students are failed by our educational system.

My Ideas:

- Eliminate the budget stabilization factor and prioritize educational funding from the state budget on increased teacher pay, better facilities, and support for underserved students.
- Improve our school security so students no longer have to endure the trauma of active-shooter drills and can feel safe in their place of learning.
- Expand our new universal Pre-K programs to provide more access to kids from low-income families.
- Expand our use of career and technical education and partner with industries for apprenticeship programs.
- Improve our civics standards to promote an informed and engaged democracy.
- Help teachers engage in additional professional development to learn the best ways to help students.
- Provide additional mental health resources for struggling students and address the epidemic of cyber-bullying.
- Rework the school funding formula to provide a fairer and more equitable distribution of resources to make sure Denver students get their fair share of state dollars.

**Older Adults:** The cost of housing, health care, and everyday necessities have become increasingly expensive for Coloradans living on fixed incomes to age in place or make ends meet. We owe it to our older adults to provide stability and security so they can enjoy their retirement. Our older adults provide great service to our community and often donate huge amounts of their time to helping others. We should all respect their wisdom and experience and work hard to eliminate burdens on them.

My Ideas:

- Increase our long-term care options so more older adults can stay in their homes and with their loved-ones.
- Strengthen laws around elder abuse, fraud, and neglect to ensure no older adults gets taken advantage of.
- Fund in-home care and nutrition programs that lead to healthier, longer lives.
- Protect all older adults who rely on state pensions by refusing to restructure or reduce payouts.
- Make the Senior Homestead Exemption portable, allowing older adults to downsize or move without paying more in taxes.

**Reproductive Justice:** Our State Legislature has done a fantastic job of protecting abortion rights as GOP leaders have systematically targeted choice in other states. Colorado is now a sanctuary for those in other states who need abortion access and reproductive healthcare. We need to stand strong against any attack on these rights in Colorado, whether from Republican legislators or attempts to trick Coloradans through ballot measures.

My Ideas:

- Campaign for a ballot measure that guarantees access to an abortion in Colorado.
- Increase access to reproductive healthcare to make it truly equitable. Coloradans' right to an abortion is not complete without real access for all.
- Prevent corporations from denying abortion access through company insurance plans.
- Support science-based reproductive healthcare education.
- Protect our healthcare providers from intimidation, threats, or harassment.

**ISSUES**

**Civil Rights:** Civil rights and equal treatment under the law define who we are, but far too often we fall short of true justice and equality. Colorado has made great strides toward reforming our justice system and advancing equality. However, inequities still exist and we are reminded daily that our communities of color continue to be overpoliced, over incarcerated and subject to an overstressed legal system that does not give people an equal defense. We have also seen attacks on our hard-fought voting rights, with extremists demanding racist voter ID laws and threatening intimidation at ballot boxes. The protections that the LGBTQ community has won over the past 2 decades are under attack from the conservatives on the Supreme Court. Our disability community has seen protections stripped in other states. Hate crimes are rising in the United States, with incidents of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia becoming unacceptably common. These are core issues to the functioning of our nation and we must always stand up to protect Coloradans' rights.

**My Ideas:**

- Continue the work being done in our community to end overpolicing, brutality, unequal sentencing, and mass-incarceration.
- Promote alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders including restorative justice, addiction treatment, and diversionary programs to prevent people from being trapped in a cycle of criminal activity.
- Properly train and fund police forces to protect our communities while respecting everyone's civil rights.
- Enforce anti-discrimination laws and strengthen provisions that help the LGBTQ community, all communities of color, our disabled neighbors and any other protected group.
- Ensure that transgender Coloradans have equal access to quality healthcare.
- Strengthen hate-crime legislation to protect any Coloradan from attacks based on their race, their sexual orientation, or their religious affiliation.
- Expand language access in public spaces and governmental services for communities with limited English proficiency.

**Stopping Gun-Violence:** Communities across Colorado have been rocked time-and-again by gun tragedies. From mass shootings to domestic disputes to criminal activity, it has destroyed families and hollowed out neighborhoods. Suicide is the largest single cause of gun-deaths and we must create and expand programs to help those contemplating it. We need real action to prevent more of our fellow Coloradans from falling victim to senseless acts of gun-violence.

**My Ideas:**

- Ban weapons of war that have no place on Colorado streets.
- Ensure that universal background checks and waiting periods are actually occurring on private party sales by requiring them to use a licensed dealer as an intermediary.
- Provide resources to the victims of domestic violence and those who believe their home may not be a safe place to stay.
- Invest in the mental health resources that can prevent suicides and give help to those considering it.
- Promote our safe-storage laws to increase compliance and protect kids from accidents.
- Encourage buyback programs that can get unwanted guns out of places where they are more likely to be stolen.
- Crack down on straw purchasers who provide firearms to those who cannot legally buy them.

**BIOGRAPHY**

Representative Elisabeth Epps, JD, is a mother, community organizer, civil rights leader, and abolitionist who founded and serves as Executive Director of Colorado Freedom Fund. For years she has inspired, shaped, championed, and helped pass critical legislation focused on liberty, justice, and equity in Colorado. Elisabeth is the Principled, Proven, Progressive candidate for HD6.

**Herstory**

Born and raised in a Black family in the American South, Elisabeth grew up surrounded by love, but also pain. Elisabeth's mother died of breast cancer at age 33, when Elisabeth was just 9. Her father, now retired, was a 29-year AFA-CWA union member. Elisabeth attended a dozen schools before 12th grade when she became a single parent herself at age 16. After graduating early from high school, with a newborn baby often on her hip, Elisabeth worked dozens of jobs to make ends meet--she nannied, provided in-home child and adult care, was a bank teller, insurance underwriter, delivered phone books, worked at multiple call centers, and was a patient care coordinator at a free health clinic. Elisabeth has worked and volunteered on many issue-based and candidate campaigns since childhood. Video of her at age 12 debating the death penalty, and letters to the editor she wrote at age 14, foreshadowed the activist she would become. She's worked for Democrats in 4 states, including as a legislative aide in the U.S. Senate and a field organizer for Colorado Democratic Party working to re-elect President Barack Obama in 2012. Migration is a human right, and like so many of our neighbors Elisabeth moved her young family west to Colorado to pursue opportunity. A graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law, her first job in Colorado was with the Colorado State Public Defender. After a brief challenging period of housing insecurity, during which her family lived in a coworker's basement and in motels, Elisabeth, her son, and their ancient dog Carter eventually made their home in Denver, where her son graduated as a scholar and athlete from Denver East High School.



As is the case for many students not born to generational wealth, graduate school was not a ticket to financial freedom but instead saddled Elisabeth with crushing 6-figure student loan debt. Even after earning her law degree Elisabeth worked extra jobs--she was a cocktail waitress and hostess, she tutored, taught test prep, copy-edited, drove for a ride-share company, and did temp work to take care of her family. Always a worker, she's also always been a renter. Elisabeth has been uninsured, under-insured, and as a young single mom was often reliant upon critical government support for health care and food security. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley reminds us that the people who are closest to the pain, should be the people closest to the power. When it comes to issues like housing insecurity, lack of access to healthcare, and being over-policed, Elisabeth has known those challenges.

**Serving Colorado's most vulnerable.**

In 2018 Elisabeth founded Colorado Freedom Fund (CFF), which works to end wealth-based detention through legislation, litigation and direct action. CFF has bought freedom for over 1000 Coloradans. Elisabeth and her team have driven thousands of miles across the state helping neighbors who were stuck in cages only because they are poor. From 2018-2021 Elisabeth worked with ACLU of Colorado as first its Pretrial Justice Organizer and then a Smart Justice Organizer. Elisabeth helped create the Bring Our Neighbors Home campaign and worked on criminal legal issues like supporting the repeal of Colorado's death penalty, and advocating for clemency through the Redemption campaign. As Executive Director of Colorado Freedom Fund, Elisabeth works tirelessly in jail lobbies and courtrooms across our state to help the most vulnerable members of our community.

Herself a survivor of police violence and intimate partner violence, Elisabeth understands how cops, courts, and cages fall short in protecting victims and preventing crime. Elisabeth has dedicated her life to keeping the most vulnerable members of our community safe, free, and healthy. She'll take that same dedication to the Colorado State House.

**ISSUES**

No issues page was listed on Elisabeth Epps website at the time of the drafting of this guide.



# SOURCES AND DISCLAIMER

## **SOURCES:**

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