



2024 Legislative Report



The 2nd Regular Session of the 74th General Assembly adjourned on May 9th. Hicks & Associates is pleased to present this report on the activities of the legislature in 2024.

Session Overview: The 2024 Legislative Session convened on January 10th. Despite over 100 bills being introduced on day one, primarily from interim committees, the session started slowly, with the first committee hearings taking a few weeks to commence. In the initial week, speeches from leadership in both chambers and the Governor’s State of the State address outlined priorities for the session. With Democrats holding the majority in both chambers and the Governor’s office, there was a strong alignment on issues such as workforce development, education, cost of living/housing, water, public safety, and climate change.

Legislative Activity: This year, the legislature considered more bills than in recent history, with a total of 705 bills introduced—472 by the House and 233 by the Senate. Out of these, 180 bills were postponed indefinitely, including those that died on the calendar. The Governor vetoed 6 bills and signed 519 into law.

State Budget: A significant factor in the legislative process was the state budget, which saw a 3.7% increase from the previous year, totaling \$40.6 billion. The Appropriations Committees experienced considerable delays, impacting the overall legislative timeline. With three days left in the session, over 230 bills were still pending, including **SB24-233**, a crucial property tax reform bill.

Political Dynamics: The business community has been on the defensive since Democrats took full control of the Capitol, necessitating the formation of large coalitions to amend or block invasive legislation. A notable trend has been the reduction in bills dying in committee, with many being laid over for weeks in hopes of amendments.

Election Year Considerations: This election cycle is pivotal, as Senate Democrats are striving to achieve a supermajority. If they succeed, alongside the already established House supermajority, they will gain the power to override gubernatorial vetoes. This potential shift in legislative power could have profound implications for the next session, as the Governor has vetoed multiple bills this year. A Democratic supermajority could significantly influence the legislative landscape, potentially altering the dynamics of how laws are passed, and which initiatives succeed. By



participating in candidate interviews and assessments, industry stakeholders can effectively advocate for their interests and prepare for potential changes in the legislative environment.

Industry Focus: Throughout the session, Hicks & Associates reviewed every bill to assess its potential impact on the construction industry and general business climate. Below are some high-impact pieces of legislation that we engaged with:

Key Legislation Impacting Industry

HB24-1008: Wage Claims Against Construction Contractors

Summary: This bill proposed holding general contractors in the construction industry strictly liable for the actions of their subcontractors regarding wage theft.

Impact: The construction industry lobbied against the bill, arguing it would lead to increased litigation and burden small businesses. The industry's efforts were successful, with Governor Polis vetoing the bill on May 17. However, there is anticipation that similar legislation may return in future sessions, possibly extending beyond just the construction industry.

HB24-1014: Deceptive Trade Practice Significant Impact Standards

Summary: This bill aimed to lower the standards required for filing claims under the Consumer Protection Act.

Impact: The construction industry opposed this bill due to concerns it would increase the cost of doing business. The bill was postponed indefinitely after stalling in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB24-1178: Local Government Authority to Regulate Pesticides

Summary: This bill would have given local governments more authority to regulate pesticide use.

Impact: The industry, alongside other stakeholders, successfully lobbied against the bill, which died on the House calendar. Continuous efforts are expected to address this issue in future sessions.

HB24-1260: Prohibition Against Employee Discipline

Summary: Known as the Worker Freedom Act, it aimed to restrict employers from disciplining employees over political or religious speech.

Impact: The construction industry, part of a larger employer coalition, successfully argued that the bill's language was too broad and ambiguous. The Governor vetoed the bill on May 17.

SB24-106: Right to Remedy Construction Defects

Summary: This bill sought to provide homeowners with clearer paths to address construction defects.

Impact: Although it passed the Senate, concerns in the House led to its indefinite postponement. The construction industry will continue working on this issue in future sessions to reduce the burden and costs associated with building.

SB24-233: Property Tax Reform



Summary: Addressed the repercussions of the Gallagher amendment repeal by providing \$1.3 billion in short-term relief and proposing long-term reforms.

Impact: The bill's passage is crucial for the construction industry as it stabilizes property tax rates, impacting housing affordability and construction costs.

Other Notable Legislation and Issues

Workforce Development:

Several bills focused on expanding apprenticeship programs and regional talent development to address workforce shortages. Notable bills include **HB24-1365** and **SB24-104**, which aim to increase training opportunities and align educational programs with industry needs.

- **HB24-1365 Opportunity Now Grants & Tax Credit:** Developed with the Colorado Chamber of Commerce, this bill focuses on creating regional talent development plans and addressing local workforce shortages through grants and tax credits for training programs.
- **SB24-104 Career & Technical Education & Apprenticeships:** This bill aligns high school career and technical education with apprenticeship programs, enabling students to start their training early and benefit from earn-and-learn opportunities.

Environmental Legislation:

SB24-005, targeting landscaping practices for water conservation, and **SB24-230**, establishing oil and gas production fees for environmental projects, were critical. These bills reflect ongoing efforts to balance environmental concerns with industry practices.

- **SB24-005 Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation:** Originating from the Water Resources and Agriculture Review Interim Committee, this bill faced numerous issues. Through collaboration with sponsors and proponents, amendments were made to address most concerns. The bill emphasizes the need for continued education and collaboration on water conservation issues.
- **SB24-230 Oil & Gas Production Fees:** Part of the aforementioned compromise, this bill establishes new fees on oil and gas production to fund transit projects, wildlife, and land conservation. It represents a balanced approach, avoiding more restrictive measures and demonstrating cooperation among stakeholders.

Housing Issues:

The housing crisis remains an urgent and often contentious issue for state lawmakers, addressed this session primarily through a series of land-use bills. On April 15, Governor Jared Polis signed **HB24-1007** into law, which removes limits on the number of unrelated individuals cohabitating, with targeted enforcement in cities like Fort Collins. This law, effective from July 1, will adhere to health and safety standards for occupancy limits.

- **HB24-1313** mandates that Front Range cities achieve housing density targets near transit corridors to qualify for grant funding, sparking resistance from municipalities concerned



about losing governance autonomy. The bill passed the House by a 37-24 vote on April 14 and now heads to the Senate.

- **HB24-1152** aims to increase the housing supply by legalizing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) across Front Range cities, facilitating the creation of independent living spaces on residential properties. This bill also passed the House by the same margin.

Tax Simplification:

Efforts to simplify the state's complex tax system continued with bills like **SB24-023**, which protects employers from errors in the GIS tax system, reducing the administrative burden on businesses.

- **SB24-023 Hold Harmless for Error in GIS Database:** This bill protects employers from errors in tax remittance due to the GIS system, which is managed by the Department of Revenue. It ensures that businesses are not penalized for mistakes beyond their control.

Traffic and Safety Regulations:

New traffic laws, including **SB24-065** and **SB24-100**. **SB24-065** which prohibits the use of electronic devices while driving, aims to enhance safety on Colorado's roads, indirectly affecting the construction industry through improved transportation safety. The bill includes emergency exemptions and is awaiting the Governor's approval. **SB24-100** expands the areas where the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) can restrict highway use for commercial vehicles over 16,000 pounds to include various major routes from September 1 through May 31. Commercial vehicle drivers speeding in these zones face doubled fines and surcharges unless already doubled in construction zones.

Climate Change and Air Quality:

This session saw continued efforts to address climate change and air quality, often moving goalposts set by previous legislation. A significant compromise was, which included **SB24-230**, involving industry, environmental groups, and the Governor's office led to the withdrawal of several bills and ballot measures.

Conclusion:

Overall, the business community achieved more wins than losses this session. Constant engagement, clear messaging, and defined goals have proven successful. We thank you for your continued engagement and the opportunity to represent you at the Capitol.

The 2024 session of the Colorado Legislature was marked by significant legislative activity addressing key issues affecting the state. Through strategic engagement and coalition-building, Hicks & Associates worked diligently to influence legislation impacting the construction industry and the broader business environment. As we move forward, the outcomes of this session will shape Colorado's economic and social landscape for the coming years.



Engagement, Lobbying, Testimony, & Monitoring

GreenCO was heavily involved in multiple pieces of legislation this legislative session. The following bills include priority bills, meaning we directed the lobbying team to actively engage with other stakeholders, lobby all members of the General Assembly, provide testimony during committee, create fact sheets to ensure GreenCO's position and engage in any and all amendments to bills. Also included are the bills we were asked to engage in by other key stakeholders and bills that we were monitoring

Bill Number	Short Title	GreenCO	Outcome	GreenCO Actions
HB24-1008	Wage Claims Construction Industry Contractors	Oppose	Governor Vetoed	Attended multiple stakeholder meetings and worked with a large business coalition in opposition and encouraged the Governor to veto the bill.
HB24-1014	Deceptive Trade Practice Significant Impact Standards	Oppose	Postponed Indefinitely	Attended multiple stakeholder meetings and worked with a large business coalition in opposition to the bill.
HB24-1015	Workplace Suicide Prevention Education	Monitor	Died on Calendar	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1041	Streamline Filing Sales & Use Tax Returns	Support	Governor Signed 4/04	Worked with the Simplify Sales and Use Tax coalition in supporting this bill through the process.
HB24-1081	Regulate Sale Transfer Sodium Nitrite	Monitor	Governor Signed 4/17	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1083	Construction Professional Insurance Coverage Transparency	Oppose	Died on Calendar	Worked with construction industry coalition in amending the bill but continued to oppose to the bill as there were still issues.
HB24-1095	Increasing Protections for Minor Workers	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/4	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1097	Military Family Occupational Credentialing	Monitor	Governor Signed 4/17	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1138	Tax Credit for Transfer of Agricultural Asset	Monitor	Died on Calendar	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1178	Local Government Authority to Regulate Pesticides	Oppose	Died on Calendar	Attended stakeholder meetings and worked with large coalition including CPRA in opposition to this legislation. Were able to lobby the House members enough to where the bill would have most likely been voted down on the House floor.



Bill Number	Short Title	GreenCO	Outcome	GreenCO Actions
HB24-1220	Workers' Compensation Disability Benefits	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/4	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1230	Protection for Real Property Owners	Monitor	Died on Calendar	Monitored the bill as it went through the process and attended stakeholder meetings.
HB24-1260	Prohibition Against Employee Discipline	Oppose	Governor Vetoed	Attended stakeholder meetings and worked with large business coalition in opposition to the bill.
HB24-1267	Metropolitan District Covenant Enforcement Policy	Monitor	Governor Signed 4/19	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1352	Appliance Requirements & Incentives	Monitor	Died on Calendar	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1362	Measures to Incentivize Graywater Use	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/29	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1365	Opportunity Now Grants & Tax Credit	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/7	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1379	Regulate Dredge & Fill Activities in State Waters	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/29	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1435	Colorado Water Conservation Board Projects	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/29	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
HB24-1464	Designation of Highway Zones	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/3	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-005	Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation	Amend	Governor Signed 3/15	Worked with sponsor since last interim on our issues to the bill. We were able to amend the bill as much as possible but still had some concerns that we discussed with the sponsors from some GreenCO members.
SB24-023	Hold Harmless for Error in GIS Database Data	Monitored	Governor Signed 4/19	Monitored the bill as it went through the process and since its inception in the Sales and Use Tax Simplification Task for over last interim.
SB24-025	Update Local Government Sales & Use Tax Collection	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/1	Monitored the bill as it went through the process, including over last interim in the Sales & Use Tax Simplification Task Force.



Bill Number	Short Title	GreenCO	Outcome	GreenCO Actions
SB24-031	Local Authority Enforce Violations of Noxious Weed Act	Monitor	Governor Signed 3/12	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-037	Study Green Infrastructure for Water Quality Management	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/24	Monitored the bill as it went through the process, including over last interim in the Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.
SB24-038	Authorize Conservancy District Water Management	Monitor	Postponed Indefinitely	Monitored bill as it went through the process.
SB24-065	Mobile Electronic Devices & Motor Vehicle Driving	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/5	Attended stakeholder meetings and closely monitored as the bill it went through the process.
SB24-081	Perfluoroalkyl & Polyfluoroalkyl Chemicals	Monitor	Signed by Governor 5/1	Closely monitored the bill as it went through the process and attending stakeholder meetings.
SB24-092	Cost Effective Energy Codes	Monitor	Postponed Indefinitely	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-095	Air Quality Ozone Levels	Monitor	Postponed Indefinitely	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-100	Commercial Vehicle Highway Safety Measures	Amend	Governor Signed 5/20	Attended stakeholder meetings and worked with large business coalition in amending the bill.
SB24-104	Career & Technical Education & Apprenticeships	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/31	Closely monitored the bill and others as it is part of the larger work being done to address workforce development throughout the state.
SB24-106	Right to Remedy Construction Defects	Support	Postponed Indefinitely	Attended multiple stakeholder meetings on this bill and worked with construction industry coalition in supporting this bill.
SB24-112	Construction Defect Action Procedures	Monitor	Postponed Indefinitely	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-148	Precipitation harvesting Water Detention	Monitor	Signed by Governor 4/11	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-152	Regenerative Agriculture Tax Credit	Monitor	Died on Calendar	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.



Bill Number	Short Title	GreenCO	Outcome	GreenCO Actions
SB24-155	Payment of Family Medical Leave Benefits	Monitor	Governor Signed 4/11	Closely monitored this bill as it went through the process as the FAMILI program is in its first year.
SB24-165	Air Quality Improvements	Oppose	Postponed Indefinitely	Worked with large coalition in opposition to the bill.
SB24-179	Floodplain Management Program	Monitor	Governor Signed 6/6	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-197	Water Conservation Measures	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/29	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-228	Tabor Refund Mechanisms	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/14	Monitored the bill as it went through the process.
SB24-229	Ozone Mitigation Measures	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/16	Monitored the bill as it went through the process as this was part of the compromise on addressing air quality/climate change.
SB24-230	Oil & Gas Production Fees	Monitor	Governor Signed 5/16	Monitored the bill as it went through the process as this was part of the compromise on addressing air quality/climate change.
SB24-233	Property Tax	Monitor	Signed by Governor 5/14	Monitored the bill as it went through the process as this was the property tax legislation we had been waiting for since the repeal of the Gallagher Amendment.