



**SENATE
STATE OF COLORADO
DENVER**

July 5, 2019

The Honorable Jared Polis
Governor of Colorado
State Capitol Building
200 E Colfax Avenue, Room 136
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Governor Polis,

Thank you for your willingness to discuss a potential reduction to the current state income tax rate of 4.63%. Senate Republicans believe that such a reduction would further stimulate the Colorado economy and lead to greater opportunities for all Coloradans.

For the past several weeks, we have been invited to participate in discussions that sought to pair a potential income tax reduction with some agreement on how to re-balance the 2019-20 fiscal year budget due to recent increased revenue projections. Some of those discussions also included potential modifications to spending limits under the Taxpayers Bill of Rights ("TABOR"). The latter component of such discussions has been particularly troublesome for the majority of our caucus members.

Your measured approach to encourage such discussions without threatening a special session has allowed legislators to consider a variety of alternatives ranging from statutory changes that could be made by the General Assembly to additional questions that could be referred to voters this November. We are grateful that you have not called a special session, nor have you used your Constitutional authority as leverage in those discussions. Thank you, sir.

Rather, as a former federal legislator, you have shown great respect for the vote thresholds required by our state Constitution in order to pass any bill that might be introduced. As you know, in the thirty-five-member state Senate, eighteen votes, a simple majority, is the minimum requirement to pass a bill.

To that point, our communications with Senate Majority Leadership have enabled us to better understand the overall support or lack thereof for various proposals. Generally, while support from the Senate Minority increases as greater reductions of income taxes are considered, support from the Senate Majority decreases. Conversely, as lower rates of

income tax reduction are considered, support from the Senate Majority generally increases while support from the Senate Minority decreases.

Given that the Colorado Constitution prohibits caucus positions, our respective leadership roles are to ask each member to share his/her position with us rather than for us to direct how they would vote. Our subsequent conversations as leaders of our respective caucuses then allow us to gauge the overall support or opposition among all thirty-five Senators.

We are confident that Senate President Garcia has a thorough understanding of the various positions held by the nineteen members of the Senate Majority Caucus. Furthermore, we are confident that we understand the various positions held by the sixteen members of the Senate Minority Caucus.

The bottom line, Governor, is that no proposal seems to have garnered the required eighteen-vote threshold. Indeed, our shared estimates seem to indicate that support is well short of the constitutionally required eighteen votes. Thus, we urge you to not call a special session as the alternatives for an outcome would seem to be either a unilateral, partisan, effort or that nothing at all would be accomplished.

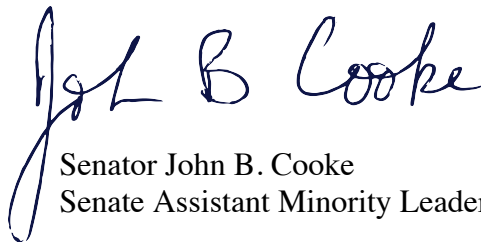
Moving forward, we encourage Senate Republicans to wait for our boss, the People of Colorado, to vote on the various ballot questions that are currently slated for the November 2019 ballot. We would then return to our part-time, citizen legislator, duties in January 2020 aided by the clarity of those decisions made by voters.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "CHRIST HOLBERT". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "C" and "H".

Senator Chris Holbert
Senate Minority Leader

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John B. Cooke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "C".

Senator John B. Cooke
Senate Assistant Minority Leader

cc: Senate Minority Caucus