

SENIOR DAY AT THE CAPITOL — MARCH 30

We are excited to extend an invitation to all who believe that “what happens at the capitol will have a direct impact on our lives”. See following pages for details.

This year will feature Governor Hickenlooper and Attorney General Coffman. There will also be many legislators — who will all be given an opportunity to speak.

Last year the Senior Lobby, along with other organizations, worked hard to have the legislature create a strategic planning group to prepare the state for the impact of the aging population. This group will look at the impact from now to 2030 and beyond. It has made significant progress. We are honored to have Jim Riesberg, chair of the group, to present the progress and his vision for the future.

Ruth Long, Chair of the Colorado Commission on Aging will also talk about the commission and its vision.

Clair Levy — Colorado Center on Law and Policy.

In the afternoon, to give insight into senior issues, there will be a panel consisting of representatives from the following organizations:

AARP Colorado,

Colorado Commission on Aging,

Strategic Planning Group on Aging,

Colorado Gerontological Society,

Denver Regional Council of Governments: Area Agency on Aging.

There will also be a look at the Senior Lobby’s history and its impact on legislation. Some successes and unfortunately some issues that continue to be left for future action. They don’t go away: just deferred to a future date.

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LEGISLATION BEGINS WHEN THE FEAR OF DOING NOTHING AT ALL FINALLY TRUMPS THE TERROR OF DOING IT BADLY, OR NOT AT ALL. Paraphrased from Alain De Botton, author

Comment by Ed Shackelford

This legislative session the legislature had the opportunity to consider two issues that have a significant impact on some or all seniors. I have been reviewing Senior Lobby newsletters from the 1980s in preparation for honoring our 35th anniversary. Interestingly the issues sound familiar. For example:

Older Americans Act and Older Coloradans Fund: There was, and is, concern over federal funding for the Older Americans Act. And there was, and is, concern about reliable funding for the Older Coloradans Fund. These are sources of funding for many programs, including meals on wheels and senior transportation.

Cost of medical drugs: This was a big issue in the 1980s. In 2016 the cost of drugs is the most significant cause of medical costs increasing significantly more than inflation. This year house bill HB16-1102 was introduced as a small, first step at starting the process of understanding and controlling drug prices. This was unfortunately killed in the house committee: Health, Insurance, & Environment. The vote was 5 in favor and 8 opposed. All 6 Republicans and 2 Democrats opposed this bill.

The issue of drug costs will not go away. It is getting increasing visibility, and at some point the nation will have no alternative but to acknowledge the impact of drug prices.

There are many examples showing the impact of drug prices. Perhaps one of the best is “what is happening with the cost of Insulin”? This was summarized in a report by Kasia Lipska in *The New York Times*.

“Insulin has been around for almost a century. “In the United States, just three pharmaceutical giants hold patents what allow them to manufacture insulin: Eli Lilly, Sanofi and Novo Nordisk. Put together , the big three made more than \$12 billion in profits in 2014, with insulin accounting for a large portion”.

What makes this so worrisome is that the big three have simultaneously hiked their prices. From 2010 to 2015 the price of Lantus (made by Sanofi) went up by 168 per cent; the price of Levimir (made by Novo Nordisk) rose 169 percent; and the price of Humulin R U-500 (made by Eli Lilly) soared by 325 percent.

“The big three have cleverly extended the lives of their patents, making incremental improvements to the insulin. It’s not clear whether the newer insulin products are significantly safer or more effective than their predecessors.”

This cost affects us all. Either directly, or by increased health insurance costs, or by increased federal spending for those on Medicare or Medicaid. This is just one of many examples.

Affordable Housing: This is an issue that has been considered for many years. Yet there has been very little done to alleviate the situation.

The following population data was obtained from the Colorado State Demographer's website.

2010	estimated	5,050,299	Increase
2011	estimated	5,120,193	69,894
2012	estimated	5,191,979	71,786
2013	estimated	5,270,986	79,007
2014	estimated	5,353,471	82,485
2015	projected	5,443,612	90,141
2016	projected	5,538,580	94,968
2017	projected	5,635,874	97,294

This is for the entire state of Colorado. But most of the increase is along the front range, primarily Metro Denver, Boulder and Ft. Collins. New construction has not been able to keep up with the inflow of residents. And many new residents can not afford the cost of the newly built homes or apartments. So this has put pressure on the existing housing stock, causing Metro Denver housing price increases to be among the most significant in the country.

The impact has been disastrous for too many of our low to moderate income people including seniors and the disabled.

There are efforts to provide additional affordable houses. Most efforts require government financial support, provided in many different scenarios.

There is one solution that does not require government funding. This is increased availability of mobile homes. This has only limited ability to impact the inventory of affordable homes. But a significant portion living in mobile homes are seniors. Potentially there could be more in the right environment.

The problem is a business model that is skewed to the benefit of the owners of the mobile home parks. It is a case of divided property rights. The park owners have rights and the mobile home owners have rights. But parks owner's rights tend to trump the rights of mobile home owners.

It is estimated to cost approximately \$8,000 to relocate a mobile home. Those built in 1975 or earlier in most cases can not be moved. Because many mobile home owners can not come up with the money to move, they are intimidated by the park owners. This creates an uneven playing field.

Another fundamental issue is the potential alternate development of the land currently used as a mobile home park. The park owners can, and do, when the opportunity arises, sell the land to developers. As a result the mobile home owners have no alternative. They must either move or abandon their home.

It seems obvious that the issue is an untenable business plan. When one of the parties has such an advantage the results too often are not acceptable. Although there are many mobile home park owners who create a pleasant environment, we have heard enough testimony to know there are too many situations where the residents do not live in a satisfactory environment.

There has been legislation proposed for each of the last two years by Senator Kefalas. Both years the legislation failed to make it out of the committee. This is unfortunate because this is a non-partisan issue. But it is an issue that needs attention.

Here are some proposed solutions:

Any new mobile home park must be zoned for this usage only. Then the existing mobile home parks would be “grandfathered” and would not have this specific zoning. But if the mobile home park is sold, the new buyer would either need to immediately develop the land for other usage, or it would be zoned for only mobile home park usage in the future.

To protect the rights of the residents, it seems that an ombudsman would be the best solution. This person could protect the interests of the residents without anyone having to directly challenge the owner. As an alternative, there could be a mandatory requirement for a formal procedure for dispute resolution.

Mobile home living affects a small percentage of the population. These are persons living in rural communities or on the periphery of urban areas. Land values generally are not conducive for mobile home parks.

But many of the residents are seniors, disabled, poor or a combination of these. Because this is the most cost effective way to provide affordable housing, legislation providing a sound business model is needed. In fact it is a requirement for any legislature serious about reducing the crisis caused by a lack of affordable housing.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION FOR 2016

This is an unusual year for the legislative committee. As of March 12, 2016 we have not opposed a single bill. But we have 63 bills on our list. Of these; we strongly support 7, support 22 and monitor 20. Other have been signed by the governor, or are awaiting his signature, or we are still evaluating.

The following are bills we strongly support:

HB16-1027, Concerning depositions in criminal cases in which an at-risk person may not be available for trial. This bill was amended by prosecutors and defense attorneys working together to reasonably protect the interests of all parties. It passed unanimously from committee and is currently in the House, awaiting a final vote before it goes to the Senate.

HB16-1075, This concerns reestablishing Alzheimer's Association tax check-off . The voluntary contribution program, commonly referred to as the tax check-off program, benefiting the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado fund (fund), was removed from the income tax return form for failing to receive the requisite minimum contribution amount within the statutorily designated time period. The bill reestablishes the fund and provides that the fund must be placed in the tax check-off queue if necessary due to the number of funds appearing on the form at the time of reestablishment. This bill will probably be replaced by HB16-1297, which expands the issue to more than just Alzheimer's.

HB16-1097, Concerning regulation of Medicaid nonemergency transportation providers. This bill is particularly important for rural areas. Currently all transportation is required to be by vehicles licensed by the PUC. This provides a simpler, more cost effective means of transportation and in some cases the only transportation available.

HB16-1102. This concerns the cost of drugs, and is discussed in detail on page 2. This topic will not go away, and we will work on the issue this summer/fall. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

HB16-1195. This concerns home modification services in Medicaid home and community based services waivers. The bill amends the definition of home modification services to clarify that the services are available for installations and adaptations related to an eligible person's disability as permitted by federal law, and not solely for a physical impairment. With federal authorization, the bill permits the cap on the amount of home modification services an individual may receive to reset at the time of the renewal of the home- and community-based services (HCBS) for the elderly, blind, and disabled waiver. The bill aligns the statutory definition for environmental modification services in the HCBS for persons with brain injury waiver by renaming it home modification services, and, with federal authorization, permits the cap on the amount of services an individual may receive to reset at the time of the renewal of the waiver.

HB16-1374. This concerns a required notice & disclosures for freestanding ERs. The details summary is lengthy. But in essence the goal is to make sure that persons visiting one of these facilities understands it is an emergency room. The cost would be substantially higher for non-emergency treatment than the urgent care facilities.

SJM16-004. This is a joint resolution, recommending that congress reauthorize the Older Americans Act, and make it fairer for states like Colorado who have one of the highest rates of increase in senior population. This has been signed by the Speaker of the House and forwarded to congress.

Nuts & Bolts of Influencing Legislation

INFLUENCING LEGISLATION BY CONTACTING LEGISLATORS

By David Barclay

A WHO TO TALK TO WHEN YOU CAN'T MEET WITH THEM ALL

- 1 Your friends in the legislature, first.
- 2 Your own legislator, second.
- 3 The committee(s) that is handling the bill, third and fourth.
- 4 The kingpins for your issue, third and fourth.

B MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

- 1 The most effective way to meet with a legislator (with the most effective listed first).
 - a Meet with legislator at his or her home.
 - b Phone calls to his or her home.
 - c Meet with the legislator at the statehouse.
 - d Phone calls to the statehouse.
- 2 Contacts of little or no value.
 - a Form letters.
 - b Form emails.

C WHEN TO MEET WITH LEGISLATORS

- 1 Don't contact your legislator only when you want action.
 - a Meet with during interim.
 - b For lunch or coffee.
 - c Get acquainted socially, if possible.
- 2 Compliment when appropriate.

D COORDINATING YOUR CONTACT EFFORTS

- 1 Don't duplicate. Know what other members of your legislative advocate network are doing. Coordinate your efforts and divide up what needs to get done.
- 2 Send copies of your legislative correspondence to your coalition's legislative coordinator, and to the secretary. Report all contacts with legislators and what transpired.

E FOLLOWING BILLS WITHOUT BOTHERING LEGISLATORS

Call the Colorado Senior Lobby. Alternatively: Go to coloradoseniorlobby.org. Under the heading "Get Involved" click on BILL SHEET.

RULES FOR CONTACTING LEGISLATORS

- A **BE PRACTICAL:** Find out what can realistically be accomplished.
- B **BE AS BRIEF AND CONCISE AS POSSIBLE IN PRESENTING YOUR CASE.**
- C **LEAVE BEHIND A ONE-PAGE OUTLINE SUMMARY** of your position (also leave one with the administrative assistant).
- D **DO NOT THREATEN** with political or voter retaliation.
- F **FOLLOW UP YOUR VISIT** with a letter to the legislator.

Wednesday, March 30, 2016
35th Anniversary
Senior Day at The Capitol

Hosted by
Colorado Senior Lobby (CSL)

This event is held in Downtown Denver at The Colorado State Capitol

2016 Proposed Event Agenda

8AM – 9AM: Continental Breakfast (The Capitol - North 2nd Floor Mezzanine)

9AM – Noon: Old Supreme Court Chambers (The Capitol - 2nd Floor)

Noon – 2PM: Lunch & Afternoon Program (Order your Lunch early)

Location: Denver Consistory - 1370 Grant Street)



Why attend?

Meet your Legislators, Elected Officials & Senior Day Sponsors

- Learn about programs available for Seniors
- Learn about Legislation affecting Seniors
- Improve your skills on Advocating on behalf of Seniors
- **And most important:
Let the Governor, Speaker of the House,
Senate President and your Legislators
know your Concerns !**

- **Join Colorado Senior Lobby today to have advance notice of legislative action.**
- **Visit our website for more information about Individual and Family Memberships.**

**QUESTIONS? Call or email Ed Shackelford, President of Colorado Senior Lobby
at 303-832-4535 or email: president@ColoradoSeniorLobby.org**

Lunch Reservations will be taken until March 29, 2016 or maximum capacity is reached.

Note that lunches must be pre-purchased with this form or online.

I (we) plan on attending Senior Day at The Capitol to be held on Wednesday - March 30, 2016!

My Name: _____ My Phone: _____

Other people attending with me: _____

My Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Optional Lunch for # of people: _____ at \$10.00 each = \$ _____ Check(s) Enclosed: _____

Number of Assorted Meat(s): _____ Number of Vegetarian Lunch(s): _____ Number of Gluten Free Lunch(s): _____

Mail checks for lunches payable to CSL: Colorado Senior Lobby, PO Box 102662, Denver, CO 80250

- **You can also register and pay via credit card online at: www.ColoradoSeniorLobby.org**
- **Limited seating is available in the Old Supreme Court Chambers in The Capitol. Seating is first come, first served basis with priority seating given to seniors.**

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Colorado Senior Lobby
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*The ultimate folly is to think that
something crucial to your welfare is being taken
care of for you.*
—Robert Brault, American operatic tenor

“Healthy citizens are the
greatest asset any
country can have.”
— Winston Churchill

Go Green:

Recycle This Newsletter!

After you've enjoyed our newsletter,
please recycle it by passing it along
to a family member, friend, neighbor
or coworker.

Colorado Senior Lobby — Nonprofit, non-partisan, volunteer organization

MEMBERSHIP: Single \$30 Family \$40 Organization \$75 \$ _____

Organizations: Attach three names and contact information

Additional contribution to support our vision for seniors' quality of life \$ _____

Total (This payment is not tax deductible) \$ _____

Name/Business/Organization: _____

Address: Street _____

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Circle one: **BILL ME** or **CHECK ENCLOSED** — payable Colorado Senior Lobby

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