

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coloradans to Lawmakers:
“Save Our State, No More Cuts”

Colorado can't cut its way back to prosperity, nor can Colorado families continue to shoulder the burden of the state's broken budget. That was the message today at the State Capitol, as an estimated crowd of more than five hundred people gathered to voice their concern about recent budget cuts. Community leaders, a business owner, a faith leader, and a furloughed state worker who keeps Colorado roads safe all joined in the chorus of voices saying that all options should be on the table to fix the state's unending fiscal crisis.

“The latest round of cuts mean that there are seniors, children, and families who won't get the care and services they need, students who won't be able to go to college, and Colorado families who will get left behind,” said **Rev. Nathan Woodliff-Stanley, a Board Member of the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado and Minister of Social Responsibility at Jefferson Unitarian Church**. “That's why we're saying no more cuts—because Colorado can't afford it.”

More than forty organizations, advocacy groups, and service providers representing hundreds of thousands of Coloradans gathered on the west steps of the Capitol, imploring lawmakers to “Save our State: No more cuts.”

“Cuts mean tradeoffs, and right now those tradeoffs are being shouldered by the most vulnerable and least visible Coloradans,” said **John Parvensky, President and CEO of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless**. “The state's budget is so emaciated, that any cuts made are going straight to the bone.”

“A strong public sector not only provides key services for Colorado families, but it also makes businesses more profitable and strengthens our economic future,” said **local business owner Pam Feely**. “Eroding investment in schools, health care, higher education, and transportation is bad for our workforce and bad for our economy.”

Feely also pointed out that cuts to the Department of Revenue auditing unit are impractical when there is an estimated \$33 million in unpaid back-taxes owed to the state, adding, “No business would cut its collections department when it is struggling to pay their bills.”

“These cuts are coming at a high cost for a lot of families,” said **Steve Wager, a Mental Health Clinician at Fort Logan, one of the facilities closing due to cuts**. “Public service matters—whether it's safe roads, public safety, or the safety net of getting your family the care they need—what we do matters, and these cuts mean that critical work will not get done.”

“State leaders have done an admirable job in protecting the state's safety net through this budget crisis, but they've been limited to dealing with just the spending side,” added Rev. Nathan Woodliff-Stanley. “It's time they look at all the options, including revenue.”

Some organizations are calling on lawmakers to return to the statehouse for a special legislative session to specifically address the budget crisis by implementing a balanced revenue solution.

“All options must be on the table to deal with the state’s budget problems,” said **Carol Hedges, Senior Fiscal Analyst for the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute (COFPI)**. “Our convoluted fiscal system means that a special session on budget and revenue issues is the only way we get all options on the table. If we wait until January to take action, many of the possible revenue policy changes won’t be available to help with FY 2010 cuts.”

A provision in TABOR prohibits certain tax policy changes from taking immediate effect, requiring instead that they become effective for the year following their date of adoption. Given the fact that the \$320 million in cuts are for the current state fiscal year (FY2009-2010) ending June 30, 2010, some potential revenue enhancing steps will need legislative action before December 31, 2009 to help fill the current budget gap.

“If we all have to share in the pain of our perpetual budget problems, then businesses should share in that too,” added Feely. “There are some reasonable options that make a lot of sense in terms of tax fairness, protecting the most vulnerable, and investing in economic growth.”

In conjunction with the rally, the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute released a menu of revenue options that the legislature could enact without having to go to the ballot and without asking the majority of working families to make the sacrifice, including: suspending the net operating loss carry forward, limiting salary deductions for corporations and pass-through entities who deduct salary expenses for employees earning more than \$250,000 per year, requiring out-of-state partners and shareholders to have Colorado taxes withheld, stronger tax enforcement, redirecting federal dollars, and other options.

Additionally, Legislative Council has also compiled complete list of tax exemptions and other revenue options for the Commission on Long-Term Fiscal Stability.

FACT SHEET: Revenue Options

<http://www.cclponline.org/pubfiles/RevOptionsFactSheet082509FINAL.pdf>

Legislative Council: List of Sales and Use Tax Exemptions Prepared for Fiscal Stability Commission

<http://www.cclponline.org/pubfiles/Leg%20Council%20Sales%20and%20Use%20Tax%20Exemptions%20for%20Interim%20Committee.pdf>

A partial list of participating groups in today’s rally is below.

S.O.S. Rally: Participating Groups

9to5 National Association of Working Women
A. Philip Randolph Institute
Advocacy Denver
AFSCME
AFT Colorado
Association for Community Living in Boulder County
Colorado AFL-CIO
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute
Colorado Common Cause
Colorado Community Health Network
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition
Colorado Progressive Coalition
Colorado Public Interest Research Group
Colorado Senior Lobby
Colorado Voices for Coverage
Colorado WINS
Denver Area Labor Federation
Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
FRESC Good Jobs, Strong Communities
Great Education Colorado
Health Care for All Colorado
Interfaith Alliance of Colorado
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry
Parent to Parent of Colorado
Parents of Adults with Disabilities
Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains
SEIU
The Arc of Adams County
The Arc of Arapahoe & Douglas Counties
The Arc of Aurora
The Arc of Colorado
The Arc of Jefferson County
The Arc of Larimer County
The Arc of Mesa County
The Arc of the Pikes Peak Region
The Arc of Pueblo
The Arc of Weld County
The White House Project
THRIVE! Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Initiative of Colorado
Women's Lobby of Colorado
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless