

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# COLORADO SENATE DEMOCRATS

## Five Bipartisan State Stimulus Bills Receive UNANIMOUS Final Approval From the Senate

*Bills on school air quality improvements, agricultural marketing, rural economic development, weatherization grants, and assisting displaced workers all head to the House*

**DENVER, CO** - This morning, the State Senate advanced five bipartisan stimulus bills that are a part of [Colorado's recovery package](#).

*"The passage of these bipartisan stimulus bills are the culmination of weeks of hard work and collaboration from both sides of the aisle," said Senate President Leroy Garcia (D-Pueblo). "I am incredibly proud of what we've been able to accomplish in such a short period of time, and I can't wait for Coloradans to receive such direct, meaningful relief so we can all build back stronger."*

These five bills address a number of elements that will kickstart our state's economic recovery, invest in Colorado's future, and help us build back stronger. The bills include:

**[SB21-202: Public School Air Quality Improvement Grants](#), sponsored by Senators Moreno & Lundeen.**

- Kids learn better in environments that are safe, clean, and healthy. Unfortunately, over the years, Colorado's deferred maintenance of school facilities has grown, particularly in rural areas. This bill allocates \$10 million for Building Excellent Schools Today Act grants to fund much-needed public school air quality improvement projects to improve air quality in as many public and charter school facilities as possible.

**[SB21-203: Funding For Colorado Proud](#), sponsored by Senators Bridges & Simpson.**

- Colorado's robust agricultural sector has been the backbone of our economy for decades, and the pandemic has burdened the industry with unique challenges that will require additional resources to overcome. To accelerate the economic recovery of our agricultural and rural communities, this bill gives \$2.5 million to the Department of Agriculture for use in the Colorado Proud program, which provides new opportunities for Colorado's food and agricultural producers to increase sales globally and helps support the growth and resiliency of Colorado food systems.

**[SB21-204: Rural Economic Development Initiative Grant Program Funding](#), sponsored by Senators Donovan & Rankin.**

- In an effort to help rural communities diversify their local economies, this bill transfers \$5 million to the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grant Program to be used for projects that create diversity and resiliency in the local economies of rural communities. Over the past several years, REDI grants have funded improvements to historic buildings, investments in business centers, economic action plans, revitalization of infrastructure, and other economic development initiatives in rural communities around the state.

**[SB21-231: Energy Office Weatherization Assistance Grants](#), sponsored by Senators Story & Hisey.**

- On average, low-income households pay over four times as much of their household income on energy costs and are sometimes forced to cut back on healthcare, childcare, groceries, and other expenses just to keep the bills paid. Weatherization can significantly alleviate these costs, as well as improve the lives

and well-being of residents. This bill will provide \$3 million to fund grants in the Weatherization Assistance Program, which provides funding to low-income residents across the state to fund weatherization upgrades in their homes.

**[SB21-232: Displaced Workers Grant](#), sponsored by Senators Zenzinger & Kirkmeyer.**

- One of the top priorities of this stimulus package is getting Coloradans back to work, and one of the most efficient ways to do that is by investing in displaced workers. Increasing investments in these workers will provide them with the skills, supports and credentials necessary to secure good jobs. This bill appropriates \$15 million for the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative's Displaced Workers Grant, which is estimated to serve at least 3,000 displaced Colorado workers across the state, as well as help institutions of higher education scale high-demand programs.

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**About the Colorado Senate Democrats**

***The 20-member Senate Democratic Caucus for the 2021 legislative session includes Senators Leroy Garcia, Kerry Donovan, Pete Lee, Joann Ginal, Tammy Story, Sonya Jaquez Lewis, Stephen Fenberg, Rachel Zenzinger, Jessie Danielson, Dominick Moreno, Brittany Pettersen, Faith Winter, Jeff Bridges, Chris Kolker, Janet Buckner, Rhonda Fields, Chris Hansen, Robert Rodriguez, James Coleman, Julie Gonzales.***