



CAPS Voter Guide – 2026

Location: Colorado (Statewide)

Election Date:

June 30, 2026 (Primary)

November 3, 2026

The Colorado Alliance for Public Service (CAPS) is an informal group of former federal employees and contractors. We are dedicated to protecting the rights of public service workers and advocating for effective and just US action abroad and here in Colorado.

About This Guide

This voters' guide is intended to help Colorado voters choose candidates and policies in the 2026 election year that will help to improve the conditions for public service at home and as part of the global community.

As a fiercely non-partisan and independent alliance, we have chosen not to endorse candidates or parties in the upcoming elections. We believe that Colorado's citizens can make their own choices.

With the decimation of civil service jobs, the use of tariffs as a weapon of foreign policy and the dismantling of most U.S. international cooperation assistance with the dismantling of USAID, we are producing this guide to help voters evaluate the vision and ideas of candidates about the future of public service and the U.S. role in the world.

Key Issues

- **Public service** is a job, action, or service performed for the benefit of everyone, often provided by government or non-profit organizations rather than for-profit businesses. It includes vital services like public safety (police/fire), health care, infrastructure (roads/water), and education.

In Colorado, thousands of public servants working directly for agencies such as NOAA, NREL, the Forest Service, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, the Bureau of Land Management and others have lost their jobs due to the DOGE purges and continuing job losses across federal agencies. In the case of the closure of USAID

and the withholding of public funds, nonprofits and universities have been severely impacted through the summary loss of grants and support with no feedback from the public or our representatives.

- **The closure of USAID** summarily ended U.S. support for public service and cooperation with people and organizations around the world. It is difficult to quantify the loss of decades of progress in building effective, just and democratic partners for the United States around the world. As a tool of statecraft, international assistance provides other options for building the trust we need for a peaceful world and the conditions for mutually beneficial trade as opposed to punitive inducements such as tariffs and war.

In Colorado, the closure ended over a quarter of a billion dollars of citizen-led international development programs which counts as a significant industry that enabled us to work with and create good conditions for international trade around the world. National research laboratories (e.g. NOAA, NCAR, NREL) and world-class universities have been hit by layoffs, funding cuts, and threats to dismantle programs and institutions.

How to Be an Informed Public Service Voter

While cuts to public service have been illogical and self-defeating, making Colorado and the US less able to serve their citizens or build the trust and respect that make the US safer and able to work with countries around the world, the decimation can also be an opportunity to build back better. With this in mind, CAPS is surveying candidates for office on their vision to strengthen public service and international cooperation in the future. We will include their responses on our website.

But you can also play a role.

Take these questions with you to meetings with candidates and ask them to support public service and international cooperation in the future.

Federal Office Candidates

Both Senate and Congressional candidates for office will face a world in which the United States has become less collaborative and more inwardly focused. It has undermined the United Nations and softened its alliances with partner countries around the world and close to home. It has reduced its own ability to know and understand the needs of other countries with job cuts across the State Department and intelligence agencies. It has weakened almost all agencies that protect or provide services to Americans and channeled massive new funding into the military, even changing the name of the Department of Defense into the Department of War.

If the United States is to thrive in the future, we will need to have a national dialogue on how to perform these functions for the benefit of all Americans. We suggest that the following are priority questions you should ask the candidates who will represent you:

- Do you support a national education department to improve and expand educational opportunities for all Americans? How?
- Will you ensure America provides international assistance and cooperation that will enable Americans to build trust and good will with other countries? How?
- Will you rebuild and reinforce American capacity to make policy based on the best scientific information and evidence to ensure that we have effective and sustainable approaches to natural disasters, climate change and other challenges we face as a nation? How?
- Will you rebuild strong partnerships with universities to provide the critical information the government needs for good policy making? How?
- Will you support public service and public servants to be respected and remunerated for the jobs they do? How?

State and Local Candidates

Many state and local candidates feel that they have little power to influence public service and international cooperation. Nevertheless, many fired feds have turned to state jobs with schools, parks and other agencies to be able to continue in their public service careers. Even as the federal government pushes service mandates on to the state, we have a \$1.5 billion budget deficit that leaves little or no room for the state to absorb public service workers. Given these realities, here are some questions that can be asked of state and local candidates:

- Will you strengthen the conditions for public service in Colorado? How?
- Will you support fired public servants and contractors from NOAA, NREL, the USDA, the Park Service, The Department of Education and the EPA? How?
- Will you address the loss of federal services to our communities? How?

Ballot Initiatives

The Tax Payers Bill of Rights or TABOR was originally passed by voters in Colorado to ensure that the government lived within the budget that it collects from taxes. While this is a good value, in practice it has meant that the government has to chronically underfund or cut key services artificially and does not have the ability to manage effectively the resources it brings in. CAPS strongly recommends supporting a graduated income tax to get on the ballot by signing petitions and supporting its passage in the Fall. You can find out more about this initiative here: <https://protectcoloradosfuture.com/>

Voting Information

- Colorado Primaries
 - June 12, 2026 - First day to send ballots out
 - June 30, 2026 - Primary election day
 - Link to find out your polling location -
<https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/elections/VIP.html>
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