



**2026 Legislative Session
Week in Review
5/1/2026**

No question, it's crunch time

The days are rapidly dwindling for the 2026 session, and you can sense that in noise levels in parts of the Capitol, the crowds around the second-floor brass rail and in other corridors and the generally rising anxiety.

The Senate Friday moved fairly quickly through its calendar. Among other things it passed the controversial revisions to the labor peace law, HB 26-1005, on a 23-12 vote.

It also voted 23-11 to pass SB 26-172, the bill asking voters to change boundaries of Front Range Rail District.

Meanwhile, the House was bogged down on the first of several complicated tax expenditure bills.

Here's a look at some of the major issues debated during the busy week.

Abortion – It took a lot of debate across two days, but the House voted 41-22 Monday to pass HB 26-1335, which requires college and university medical centers to provide abortion medication.

Corrections – The gave final approval Thursday to two modest corrections reform bills – SB 26-158 concerning release terms for some youthful offenders (45-18) and SB 26-159 on inmate earned time (40-23).

Elections – HB 26-1084, the bill that would require easier-to-understand language on ballot measures, took one step closer to enactment with Senate approval of the conference committee report and re-passage of the bill.

Home insurance – The Senate passed SB 26-155 21-12 on Wednesday. This is the measure to create the Strengthen Colorado Homes Enterprise in the Division of Insurance to implement a grant program to help homeowners fortify their roofs against wind and hailstorms. The enterprise would collect a fee from insurers.

Immigrants – HB 26-1276, which sets up protections for immigrants in Colorado by requiring transparency in federal immigration enforcement activities, expanding inspection authority over immigration detention facilities and imposing civil penalties for violations, passed the House 42-21 Monday.

Murder – The House had a long, emotional and kind of sensational debate over HB 26-1281, which would change some definitions of homicide in state law. Republicans told lots of harrowing victim stories. The bill passed by the narrowest of margins – 33-32.

Online safety – With a 40-23 vote, the House passed SB 26-051 on Thursday, the bill to require application developers to receive user age information and use it to comply with any applicable law.

School finance – It took 90 minutes of debate on third reading, but the Senate finally voted 23-12 along party lines to pass SB 26-135 on Monday. This is the school funding proposal that basically would eliminate TABOR refunds and divert the money to school districts to reduce class sizes and pay teachers more – but some money could be used for non-education spending. The polite and thoughtful debate (this is the Senate after all) divided along standard partisan lines about TABOR and funding education. This bill reportedly is in trouble.

Plastic – The Senate spent an inordinate amount of time over a couple of days debating SB 26-146, which would ban restaurants from giving customers disposable cutlery on takeout orders – unless customers request it. It passed 19-14 on Wednesday.

Sports betting – SB 26-131 aims to curb addictive sports betting habits by implementing a limit of six deposits per customer within a continuous 24-hour period and restricting the use of credit cards for sports betting accounts. A plan to ban prop bets was removed in committee. Passed 19-14 by the Senate Tuesday.

TABOR – After drawn-out speechmaking, the House Thursday voted 41-21 to pass HB 26-1419, the bill that reduce future TABOR refunds to account for over-refunds paid for 2024-25. (This is essential to budget balancing.)

And in committee this week - House Finance, after extensive debate, voted 6-3 to advance HB 26-1326, the sunset bill for the Public Utilities Commission ... a House Business debate went into the evening before approval if HB 26-1424, the bill that seeks to create more protections for ride share customers ... House Education, without much fuss or testimony, Wednesday voted 11-0 to advance SB 26-023, the annual school finance act. It's been smooth sailing so far for this important annual bill. But watch for possible amendments in Appropriations or on the House floor to help districts with declining enrollments.

Dropping like flies – Bills are dying at a quicker rate, most postponed indefinitely by sponsors who realize they don't have sufficient support. Among the fallen are hemp drinks legalization (SB 26-164), right to repair electronics (SB 26-090), guard rails on

license plate readers (SB 26-070), rat poison regulations (SB26-062), youth sports safety (SB26-100), residential lot splitting (HB 26-1308) and updating of marijuana regulations (SB 26-161).

Signed – Gov. Jared Polis on Monday signed HB 26-1134, a bill that seeks to ensure municipal court defendants have access to attorneys, along with providing other transparency measures and safeguards. The bill was a second effort to codify protections for municipal defendants after Polis vetoed a similar bill last year. Friday was the 108th day of the 120-day session. Sine die (Latin for adjournment without day certain) is May 13.

Tallying the bills

Yeah, there are only a few days remaining in the session, but new bills keep popping up. Here are some measures of note:

Autism treatment – HB 26-1425 would create a Colorado Behavior Analyst Licensing Board to regulate applied behavior analysis services, requiring behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts to be licensed by July 1, 2028, and establishes licensing standards for applied behavior analysis clinics. Rapid expansion of these services has helped push increases in Medicaid costs. Bipartisan. (This passed through its first committee this week.) Bipartisan.

Child care – SB 26-180 would create the Investment Performance Authority, a special purpose authority that may invest certain public money from state and governmental entities, with a portion of investment earnings used to support child care assistance for families with low incomes. Bipartisan.

Ride sharing – HB 26-1424 seeks to increase safety for transportation network company drivers and riders by requiring more frequent criminal background checks, implementing audio/video recording capabilities, establishing deactivation procedures for problematic drivers and mandating annual safety incident reporting. Democratic.

And the JBC voted Thursday to introduce two interesting bills, one to streamline state-county welfare administration to reduce error rates and another that would authorize JBC to basically act as an interim committee this coming summer to study the ballooning cost of Medicaid.

As of Friday morning, 612 bills had been introduced.

The Week for the JBC

It was a big week for the budget committee. After five months of briefings, tough decisions, a couple of missed deadlines and a few tears, JBC's 65-bill 2026-27 budget package finished jumping the last procedural hurdles in the House and Senate – approval of conference committee reports, re-passage and all that.

But it also was kind of a frustrating week, as the committee found it hard to meet about prospective bills, given the crush of work on the floors and in other committees.

JBC did manage to agree on the welfare administration and Medicaid study bills noted above. But as noon passed Friday it still hadn't found a moment to consider possible legislation to rein in costs of enrichment programs for homeschooled students.

Notable stories of the week

- Corrections reform bills advance (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/05/01/colorado-lawmakers-pass-bills-to-reduce-prison-population/>
- Some lawmakers not giving up on conversion therapy limits (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/30/supreme-court-colorado-conversion-therapy-ban-house-bill-1322/>
- License plate reader bill shelved (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/29/senate-bill-70-lay-over-colorado-surveillance-technology/>
- Lawmaker tries again on rideshare safety bill (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/28/colorado-lawmaker-pushes-revised-rideshare-safety-bill-after-polis-veto/>
- Dueling data center bills have stalled (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/27/data-center-bills-stalled-colorado-legislature/>

All of this week's news links

Friday, May 1

- Corrections reform bills advance (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/05/01/colorado-lawmakers-pass-bills-to-reduce-prison-population/>
- Lawmakers wrestle with child care program costs (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/05/01/colorado-ccap-enrollment-freezes-legislation/>
- Aurora mental health non-profit trims jobs because of budget cuts (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/30/aurora-mental-health-nonprofit-cuts-100-plus-jobs-after-colorado-agency-reduces-reimbursement-rate/>

- Bill would ban swipe fees on sales taxes (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/30/colorado-bill-prohibits-credit-card-companies-from-charging-swipe-fees-on-sales-taxes/>
- Senate passes bill to ease cities' access to housing funds (Post) - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/30/affordable-housing-proposition-123-cities-legislature/>
- Committee kills bill that would have limited use of new federal education tax credit (Chalkbeat) - <https://www.chalkbeat.org/colorado/2026/05/01/colorado-lawmakers-postpone-bill-aimed-at-trump-education-tax-credit/>
- Bill seeks \$40 million in fees from health insurers (Sum & Substance) - <https://tsscolorado.com/bill-seeks-40-million-in-fees-from-health-insurers-to-fund-subsidy-programs/>

Thursday, April 30

- Polis signs ban on dog, cat sales at pet stores (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/29/selling-dogs-cats-in-pet-stores-now-banned-in-colorado/>
- Some lawmakers not giving up on conversion therapy limits (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/30/supreme-court-colorado-conversion-therapy-ban-house-bill-1322/>
- Lawmakers debate prison release bill (Axios) - <https://www.axios.com/local/denver/2026/04/29/colorado-release-inmates-prison-overcrowding>
- Legislative conversation on emissions cuts is changing (Sum & Substance) - <https://tsscolorado.com/data-centers-rising-utility-bills-change-legislative-conversation-on-emissions-cuts/>

Wednesday, April 29

- Sports betting bill advances (CO Newsline) - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/29/state-budget-finalized-legislature-cuts/>
- Bill proposes novel source for childcare funding (Chalkbeat) - <https://www.chalkbeat.org/colorado/2026/04/29/lawmakers-propose-novel-investment-strategy-for-new-childcare-funding/>
- Sponsors withdraw hemp beverage bill (Westword) - <https://www.westword.com/news/colorado-bill-thc-drinks-at-bars-restaurants-dies-40879058/>
- Groups team up on bill to bar non-lawyers from owning law firms (Sum & Substance) - <https://tsscolorado.com/unusual-partners-team-up-on-bill-to-clip-private-equity-funding-of-law-firms/>
- Right-to-repair exemptions bill fails in House (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/29/proposal-exempting-some-it-equipment-from-colorados-right-to-repair-law-fails/>

- Lobbyist bill faces potential veto (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/28/colorado-bill-dealing-with-administration-lobbyists-garners-support-but-faces-potential-veto-from-polis/>
- License plate reader bill shelved (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/29/senate-bill-70-lay-over-colorado-surveillance-technology/>
- Polis signs newborn abandonment bill (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/29/safe-haven-law-abandoned-newborns-new-law/>

Budget finally passes:

- CO Pols - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/28/colorados-46-8-billion-budget-nears-finish-line-heres-what-changed/>
- Sun - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/28/colorado-budget-passes/>
- Post - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/29/state-budget-finalized-legislature-cuts/>

Tuesday, April 28

- Bill would give state inspection powers over ICE facilities (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/28/colorado-democrats-eye-new-state-requirements-for-ice-facilities/>
- Lawmaker tries again on rideshare safety bill (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/28/colorado-lawmaker-pushes-revised-rideshare-safety-bill-after-polis-veto/>
- House passes requirement for college health centers to stock abortion medication (Post) - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/28/abortion-pill-access-colleges-immigration-colorado/>
- Polis signs municipal court reform bill (Post) - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/28/polis-legislation-municipal-court-transparency/>
- Lawmakers work to tweak higher ed funding formula (Chalkbeat) - <https://www.chalkbeat.org/colorado/2026/04/27/colorado-lawmakers-plan-higher-ed-funding-formula-update/>
- Legislature already needs to correct just-signed plastic pellets bill (Sum & Substance) - <https://tsscolorado.com/legislators-advancing-bill-to-clean-up-plastics-regulation-polis-signed-last-month/>
- Rat poison bill dies (Sum & Substance) - <https://tsscolorado.com/bill-to-limit-use-of-rat-poison-meets-its-legislative-end/>

Saturday, April 25 – Monday April 27

- Dueling data center bills have stalled (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/27/data-center-bills-stalled-colorado-legislature/>

- Controversial wildlife commissioner nominees withdraw (CO Pols) - <https://www.coloradopolitics.com/2026/04/24/colorado-wildlife-commission-shake-up-2-nominees-withdraw-before-full-senate-vote/>
- BHA hired executive accused taking funds from former employer (Sun) - <https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/24/behavioral-health-deputy-commissioner-hiring-theft-scheme/>
- Defense lawyers swamped in wake of Missy Woods testing scandal (CPR) - <https://www.cpr.org/2026/04/27/legislation-missy-woods-scandal-defense-attorney/>
- Lawmakers wrestle with AI, social media issues (Post) - <https://www.denverpost.com/2026/04/26/chatbot-regulations-ai-suicide-age-verification-colorado/>
- Hinrichsen changes focus in final session (Westword) - <https://www.westword.com/news/colorado-senator-final-session-fights-for-the-fringes-40865459/>