

First Extraordinary Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 25B-0010.01 Rebecca Bayetti x4348

SENATE BILL 25B-005

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

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Senate Committees

State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING A REALLOCATION OF FUNDING FROM THE DIVISION OF
102 PARKS AND WILDLIFE FOR THE REINTRODUCTION OF GRAY
103 WOLVES TO THE COLORADO HEALTH INSURANCE
104 AFFORDABILITY ENTERPRISE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,
105 REDUCING AN APPROPRIATION.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill reduces by \$264,268 an appropriation for the 2025-26 state fiscal year from the general fund to the department of natural

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

resources division of parks and wildlife (division) for the reintroduction of gray wolves. The bill requires the state treasurer to transfer a corresponding amount from the general fund to the Colorado health insurance affordability enterprise cash fund on September 1, 2025.

The bill also prohibits the division from using the money appropriated from the general fund in state fiscal year 2025-26 (appropriated money) for the acquisition and reintroduction of gray wolves or from taking any action to acquire or reintroduce gray wolves during state fiscal year 2025-26. The division may use the appropriated money to assist owners of livestock in preventing and resolving conflicts between gray wolves and livestock and to pay fair compensation to owners of livestock for any losses of livestock caused by gray wolves.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) Through the narrow passage of Proposition 114 by Colorado
5 voters in 2020, the division of parks and wildlife and the parks and
6 wildlife commission were directed to develop and implement a plan to
7 reintroduce gray wolves to Western Colorado while ensuring fair
8 compensation for livestock losses;

9 (b) According to the 2020 State Ballot Information Booklet,
10 published by the legislative council of the Colorado general assembly,
11 "Proposition 114 increases state spending by approximately \$300,000 in
12 state budget year 2021-22 and \$500,000 in state budget year 2022-23 for
13 public outreach and development of a gray wolf reintroduction plan.
14 Beginning in the state budget year 2023-24, spending will increase to
15 about \$800,000 per year for the implementation of the wolf reintroduction
16 plan";

17 (c) Since state budget year 2023-24, the cost of the wolf
18 reintroduction program has far exceeded the \$800,000 per year that was
19 estimated in the 2020 State Ballot Information Booklet. For just state

1 budget year 2024-25, the program cost the state \$3,457,613, with funding
2 requirements for livestock conflict reduction and depredation
3 compensation expected to rise in the coming years.

4 (d) These cost overruns have occurred during a time when the
5 state government has had to make drastic cuts to state spending for
6 transportation infrastructure, Medicaid services, education, and more.
7 Now, with ongoing inflationary pressure, a substantial reduction in
8 available federal money for state operations due to the passage of H.R. 1
9 by the United States Congress, the expiration of health insurance
10 affordability tax credits that will cause insurance costs for Coloradans to
11 spike, and Colorado's balanced budget requirement, the state of Colorado
12 is faced with a challenging fiscal situation and Colorado families are at
13 risk of losing access to health insurance.

14 (e) Programmatically, Colorado's legal requirement to reintroduce
15 and establish a self-sustaining population of gray wolves has been
16 objectively successful: According to the division of parks and wildlife,
17 the wolves reintroduced into Colorado in late 2023 and early 2025 have
18 formed multiple packs and produced multiple litters of offspring and, as
19 of August 2025, there are over 30 wolves in Colorado with that number
20 anticipated to grow as more offspring from the current breeding season
21 are confirmed. Unfortunately, wolf-livestock conflict has only increased
22 as more wolves have been introduced and reproduced, which has further
23 escalated the cost of the wolf reintroduction program to taxpayers.

24 (f) Therefore, in the context of this extraordinary session called to
25 address an emerging budget and health insurance affordability crisis,
26 continued funding for the procurement of new wolves from other states
27 or other countries is not a responsible use of taxpayer dollars and

1 undermines the state's ability to lower costs for Coloradans' everyday
2 expenses. Colorado should spend money originally allocated for the
3 procurement, capture, transport, and release of new wolves on matters
4 more immediately impactful and beneficial to Colorado families while
5 retaining funding to support livestock producers and communities being
6 impacted by Colorado's existing and expanding wolf population.

7 (2) The general assembly further finds and declares that:

8 (a) In his Executive Order D 2025 009, "Call for the First
9 Extraordinary Session of the Seventy-Fifth General Assembly and
10 Directing a Statewide Hiring Freeze", Governor Polis directed the general
11 assembly to consider and pass legislation concerning, among other topics,
12 "adjustments to the Health Insurance Affordability Enterprise (HIAE) to
13 facilitate a reduction in premium increases and avoid health insurance
14 coverage loss for those in the individual market and those unable to
15 purchase health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado";

16 (b) As noted in the executive order and extraordinary session call
17 by the governor, "Congress's failure to extend enhanced Health Insurance
18 Premium Tax Credits, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of
19 2021 (ARPA) and extended by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022
20 (IRA), in concert with the 2025 Marketplace Integrity and Affordability
21 Final Rule and individual market changes set forth in H.R.1, will have a
22 significant impact on health insurance rates in Colorado's individual
23 health insurance market, as well as broader market impacts. July 2025
24 rate filings by insurance carriers with the Colorado Division of Insurance
25 are, on average, 28% higher than 2025 rates with some requested rate
26 increases on Colorado's Western Slope of almost 40%. While the State
27 cannot extend federal premium tax credits, we can add funds to

1 Colorado's Health Insurance Affordability Enterprise (HIAE) in order to
2 mitigate the impact of these extraordinary individual health insurance
3 requested rate increases on individuals and families across the State.
4 Without this additional support, projected coverage losses will be
5 devastating for families and the health care system."

6 (c) While these health insurance increases would significantly and
7 negatively burden every part of Colorado, the price increases are
8 particularly acute for Western Slope counties-the same counties,
9 communities, businesses, and individuals being directly impacted by the
10 wolf reintroduction program.

11 (3) It is therefore the intent of the general assembly, in order to
12 address the governor's directive in the call for this extraordinary session
13 to fund the health insurance affordability enterprise, to not fund the
14 procurement of new wolves in the 2025-26 state fiscal year and reallocate
15 that money to the health insurance affordability enterprise, which will
16 help Coloradans and their families save money on their health insurance
17 premiums while protecting funding for the ongoing administration of
18 wolf-livestock conflict minimization and depredation compensation.

19 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 10-16-1206, **amend**
20 (1)(g) and (1)(h); and **add** (1)(i) and (5) as follows:

21 **10-16-1206. Health insurance affordability cash fund -**
22 **creation - repeal.** (1) There is created in the state treasury the health
23 insurance affordability cash fund. The fund consists of:

24 (g) The federal share of the medical assistance payments received
25 pursuant to section 25.5-4-503 (2); ~~and~~

26 (h) Gifts, grants, or donations received from private or public
27 sources; AND

1 (i) ANY OTHER MONEY THAT MAY BE APPROPRIATED OR
2 TRANSFERRED TO THE FUND.

3 (5) (a) ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2025, THE STATE TREASURER SHALL
4 TRANSFER TWO HUNDRED SIXTY-FOUR THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED
5 SIXTY-EIGHT DOLLARS FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE FUND.

6 (b) THIS SUBSECTION (5) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

7 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 33-2-105.8, **add** (4.7)
8 as follows:

9 **33-2-105.8. Reintroduction of gray wolves on designated lands**
10 **west of the continental divide - public input in commission**
11 **development of restoration plan - compensation to owners of**
12 **livestock - definitions - repeal.** (4.7) (a) THE DIVISION SHALL NOT USE
13 MONEY APPROPRIATED FROM THE GENERAL FUND FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR
14 2025-26 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING OR REINTRODUCING GRAY
15 WOLVES AND SHALL NOT TAKE ANY ACTION TO ACQUIRE OR REINTRODUCE
16 GRAY WOLVES DURING STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26. THE DIVISION MAY
17 USE MONEY APPROPRIATED FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 FOR THE
18 PURPOSES LISTED IN SUBSECTIONS (2)(e)(I) AND (2)(e)(II) OF THIS
19 SECTION.

20 (b) THIS SUBSECTION (4.7) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

APPROPRIATION FROM

	ITEM & SUBTOTAL	TOTAL	GENERAL FUND	GENERAL FUND EXEMPT	CASH FUNDS	REAPPROPRIATED FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

1 **SECTION 4. Appropriation to the department of natural resources for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.** In Session Laws of Colorado 2025, section 2 of chapter
 2 476, (SB 25-206), **amend** Part XV (5)(A), the affected totals, and footnote 79 as follows:

3 Section 2. **Appropriation.**

PART XV

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

7 **(5) DIVISION OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE**

8 **(A) Colorado Parks and Wildlife Operations**

9 State Park Operations	64,834,343				63,934,343 ^a		900,000(I) ^b
	(332.1 FTE)						
11 Wildlife Operations ^{79, 80}	134,373,507		2,147,712		97,525,795 ^c		34,700,000(I)
12	134,109,239		1,883,444				
13	(731.8 FTE)						

APPROPRIATION FROM

	ITEM & SUBTOTAL	TOTAL	GENERAL FUND	GENERAL FUND EXEMPT	CASH FUNDS	REAPPROPRIATED FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1 Vendor Commissions,							
2 Fulfillment Fees, and Credit							
3 Card Fees	11,684,700				11,684,700 ^d		
4	<u>210,892,550</u>						
5	210,628,282						
6							

7 ^a Of these amounts, \$49,667,313 shall be from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund created in Section 33-10-111 (1), C.R.S., \$8,800,000(I) shall be from the Great Outdoors
8 Colorado Program established in Section 1 of Article XXVII of the State Constitution, \$2,459,306(I) shall be from Lottery proceeds pursuant to Section 3 of Article XXVII of the State
9 Constitution, \$2,243,971 shall be from the Severance Tax Operational Fund created in Section 39-29-109 (2)(b), C.R.S., \$641,063 shall be from the Off-highway Vehicle Recreation
10 Fund created in Section 33-14.5-106 (1), C.R.S., and \$122,690 shall be from the Snowmobile Recreation Fund created in Section 33-14-106 (1)(a), C.R.S. The appropriation from the
11 Severance Tax Operational Fund is made in accordance with allocations specified in Section 39-29-109.3 (1)(f), C.R.S. Pursuant to Section 3 of Article XXVII of the State Constitution,
12 amounts appropriated from the Great Outdoors Colorado Program and lottery proceeds are continuously appropriated and are shown for informational purposes only.

13 ^b This amount shall be from various sources of federal funds, including funds anticipated to be received from the United States Bureau of Reclamation through a cost-sharing agreement
14 to address the net operating deficit of Paonia, Vega, Rifle Gap, Crawford, Navajo, Mancos, and Ridgway State Parks, and is shown for informational purposes only.

APPROPRIATION FROM

ITEM & SUBTOTAL	TOTAL	GENERAL FUND	GENERAL FUND EXEMPT	CASH FUNDS	REAPPROPRIATED FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS
\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<p>° Of these amounts, \$84,110,795 shall be from the Wildlife Cash Fund created in Section 33-1-112 (1)(a), C.R.S., \$8,800,000(I) shall be from the Great Outdoors Colorado Program established in Section 1 of Article XXVII of the State Constitution, \$3,000,000 shall be from the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund created in Section 33-1-112 (3.5)(a), C.R.S., \$700,000 shall be from the Wolf Depredation Compensation Fund created in Section 33-1-128 (2)(a), C.R.S., \$500,000 shall be from subscription revenues credited to the Colorado Outdoors Magazine Revolving Fund created in Section 33-1-114 (1), C.R.S., \$400,000 shall be from the Colorado Nongame Conservation and Wildlife Restoration Cash Fund created in Section 33-1-125 (1)(a), C.R.S., and \$15,000 shall be from the Federal Aid Projects Income Fund created in Section 33-1-119, C.R.S. Pursuant to Section 3 of Article XXVII of the State Constitution, amounts appropriated from the Great Outdoors Colorado Program and lottery proceeds are continuously appropriated and are shown for informational purposes only.</p> <p>^d Of this amount, an estimated \$10,000,000 shall be from the Wildlife Cash Fund created in Section 33-1-112 (1)(a), C.R.S., an estimated \$1,350,000 shall be from the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Cash Fund created in Section 33-10-111 (1), C.R.S., an estimated \$250,000 shall be from the Off-highway Vehicle Recreation Fund created in Section 33-14.5-106 (1), C.R.S., an estimated \$31,700 shall be from the sale of migratory waterfowl stamps pursuant to Section 33-4-102.5 (2), C.R.S., and an estimated \$53,000 shall be from the Snowmobile Recreation Fund created in Section 33-14-106 (1)(a), C.R.S.</p>						
TOTALS PART XV						
(NATURAL						
RESOURCES)	\$476,725,197	\$57,345,170		\$367,162,434 ^a	\$9,587,533 ^b	\$42,630,060 ^c
	\$476,460,929	\$57,080,902				

APPROPRIATION FROM

ITEM & SUBTOTAL	TOTAL	GENERAL FUND	GENERAL FUND EXEMPT	CASH FUNDS	REAPPROPRIATED FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS
\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

1

2 ^a Of this amount, \$35,474,230 contains an (I) notation and an estimated \$31,417,277 is from the Severance Tax Operational Fund pursuant to Section 39-29-109.3 (1), C.R.S.

3 ^b Of this amount, \$1,115,249 contains an (I) notation.

4 ^c This amount contains an (I) notation.

5

6 **FOOTNOTES** -- The following statements are referenced to the numbered footnotes throughout section 2.

7

8 79 Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Parks and Wildlife Operations, Wildlife Operations -- It is the General Assembly's
 9 intent that ~~\$2,100,000~~ \$1,835,732 General Fund appropriated for this line item be used for the implementation of Proposition 114 for the reintroduction and
 10 management of gray wolves.

1 **SECTION 5. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
2 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
3 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
4 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
5 institutions.