

News Release

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DU research center examines Amendment 59: Preschool through 12th-Grade Education Funding

DENVER—Some of the ballot proposals placed before voters this November are complicated. Amendment 59 is one of them. In the second of three reports, the University of Denver Center for Colorado’s Economic Future (CCEF) analyzes the potential impact of Amendment 59, which would change the funding sources for pre-kindergarten through 12th grade (P-12) public education in Colorado and eliminate certain funding requirements. The proposal also would put an end to taxpayer refunds of surplus state revenue, set up a state education savings account and eventually provide additional funding for education.

The CCEF report, available for download at www.du.edu/economicfuture, examines how Amendment 59 would work and how it would affect current statutes and provisions of the Colorado Constitution.

“Colorado’s public school funding laws are extremely complex, so an initiative changing the way they work must necessarily be complicated and difficult for people to understand who are unfamiliar with them” says Charles Brown, director of CCEF. “Our goal is to help citizens better navigate the difficult issues addressed by the amendment.”

Conflicts between current constitutional and statutory provisions that limit state spending, and others that simultaneously require increases in state funding for P-12 education, created a budget squeeze in the early years of this decade resulting in significant budget reductions for other services.

The center was created in 2007 after DU’s Colorado Economic Futures Panel (CEFP) completed its work in January 2006. The panel spent more than a year examining the fiscal health of Colorado’s state and local governments and their ability to sustain fundamental public investments appropriate to the state’s long-term economic vitality. Establishing a permanent center to study the state’s economic future was a recommendation from the CEFP.

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The University of Denver Center for Colorado’s Economic Future is an independent, nonpartisan organization that conducts research on matters related to Colorado’s fiscal health, trends affecting the state’s economy and proposed legislation relating to taxation and public spending.