



President's Remarks

By: Bernadette Jiron

Welcome back all educators! I hope you had a fantastic summer and that you're rested up for a brand-new school year. I attended the National AFT Convention in July that was held in Boston. I think it was one of the best conferences we've ever had! We had some fantastic speakers such as Senator Elizabeth Warren D-Mass; Charlie Baker, the Republican governor of Massachusetts; Marty Walsh, U.S. Secretary of Labor and Elizabeth Shuler, President of AFL-CIO and many other speakers. Also, there were individual departmental meetings such as the PSRP Paraprofessionals' Division, the Teachers' Division and other groups. Randi Weingarten was re-elected as our president; Fedrick C. Ingram, Secretary -Treasurer and Executive Vice President, Evelyn DeJesus. Congratulations to all of our leaders in education!

Local Congratulations: I would like to recognize Victoria Pacheco and Christina Finnesy from our Local 4463 for their efforts in the recent negotiations for our local representing paraprofessionals, CSO'S, bus assistance and food and nutrition workers who collectively ratified the new 3-year agreement. Paraprofessionals will be starting at \$20 an hour, Special Ed. paraprofessionals start at \$21 an hour, CSOs start at \$23, leave CSOs start at \$24.50 and nutrition workers' starting salary is \$18. Fantastic job, Local 4463! You are the leaders of paraeducators and nutrition workers in Colorado.

Kallie Leyba, Sarah Mesmer, and I worked this summer on endorsements for the upcoming election in November. We are supporting some candidates that are labor friendly. See who we endorsed below and contribute to their campaigns by checking out our website at aftcolorado.org

In Unity -
Bernadette (Bernie) Jiron
AFT Colorado President
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From your Executive Director

By: Kallie Leyba

Working people in our country have a lot to celebrate as our elected leaders in Washington DC are delivering with the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#), the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), The [PACT Act](#), and the recent [Executive Order around Student Debt Discharge](#). I've included summaries below of just some of the great things that are happening. This is an excellent reminder that elections have consequences (good and bad) and I urge you all to GET INVOLVED in the midterm elections: local, state and national.

Thank you to the many of you who worked on the Initiative 63 Petition Signature Gathering process. Unfortunately, the Great Schools Thriving Communities Coalition was unable to raise enough funds to pay for petition workers in addition to our dedicated volunteers and Colorado's voters won't have an opportunity to vote on this proposal this year. We are already working on finding a way to change Colorado's tax system so that we can get more funding into education. Stay tuned. Meanwhile, a sincere thank you to everyone who contributed in volunteer work and or financial donations. We are continuing to move forward.

I'll highlight **some** of this quarter's work below. Thank you all for your continued commitment to education and to AFT's work.

In solidarity,
Kallie Leyba



Executive Board member Kathy Dorman and Kallie Leyba celebrating the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act.

Election 2022

Election season is approaching quickly. Your AFT Colorado COPE Committee and Executive Board have been working hard to make endorsement and donation decisions. Remember, member dues cannot be used for political purposes, and that is why I encourage all of you to donate to COPE, or increase your COPE donation if you already do (and thank you for your contributions). Talk to your local union office or [email me](#) to get your contribution set up.

Below you will find a complete list of our endorsements for State Candidates. I am happy to talk to anyone about why our committee made the decisions they did – so if you have questions, please [email me](#) and ask.

Additionally, I hope you'll join us for our [What's Up with the Election 2022 Zoom meeting](#) on September 29, 2022 from 5-6 pm. During this meeting we will talk about which candidates are in YOUR House and Senate Districts and tell you more about them. We will talk about upcoming legislation we expect or hope to see next year and generally let you know what's up for the election. I hope you'll join us. We understand that many people don't even know what their House or Senate District is, and it may have changed with redistricting. Don't worry—we will help you figure it all out. Register for the [Zoom meeting](#) here.

If you are ready to volunteer for candidates please [email me RIGHT NOW](#), to tell me I can count on your support for election volunteering.

We will be sending out detailed information on election volunteering opportunities soon so get out those canvassing shoes and get ready!

Mike Cerbo, President of our Denver Federation of Teachers and I showed up for the kickoff of the NO WAY O'DEA BUS TOUR. O'Dea is running to replace Michael Bennet and Mike and I say, "No way, O'Dea."



AFT Colorado proudly announces our candidate endorsements for the 2022 election season.

Candidates for Colorado State Office:

Dave Young - Treasurer
Jena Griswold - Secretary of State

Phil Weiser - Attorney General
Jared Polis - Governor

Candidates for Colorado State Senate:

Nick Hinrichsen - Senate District 3
Dylan Roberts - Senate District 8
Arik Dougherty - Senate District 9
Thomas Exum Sr. - Senate District 11
Janice Marchman - Senate District 15
Lisa Cutter - Senate District 20
Jessie Danielson - Senate District 22

Kyle Mullica - Senate District 24
Faith Winter - Senate District 25
Tom Sullivan - Senate District 27
Braeden Miguel - Senate District 30
Robert Rodriguez - Senate District 32
Julie Gonzales - Senate District 34

Candidates for Colorado State House of Representatives:


Javier Mabrey - House District 1
Steven Woodrow - House District 2
Meg Froelich - House District 3
Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez - House District 4
Alex Valdez - House District 5
Elisabeth Epps - House District 6
Jennifer Bacon - House District 7
Leslie Herod - House District 8
Emily Sirota - House District 9
Karen McCormick - House District 11
Tracey Bernett - House District 12
Julie McCluskie - House District 13
Rob Rogers - House District 14
Stephanie Vigil - House District 16
Regina English - House District 17
Marc Snyder - House District 18
Blake Garner - House District 22
Monica Duran - House District 23
Lindsey Daugherty - House District 24
Tammy Story - House District 25
Meghan Lukens - House District 26
Brianna Titone - House District 27
Sheila Leider - House District 28
Shannon Bird - House District 29




Chris Kennedy - House District 30
Said Sharbini - House District 31
Dafna Michaelson Jenet - House District 32
William Lindstedt - House District 33
Jenny Willford - House District 34
Adrienne Benavidez - House District 35
Mike Weissman - House District 36
Ruby Dickson - House District 37
David Ortiz - House District 38
Naquetta Ricks - House District 40
Iman Jodeh - House District 41
Mandy Lindsay - House District 42
Robert Marshall - House District 43
Ruby Martinez - House District 45
Tisha Mauro - House District 46
Judy Amabile - House District 49
Mary Young - House District 50
Cathy Kipp - House District 52
Andrew Boesenecker - House District 53
Elizabeth Velasco - House District 57
Barbara McLachlan - House District 59
Eliza Hamrick - House District 61
Matthew Martinez - House District 62

AFL-CIO COPE Convention

The two day convention in “Union Town, Colorado” (Pueblo) is where the AFL-CIO makes most of their decisions around endorsements of Colorado races and includes a reception with opportunities to meet candidates.







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UNIONPLUS

Federal Legislation to Celebrate

Bipartisan Safer Communities Act



You should know that our National President, Randi Weingarten, has been working tirelessly to advance Gun Violence Prevention and Gun Safety Legislation. As a member of the AFT Gun Violence Prevention Committee, I was honored to be invited to celebrate the signing of the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#). Many of you may not know that my family has had two members who had shootings at their schools. My husband was teaching at Columbine HS in 1999 and was shot at and, although he was not hit, he certainly suffered emotional injuries. Eleven years later, our son was very near the shooter at Deer Creek Middle School when two of his classmates were shot and injured. This has created a personal journey for both my husband and I in the Gun Violence Prevention work, and it is also a part of my job as Executive Director. This law is the most

significant progress our country has made on gun safety legislation . . . probably ever. And while it is not the progress that many of us would like to see, it is the first step, and I have hope that we can continue to solve this problem in a bipartisan way. You can watch [the video of the event here](#). The [fact sheet on the law is here and pasted below](#).



BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act is a commonsense, bipartisan proposal to protect America's children, keep our schools safe, and reduce the threat of violence across our country.

SUPPORT FOR STATE CRISIS INTERVENTION ORDERS

- Creates a new **\$750 million** funding pot that will be available to states for the creation and administration of laws that help ensure deadly weapons are kept out of the hands of individuals a court has determined to be a significant danger to themselves or others, and other purposes such as mental health courts, drug courts, veterans courts, and extreme risk protection orders that have sufficient due process.

PROTECTIONS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Adds convicted domestic violence abusers in dating relationships to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). Creates a process for removal from NICS five years after the completion of the sentence, only if there are no intervening prohibited crimes or other similar offenses.

CLARIFIED DEFINITION OF 'FEDERALLY LICENSED FIREARMS DEALER'

- Cracks down on criminals who illegally evade licensing requirements and clarifies which sellers need to register, conduct background checks, and keep appropriate records.

UNDER 21 ENHANCED REVIEW PROCESS

- Requires an investigative period to review juvenile and mental health records, including checks with state databases and local law enforcement, for buyers under 21 years of age.
- NICS will have up to three business days to conduct the initial enhanced search. If that search reveals a possible disqualifying record, NICS will have an extended window of no more than ten business days total to complete the investigation.
- Provides additional funding to the FBI to administer new process checks in NICS and grants to help states upgrade criminal and mental health records therein.

PENALTIES FOR 'STRAW PURCHASING'

- Creates federal straw purchasing and trafficking criminal offenses, allowing prosecutors to target dangerous illegal gunrunners.

VIOLENCE INTERRUPTION FUNDING

- Provides **\$250 million** in funding for community-based violence prevention initiatives.

BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT

INVESTMENT IN CHILDREN AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Supports national expansion of community behavioral health center model; improves access to mental health services for children, youth, and families through the Medicaid program and CHIP; increases access to mental health services for youth and families in crisis via telehealth; and provides major investments at the Department of Health and Human Services to programs that expand provider training in mental health, support suicide prevention, crisis and trauma intervention and recovery.

- **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic:** Expands the existing Medicaid CCBHC demonstration program to all states to increase access to community based behavioral health services.
- **School-based mental health:** Helps states to implement, enhance, and expand school-based health programs under Medicaid through updated guidance, technical assistance, and state planning grants.
- **Gold standard in mental health coverage for children:** Improves oversight of states' implementation of Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit, the country's gold standard in children's health coverage, to strengthen children's access to comprehensive mental health care services.
- **Telemental health services for children:** Requires CMS to provide guidance to states on how they can increase access to behavioral health services through telehealth under Medicaid and CHIP.
- **Teleconsults for pediatricians and mental health specialists:** Provides \$80 million in grants to support pediatric primary care providers to rapidly access mental health specialists' expertise in guiding the treatment of their patients.
- **Training for pediatric providers:** Appropriates \$60 million over five years for training in mental health for primary care clinicians who treat children and youth.
- **Community and first responder mental health training:** Appropriates \$120 million over four years to prepare and train community members and first responders on how to appropriately and safely respond to individuals with mental disorders.
- **Support for states to expand mental health services:** Provides \$250 million for states, DC, and territories to enhance comprehensive community mental health services.
- **Building awareness of and access to services for mental health:** Appropriates \$240 million over four years for programs that increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth, provide training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to detect and respond to mental health issues, and connect school-aged youth who may have behavioral health issues and their families to needed services.
 - **School-based trauma support:** Includes a set aside of \$28 million for grants to support trauma care in school settings.
- **Support after traumatic events:** Appropriates \$40 million over four years to improve treatment and services for children, adolescents, and families who have experienced traumatic events.
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/9-8-8:** Appropriates \$150 million to support implementation of the 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline that provides 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

BIPARTISAN SAFER COMMUNITIES ACT

INCREASED FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

Invests in programs to expand mental health and supportive services in schools, including: early identification and intervention programs, school-based mental health and wrap-around services, improvements to school-wide learning conditions, and school safety.

- **School Based Mental Health Services and Staff:** Provides \$500 million through the School Based Mental Health Services Grant Program to increase the number of qualified mental health service providers that provide school based mental health services to students in school districts with demonstrated need.
- **Training and Pipeline Development for School Based Mental Health Staff:** Provides \$500 million in funding to the School Based Mental Health Service Professionals Demonstration Grant. This money will help train and diversify the pipeline of school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists.
- **Improving Conditions for Student Learning:** Provides \$1 billion in funding through Title IV-A to support a variety of activities to improve conditions for student learning, including developing positive school climates through evidence-based practices.
- **Out of School Programs:** Provides \$50 million in funding to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which funds extracurricular, after school and summer programs, with a focus of new funding to target programs for older youth.
- **School Safety:** Provides \$300 million in funding through the STOP School Violence Act to institute safety measures in and around schools, support school violence prevention efforts and provide training to school personnel and students. Codifies the SchoolSafety.gov clearinghouse, which provides evidence-based resources to improve school safety. Prohibits use of funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to train or equip any person with dangerous weapons in schools.

Inflation Reduction Act

SUMMARY: THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT OF 2022

Updated: August 11th, 2022

The *Inflation Reduction Act of 2022* will make a historic down payment on deficit reduction to fight inflation, invest in domestic energy production and manufacturing, and reduce carbon emissions by roughly 40 percent by 2030. The bill will also finally allow Medicare to negotiate for prescription drug prices and extend the expanded Affordable Care Act program for three years, through 2025.

Additionally, the agreement calls for comprehensive Permitting reform legislation to be passed before the end of the fiscal year. Permitting reform is essential to unlocking domestic energy and transmission projects, which will lower costs for consumers and help us meet our long-term emissions goals.

TOPLINE ESTIMATES:

TOTAL REVENUE RAISED	\$737 billion
<i>15% Corporate Minimum Tax</i>	<i>222 billion*</i>
<i>Prescription Drug Pricing Reform</i>	<i>265 billion***</i>
<i>IRS Tax Enforcement</i>	<i>124 billion**</i>
<i>1% Stock Buybacks Fee</i>	<i>74 billion*</i>
<i>Loss Limitation extension</i>	<i>52 billion*</i>
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	\$437 billion
<i>Energy Security and Climate Change</i>	<i>369 billion*</i>
<i>Affordable Care Act Extension</i>	<i>64 billion**</i>
<i>Western Drought Resiliency</i>	<i>4 billion***</i>
TOTAL DEFICIT REDUCTION	\$300+ billion

* = Joint Committee on Taxation estimate

** = Congressional Budget Office estimate

*** = Senate estimate, awaiting final CBO score

The Inflation Reduction Act:

1. **Expands Medicare benefits:** free vaccines (2023), \$35/month insulin (2023) and caps out-of-pocket drug costs to an estimated \$4,000 or less in 2024 and settling at \$2,000 in 2025
2. **Lowers energy bills:** cuts energy bills by \$500 to \$1,000 per year
3. **Makes historic climate investment:** reduces carbon emissions by roughly 40% by 2030
4. **Lowers health care costs:** saves the average enrollee \$800/year in the ACA marketplace, allows Medicare to negotiate 100 drugs over the next decade, and requires drug companies to rebate back price increases higher than inflation
5. **Creates manufacturing jobs:** more than \$60 billion invested will create millions of new domestic clean manufacturing jobs
6. **Invests in disadvantaged communities:** cleaning up pollution and taking steps to reducing environmental injustice with \$60 billion for environmental justice
7. **Closes tax loopholes used by wealthy:** a 15% corporate minimum tax, a 1% fee on stock buybacks and enhanced IRS enforcement
8. **Protects families and small business making \$400,000 or less**

Local Union Updates



Update from the Douglas County Federation

The official summer break has come to a close as another school year has begun. Douglas County Federation(DCF) welcomed hundreds of new teachers and staff to Douglas County Schools on August 1 at Rock Canyon Highschool in Highlands Ranch. Many DCF members were on hand to meet and teach an introductory professional development class to incoming staff.

Special thanks go to Lindsay Moraczewski, our new DCF organizer for organizing the DCF table with information about DCF and the benefits of our union and to Kathy Dorman for organizing and teaching one of many sessions of our Foundations of Effective Teaching. We were fortunate to have the assistance of the following teachers at our DCF table for the day: Matt Solak (pictured), Anne Fisher and Shannon Doering. Kathy Dorman is our State Education Issues Coordinator and she was assisted by Julie Lopez and two new teacher trainers, Adam Bittler and Bridget McCoy. This is an exciting time as we have many newly trained teachers to teach our upcoming Foundations and English Language Learners classes.



From left to right, Kevin DiPasquale and Matt Solak (teaches Chinese at Legend High School)



Denver Federation for Paraprofessionals and Nutrition Service Employees

We did it!!! Our local has made a great leap forward for educational support staff wages in Denver Public Schools. We stuck to our guns and made sure that we as ESP's are beginning to make a livable wage in Denver. The starting wages for paraeducators in Denver is now \$20 an hour and for nutritional workers it is \$18 an hour. We are the leaders in Colorado in supporting educators and nutrition workers! We have a 3-year agreement with the Denver Public Schools which means that every year will include a step increase for every employee. This provision went into effect August 1, 2022. We also were able to get one paid holiday for all local members. Our veteran employees also receive increased pay for the next three years. ***Union strong AFT!***

DOUGLAS COUNTY RETIREES PRESIDENT'S POST

By Bill Hamaker

I hope you all had a happy and healthy summer! DCF Retirees has over one hundred members in our ranks representing the best and brightest of our district. We mean to stay active as we support teachers and staff who are currently on the "front lines! It was good to see many retirees at the online Retiree meeting on July 22 and again in-person at the tribute celebration for our past president, Robin Handy, who, sadly, passed away in May.

For those who don't know me, I am Bill Hamaker, retired DC elementary music teacher and union activist in Douglas County Schools since 1982. I know I have some big shoes to fill as the new DCF Retirees president following our ardent and active friend, Robin. To me, Robin's greatest asset was her ever-present sense of humor and fun. If nothing else, I hope to convey her exuberance for life into all of our activities in the future!

I want to hear from any and all of you. Please reach out with your thoughts and ideas. We want to make DCFR not only a union of retirees but a union of friends enjoying the best years of our lives!

New and returning DCFR Officers:

Welcome to Margaret Brinker, our new DCFR Member at Large! Margaret is a veteran retired teacher! She and her husband Dale (also a DCF Retiree) live in Parker. Our other loyal returning officers are: Nancy Lawson, secretary and Sarah Mesmer, vice president.

AFT COLORADO

STANDING TOGETHER: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Committee on Political Education (COPE) Deduction

925 S. Niagara St., Suite 600, Denver, CO 80224 www.aftcolorado.org 303-947-6709

What is COPE? COPE is how AFT Colorado raises and collects voluntary political contributions from members. COPE is a non-partisan political education committee. These voluntary funds are used statewide to help back candidates and committees that support education and labor. There is one reason AFT Colorado needs to grow our COPE program, **YOU**. With the current economic environment our priorities are vulnerable and are constantly being targeted for reduction. Education budgets, programs, and services are often first on the chopping block when states face dwindling tax revenues. Along with decent working conditions, retirement, and health care. All vitally affect our lives. A strong COPE program will protect our various interests.

At the local level COPE is essential. AFT Colorado will use your voluntary funds to assist in school board races, levies, and referendums in your district. Reductions in state education aid and inflation have made local budgets even more of a challenge. We use COPE dollars to work with labor and education friendly supporters on both sides of the aisle.

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