BUSINESS IS A FORCE FOR GOOD

Two New Reports, One Focus: Colorado's Economic Future

NEW REPORT: COBRT Releases Fall 2026 Executive Outlook Survey

Colorado business leaders are increasingly concerned about the state's economic outlook, even as they remain optimistic about their own companies' growth.

Released October 28, Colorado Business Roundtable's Fall 2026 Executive Outlook Survey captures perspectives from 53 senior executives at leading Colorado employers, revealing a growing divide between confidence in their businesses and concerns about the broader business climate.

Key findings include:

- 66% expect Colorado's business climate to decline over the next six months, compared with 51% nationally.
- 90% expect company sales to increase or remain steady.
- 42% plan to expand their Colorado workforce over the next year, up from 32% in the spring.
- 76% view the impact of state policy on their businesses negatively.
- 87% believe Amendment 87's proposed graduated income tax would worsen Colorado's economic competitiveness.

The findings underscore a central message: Colorado businesses remain resilient and ready to grow, but concerns about the state's policy and regulatory environment persist.

Read the Denver Business Journal's **coverage of the report**.

Read the Fall Executive Outlook Survey

NEW REPORT: Governor's Competitiveness Council Releases Roadmap for Colorado's Economic Future

Colorado has the talent, innovation, and quality of life to lead the nation, but growing challenges threaten our state's ability to attract and retain businesses, investment, and jobs.

On October 14, the Governor's Competitiveness Council released its Colorado Competitiveness Roadmap, outlining a path forward to strengthen Colorado's business climate and position our state for long-term economic success.

Developed through collaboration among business, education, economic development, and government leaders, the roadmap draws on economic research, peer-state benchmarking, and seven statewide listening sessions involving more than 490 participants.

The roadmap outlines 49 actionable recommendations across six priority areas:

- Regulatory Reform & Execution
- Tax & Fiscal Policy
- Capital & Scale
- Talent & Workforce
- Affordability & Housing
- Infrastructure & Site Readiness

COBRT President Debbie Brown served on the Council's Executive Committee, helping bring the perspectives of Colorado's leading employers to this important statewide effort. The roadmap marks an important milestone, but the real work lies ahead. Turning these recommendations into action will require continued collaboration and a shared commitment to Colorado's economic future.

Download the Roadmap & Recommendations

In the News

iHeartMedia's 850 KOA

Colorado Business Update: President and CEO of Upstate Colorado Richard Werner discusses Colorado's business competitiveness

Hosted by Jeana Gondek

On a recent episode of the Colorado Business Update on KOA Colorado's Morning News, Richard Werner, President and CEO of Upstate Colorado Economic Development and a member of the Governor's Competitiveness Council, talked through the Council's recommendations. **LISTEN HERE**

The Denver Gazette

GUEST OPINION: Amendment 87 nearly doubles Colorado tax rate

By Debbie Brown

Amendment 87 would nearly double Colorado's top income-tax rate, from 4.4% to 8.4%. That would leave Colorado with the ninth-highest state income-tax rate in the country — and the highest top-bracket rate in our region by a wide margin. New Mexico is next at 5.9%. Arizona's flat rate is 2.5%. Wyoming, Texas and Nevada have no income tax at all. It would also be the largest tax increase in Colorado state history for small and local businesses. **READ MORE**

Denver Business Journal

Aerospace leaders warn Colorado's regulatory environment threatens sector's competitive edge

By Brett Forrest

Dan Jablonsky took over the top leadership role for Sierra Space earlier this year, serving as CEO for the privately held Louisville-based company making satellites, space vehicle components, space station technologies and its long-in-development Dream Chaser space plane.

He said Colorado's regulatory environment and certain laws on the books are making it more difficult to operate his business as other states are competing more heavily for the aerospace sector. **READ MORE**

Happening Around COBRT

View from the Top: Leadership at Altitude

At the beginning of October, Colorado Business Roundtable brought together leaders from business, academia, government, and community for our annual View from the Top: Leadership at Altitude at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

From the runway to orbit, our speakers explored the leadership, innovation, and investment needed to keep Colorado at the forefront of aviation and aerospace.

A tremendous thank you to Laura Hopkins (Lockheed Martin), Dan Jablonsky (Sierra Space), and Laura Jackson (Denver International Airport) for sharing their perspectives, and to Janine Davidson (Metropolitan State University of Denver) for moderating an outstanding conversation.

We're grateful to our presenting sponsors, Southwest Airlines and CAP Logistics, along with all our sponsors, partners, and attendees who made this event possible.

Event Photos

Event Video Recording

Colorado Business Roundtable Ballot Briefing

With Election Day just a few days away, Colorado voters face important decisions that will shape our state's economic future.

On October 7, COBRT convened political, economic, and policy experts for a comprehensive discussion of the statewide ballot measures most relevant to Colorado's business community.

The briefing featured perspectives from both sides of several major initiatives, covering taxes, state spending, energy, conservation, and Colorado's broader economic outlook.

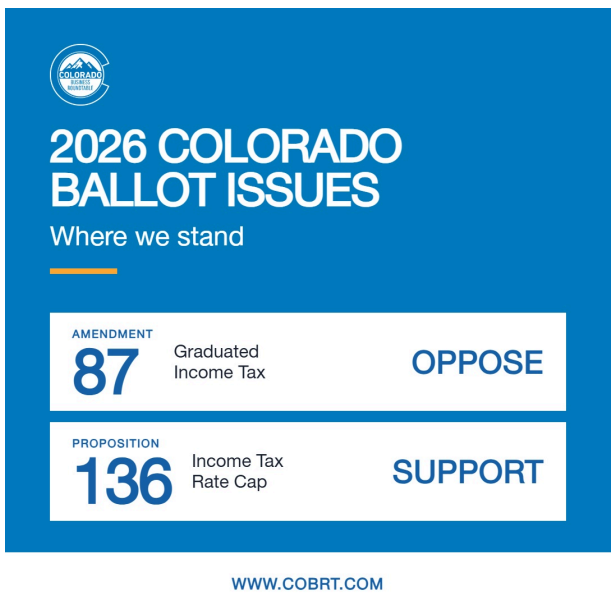
Thank you to our speakers and panelists: Kara van Stralen (Vista Strategies), DJ Summers (Common Sense Institute), Chris DeGruy Kennedy (Bell Policy Center), Ross Kaminsky (850 KOA/Common Sense Institute), Joe Kabourek (Yes for Colorado Kids), Penn Pfiffner (TABOR Committee), Kit Pfeiffer (Energy Freedom Alliance of the Rockies), Katie Farnan (No on Amendment 82), Alan Salazar (Denver Water), and Beth Hendrix (Colorado League of Women Voters).

Watch the Ballot Briefing Here

Colorado Business Roundtable Ballot Positions

Colorado Business Roundtable remains focused on advancing policies that strengthen Colorado's competitiveness and ensure our state remains a place where businesses and communities can thrive.

With that in mind, COBRT has announced its positions on two statewide ballot measures that directly impact Colorado's business climate and long-term competitiveness:



Amendment 87: Graduated Income Tax — COBRT OPPOSES

Amendment 87 would replace Colorado's flat income tax with a graduated system that raises taxes on higher-income individuals and corporations. At a time when Colorado faces growing competitiveness challenges, higher tax rates risk discouraging business investment, job creation, and the retention of employers and talent.

Proposition 136: Income Tax Rate Cap — COBRT SUPPORTS

Proposition 136 would provide greater stability and predictability in Colorado's tax environment. A competitive tax structure gives businesses confidence to invest, grow, and create opportunities for Coloradans.

Keeping Colorado Competitive: COBRT Featured in PBS12 Roundtable

What will it take to strengthen Colorado's economic competitiveness?

COBRT President Debbie Brown joined business and economic development leaders for a special episode of PBS12's The Business of Colorado, exploring the challenges and opportunities shaping our state's economic future.

Building on the findings of the Governor's Competitiveness Council, the discussion examines Colorado's business climate, workforce and talent challenges, and the policies needed to attract investment and drive long-term economic growth.

The conversation also features Leslie Oliver (Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce), Rich Werner (Upstate Colorado Economic Development), and Wendy Lea, moderated by Christine Heitz (Colorado Thrives). Thank you to Frannie Matthews (PBS12) for pulling together an excellent conversation!

Watch on YouTube | **Listen on Apple Podcasts** | **Listen on Spotify**

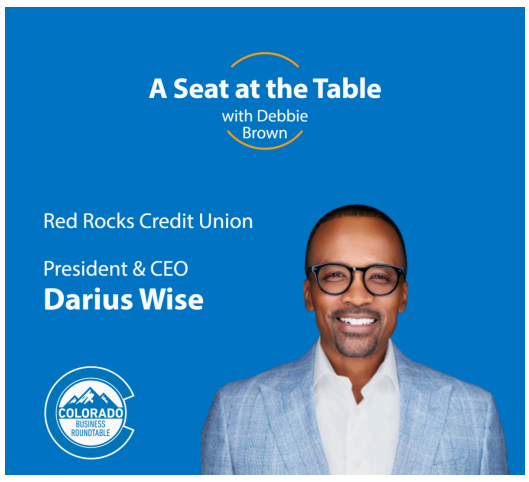
Recent Podcasts

Together We Climb featuring Jason Janz

On this episode of A Seat at the Table, Debbie Brown welcomes Jason back to the show to discuss his new book Together We Climb and his continued passion for his work.

Jason Janz co-founded **CrossPurpose** with Juan Pena in 2008, influenced greatly by spending his childhood and adolescence in poverty. With the goal of abolishing relational, economic, and spiritual poverty through career and community development, Jason's passion for social entrepreneurship and serving the poor is satisfied through his role as CEO where he builds the team, sets the organizational culture, and raises funds.

Listen Now



Leading by Example featuring Darius Wise

On this episode of A Seat at the Table, Darius Wise discusses his unusual career journey that ultimately led him to be at the helm of a financial institution. He explains the difference between credit unions and traditional banks, talks about the need for regulations and the need to ensure those regulations are doing what they're intending to do.

Darius is a thoughtful, savvy leader with many insights and an indefatigable sense of optimism about his work and empowering the people who work with him.

Listen Now

Planning Your Organization's 2027 Budget?

Explore COBRT's 2027 Signature Event sponsorship opportunities.

Contact Stephanie Piko at stephanie@cobrt.com to discuss COBRT partnership opportunities.

Colorado Business Roundtable (COBRT) is a coalition of CEOs and top executives from business, academia, community, and government who connect, collaborate, and influence solutions to Colorado's biggest economic challenges. COBRT Partners represent diverse business interests, political viewpoints, and philosophies, but they share one commitment: preserving a high quality of life for all Coloradans by building a robust, globally competitive economy.

At the core is a simple belief: Business is a Force for Good. Thriving businesses create jobs, opportunity, products and services, innovation, and investment while strengthening the communities we call home. Learn more and get engaged at **cobrt.com**.

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