



THE COLORADO 2027 PROJECT

National Context & the Role of the States

Though federal-level climate policy is threatened by science denial and rollbacks, we know from Trump's first term that doubling down on bold state leadership works. Consider:

- In 2017 at the beginning of Trump's first term, only 1% of people lived in a state with goals to cut carbon pollution 100% by 2050. Now, 40% live in a state that has those goals.
- State policy actions account for 70% of the US's climate emission reduction commitments (by comparison, the landmark federal climate bill, the Inflation Reduction Act, was projected at 11%)

Now more than ever, states matter.

In the 2026 election cycle, 38 governor's races will occur nationwide, most will be incumbents but there are open races in critical climate or political leadership states including Colorado, California, New Mexico, Georgia, Michigan, New Jersey, Virginia and Maine.

This is a critical opportunity to drive a national climate "race to the top."

We, along with our federal partners at the League of Conservation Voters, are collaborating with other national and state leaders to drive a climate and conservation "race to the top" in key Governors races.

The Colorado Opportunity

Next year, Colorado will have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to elect an entirely new state leadership, including Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Treasurer and three of four state legislative leadership positions.

These new leaders will determine Colorado's climate and conservation future, and collectively, these new governors across the nation will shape the conversation leading up to the 2028 presidential election.

Last fall, Conservation Colorado launched a three-year project we're calling Colorado 2027 to be ready for this race to the top and next generation of state leadership. There are three key elements to the Colorado 2027 project:

Our goals of Colorado 2027 include:

- Developing the policy blueprint for the next generation of Colorado climate and conservation leadership,
- Educating and engaging candidates, and
- Engaging the community including the media, donors, the public and partner groups.