



Statement of Agreement
September 2011

Colorado faces a large and growing imbalance between the revenues it collects and the costs of the services it provides. This imbalance is structural, and it threatens the effectiveness of public systems that are essential to opportunity, prosperity and our quality of life in Colorado. These include our schools, colleges and universities, transportation system and health and safety-net programs.

We cannot simply grow our way out of this imbalance. While recent economic downturns exacerbated the problem, it will persist long after the economy recovers. Its causes are complex and include demographic, cost and structural factors. Among these are an aging population, increased poverty rates, the high rate of medical inflation and a tax system that is outdated, inflexible and increasingly ineffective.

For more than a decade, Colorado has relied mostly on constraining spending and reducing services to address this imbalance. We should continue to carefully scrutinize expenditures, assess priorities, try new strategies and insist on frugal and efficient government. But Colorado's state spending is now constrained to the point that many essential public systems are jeopardized.

Today, after dramatic cuts in virtually every state program, additional revenue has become an essential component of a permanent fix for the state. Any effective solution should increase revenues to provide adequate and stable support for our essential public systems in the future.

We commit to work together to build consensus around a solution that meets that standard, to increase public understanding of the imbalance we are trying to correct, and to build the public will for change.


Signed

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