

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-second General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R20-1299.01 Ed DeCecco x4216

HR20-1004

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Geitner, Baisley, Bockenfeld, Buck, Carver, Catlin, Champion, Holtorf, Humphrey, Landgraf, Larson, Liston, McKean, Neville, Pelton, Ransom, Rich, Saine, Sandridge, Soper, Van Winkle, Will, Williams D., Wilson

House Committees

HOUSE RESOLUTION 20-1004

101 **CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE**
102 **HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED VETERANS.**

1 WHEREAS, In 2000, the voters of the state approved an
2 amendment to the Colorado Constitution adding the senior homestead
3 exemption, which provides property tax relief for qualifying senior
4 citizens and their surviving spouses; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2006, Colorado voters expanded the exemption to
6 include disabled veterans; and

7 WHEREAS, As home values have risen and property taxes
8 increased, it has become increasingly difficult for seniors and disabled
9 veterans to pay their property taxes, particularly for those with limited and
10 fixed incomes; and

11 WHEREAS, The senior homestead exemption is therefore critical
12 for many seniors and disabled veterans, as it allows them to pay reduced
13 property taxes and to stay in their homes; and

14 WHEREAS, The public health emergency related to COVID-19

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 has caused a severe decrease in the state's general fund for fiscal year
2 2020-21 and beyond, and the General Assembly is faced with making
3 difficult financial decisions on behalf of the people of Colorado; and

4 WHEREAS, Seniors are at a higher risk for developing more
5 serious complications from COVID-19, and, therefore, many seniors may
6 choose to isolate for longer periods of time, which in turn deprives them
7 of opportunities to earn income and makes it more difficult for them to
8 make property tax payments; and

9 WHEREAS, In tough times such as these, it is imperative that the
10 state budget reflect the true priorities of the people of Colorado, and
11 protecting our seniors and our disabled veterans is of paramount
12 importance; and

13 WHEREAS, The 2020 Long Bill was part of a balanced budget
14 insofar as it was based on an assumption that there would be an additional
15 \$260 million of general fund made available either through bills that
16 reduce general fund obligations or increase the amount of the general
17 fund available for appropriation; and

18 WHEREAS, One budget-balancing proposal to reduce general
19 fund obligations that the joint budget committee considered was a
20 proposal to suspend the homestead exemption for seniors and disabled
21 veterans; and

22 WHEREAS, In order to preserve the senior homestead exemption,
23 numerous amendments to the 2020 Long Bill were offered in the House
24 of Representatives to decrease the general fund appropriations in an
25 amount that would reserve the necessary funds to protect the exemption
26 as enshrined in the Colorado Constitution; and

27 WHEREAS, The general fund reductions in amendments J.001,
28 J.003, J.005, J.017, J.019, J.022, J.025, J.033, J.035, J.039, J.045, J.057,
29 J.062, J.063, J.065, and J.070 to multiple departments for various
30 programs would have reduced general fund expenditures by nearly \$600
31 million; and

32 WHEREAS, Adopting some or all of these amendments would
33 have provided ample revenue to guarantee that it would be unnecessary
34 to suspend the senior homestead exemption to balance the budget; and

1 WHEREAS, Those amendments were struck down, leaving the
2 senior homestead exemption on the potential chopping block, which
3 could make our state's seniors and veterans vulnerable to financial
4 hardship; and

5 WHEREAS, Despite the failure to adopt these amendments to the
6 2020 Long Bill, it is important to acknowledge the significance of and to
7 commit to the preservation of the senior homestead exemption, as it was
8 and is the will of the people of the state of Colorado to offer such a
9 critical program to our seniors and disabled veterans; now, therefore,

10 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the*
11 *Seventy-second General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

12 That we, the members of the Colorado House of Representatives,
13 recognize the importance of the senior homestead exemption and its
14 direct benefit to our state's seniors and disabled veterans, who deserve
15 protection from financial hardship and who are vulnerable to both the
16 health and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

17 *Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Resolution be sent to
18 the Colorado Senate.