

CHAPTER 266

GOVERNMENT - LOCAL

SENATE BILL 25-149

BY SENATOR(S) Daugherty, Amabile, Ball, Bridges, Cutter, Jodeh, Snyder, Winter F.;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Feret, Lindsay, Phillips, Stewart R., Titone, Willford.

AN ACT

CONCERNING MEASURES AFFECTING EQUESTRIANS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

- (a) The equestrian community in Colorado is a vibrant and valued segment of the state's cultural heritage and recreational activities, utilizing the state's roads, trails, and public lands;
- (b) Equestrians play a critical role in Colorado's tourism, rural and suburban economies, and broader agricultural and recreational industries, driving economic growth and supporting job creation across the state;
- (c) The 2023 American Horse Council impact study estimates over 180,000 horses are housed on 430,700 acres in the state;
- (d) The economic effects in the United States of the equestrian recreational sector include direct employment in 277,716 jobs, total employment in 466,969 jobs, and a direct contribution to the economy of \$14.548 billion;
- (e) The economic effects in the United States of the equestrian competition sector include direct employment in 301,527 jobs, total employment in 486,820 jobs, and direct contribution to the economy of \$15.628 billion;
- (f) The economic effects in the United States of the equestrian racing sector include direct employment in 312,484 jobs, total employment in 491,232 jobs, and a direct contribution to the economy of \$16.049 billion;

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

(g) A 2017 American Horse Council impact study breakout for Colorado estimated:

(I) Horse ownership, equine institutions and profit-making organizations, and tourism spending by participants and spectators combine for a \$3.1 billion economic impact;

(II) Approximately 676,000 households in Colorado contain horse enthusiasts, and for every horse-owning household, 22 other households contain horse enthusiasts who participate in activities, events, or support of the industry;

(III) Two hundred twenty thousand households participate in trail riding, with 87% utilizing public lands, and 187,000 households participated in equestrian lessons; moreover, an additional 33% of participants who trail ride in Colorado are from out of state;

(IV) The equestrian recreational sector supports 16,712 jobs with a total economic contribution of \$1.49 billion to the state economy;

(V) The equestrian competition sector supports 6,796 jobs with a total economic contribution of \$589 million to the state economy;

(VI) The equestrian racing sector supports 1,612 jobs with a total economic contribution of \$93 million to the state economy;

(VII) The equine therapy sector supports 262 jobs with a total economic impact of \$11.3 million; and

(VIII) Equine rescue and sanctuaries support 42 jobs with a total economic impact of \$1.9 million;

(h) Equestrian activities are vital to Colorado's communities, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation that promote physical health, mental well-being, and the preservation of open spaces;

(i) Colorado's growing population has increased the presence of equestrians on roadways and trails, yet riders face significant safety risks due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of designated roadways, and unclear or conflicting regulations;

(j) The absence of specific legislative protections and infrastructure for equestrians has led to conflicts with motorized traffic, resulting in accidents, injuries, and fatalities for both riders and drivers;

(k) Existing traffic laws and systems fail to address the unique needs of equestrians, including wide-passing zones, safe crossings, properly designated parking, and staging areas for equestrian activities;

(l) Public safety and equitable access to recreation are essential to Colorado's commitment to fostering a harmonious environment for all road users, including motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians, while protecting diverse outdoor activities; and

(m) Enhancing the safety, access, and recognition of the equestrian community supports Colorado's commitment to protecting diverse outdoor activities, responsibly using public lands, and fostering mutual respect among all users.

(2) Now, therefore, the general assembly of the state of Colorado declares that it is necessary and in the public interest to enact legislation to:

(a) Ensure representation of the equestrian community in transportation, recreational, and land-use planning by establishing equestrian zones;

(b) Implement a "pass wide and slow" policy for vehicles approaching or passing equestrians on roadways to enhance safety for riders, drivers, and cyclists;

(c) Establish clear standards for equestrian road crossings to provide safe and designated transitions between trails, parks, and public roads;

(d) Develop designated equestrian parking zones and trail heads with facilities for horse trailers and safe staging areas; and

(e) Promote public awareness to educate drivers, cyclists, and other road users about the safety needs and rights of equestrians.

(3) The general assembly further declares that, by enacting this legislation, the state of Colorado will take meaningful steps toward fostering a safer, more inclusive, and sustainable transportation and recreational environment for the equestrian community, while contributing to the preservation and enjoyment of the state's outdoor traditions.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 24-33.5-231 as follows:

24-33.5-231. Chief - equestrian - education. THE CHIEF MAY EDUCATE COUNTY SHERIFFS AND OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES ABOUT EQUESTRIAN ZONES AND EQUESTRIAN SAFETY.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 30-11-133 as follows:

30-11-133. Construction and maintenance of equestrian facilities. (1) (a) A COUNTY MAY CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS OR HORSE-TRAILER PARKING NECESSARY TO ACCESS EQUESTRIAN TRAILS. EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS MAY BE USED BY OTHER PEDESTRIANS AND NEED NOT CONTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE NOT NORMALLY USED FOR PEDESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS.

(b) A COUNTY MAY REQUIRE A PERSON THAT IS DEVELOPING LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL USE TO CONSTRUCT EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS, HORSE-TRAILER PARKING, OR EQUESTRIAN-SAFETY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY PERMITS.

(c) A COUNTY MAY INSTALL SIGNS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 30-28-141, THAT NOTIFY THE PUBLIC OF EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS, HORSE-TRAILER PARKING, OR EQUESTRIAN-SAFETY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS.

(2) A COUNTY MAY IDENTIFY LOCATIONS WHERE EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS ARE NEEDED TO SAFELY USE HORSE TRAILS. WHEN A LOCATION IS IDENTIFIED, THE COUNTY MAY CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN THE EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSING. THE CROSSING MUST:

(a) HAVE APPROPRIATE SIGNS NOTIFYING ROAD USERS OF THE EQUESTRIAN CROSSING; AND

(b) BE CLEARLY MARKED ON THE ROAD.

(3) A COUNTY SHALL OBTAIN THE PERMISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CONSTRUCT AN EQUESTRIAN FACILITY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION ON A STATE HIGHWAY OR A RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR A STATE HIGHWAY.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 30-28-106, **add** (9) as follows:

30-28-106. Master plan - definitions. (9) (a) AS USED IN THIS SUBSECTION (9):

(I) "EQUESTRIAN" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 31-23-206 (9)(a)(I).

(II) "EQUESTRIAN ZONE" MEANS AN AREA THAT A COUNTY DETERMINES IS SUBURBAN OR URBAN AND CONTAINS:

(A) AN EQUESTRIAN FAIRGROUND, PUBLIC EQUESTRIAN RIDING ARENA, PUBLIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER, OR PUBLIC RIDING TRAIL;

(B) AN EQUESTRIAN-CENTRIC RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE EQUESTRIANS REGULARLY RIDE AND THAT WAS ZONED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO ALLOW HOUSING PRIVATELY OWNED EQUINES BUT IS NOW BEING DEVELOPED FOR PRIMARILY RESIDENTIAL USE OR THAT IS ZONED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO ALLOW HOUSING PRIVATELY OWNED EQUINES;

(C) A KEYSTONE PROPERTY; OR

(D) ROADS OR TRAILS THAT EQUESTRIANS USE AND THAT ARE RELATED TO AN AREA DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS (9)(a)(II)(A) TO (9)(a)(II)(C) OF THIS SECTION.

(III) "KEYSTONE PROPERTY" MEANS A PROPERTY THAT HAS AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES:

(A) BOARDING FACILITIES THAT PROVIDE HOUSING FOR EQUINES, TRAINING FOR EQUESTRIANS, OR EQUINE SERVICE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

(B) EQUINE STABLES THAT FACILITATE ANIMAL WELFARE RESCUE PROGRAMS OR EQUINE THERAPY PROGRAMS;

(C) BREEDING FACILITIES FOR EQUINES; OR

(D) NONPUBLIC EQUESTRIAN VENUES THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE EQUESTRIAN COMMUNITY.

(IV) "SUBURBAN OR URBAN" MEANS THE POPULATION AND TRAFFIC DENSITY ARE SUFFICIENT TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT AND REGULAR INTERACTIONS BETWEEN EQUESTRIANS AND MOTOR VEHICLES OR OTHER RESIDENTS.

(b) A COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MAY IDENTIFY AND SHOW ON THE MASTER PLAN THE LOCATION OF AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED EQUESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE, VENUES, AND EQUESTRIAN ZONES.

(c) A COUNTY MAY ORGANIZE PUBLIC EVENTS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT EQUESTRIAN USE OF RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND ROADS AND THE DUTIES OF USERS OF TRAILS AND ROADS WITH REGARD TO EQUESTRIAN USERS. A COUNTY MAY PARTNER WITH LOCAL HORSE ADVOCACY GROUPS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THESE MATTERS OR TO HOLD THE PUBLIC EVENTS.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 30-28-141** as follows:

30-28-141. Equestrian map and signs. (1) A COUNTY MAY PUBLISH A MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED EQUESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE. THE MAP MAY BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE. THE MAP MUST INCLUDE:

(a) EQUESTRIAN VENUES, INCLUDING FAIRGROUNDS, EQUESTRIAN PARKS, PUBLIC ARENAS, AND RIDING SCHOOLS;

(b) EQUESTRIAN TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING TRAILS, DESIGNATED TRAILER PARKING, AND ACCESS POINTS TO TRAILS;

(c) EQUESTRIAN-DESIGNATED ROAD CROSSINGS; AND

(d) EQUESTRIAN ZONES, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 30-28-106 (9)(a)(II).

(2) A COUNTY MAY POST ROAD SIGNS BEARING THE UNIVERSAL EQUESTRIAN SIGN SYMBOL AND THE WORDS "WIDE AND SLOW" ON ROADS DETERMINED TO BE EQUESTRIAN ZONES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 30-28-106 (9)(a)(II).

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 31-15-717** as follows:

31-15-717. Construction and maintenance of equestrian facilities - exception. (1) (a) A MUNICIPALITY MAY CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS OR HORSE-TRAILER PARKING NECESSARY TO ACCESS EQUESTRIAN TRAILS. EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS MAY BE USED BY OTHER PEDESTRIANS AND NEED NOT CONTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE NOT NORMALLY USED FOR PEDESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS.

(b) A MUNICIPALITY MAY REQUIRE A PERSON THAT IS DEVELOPING LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL USE TO CONSTRUCT EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS, HORSE-TRAILER PARKING, OR EQUESTRIAN-SAFETY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY PERMITS.

(c) A MUNICIPALITY MAY INSTALL SIGNS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION

31-23-228, THAT NOTIFY THE PUBLIC OF EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS, HORSE-TRAILER PARKING, OR EQUESTRIAN-SAFETY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS.

(2) A MUNICIPALITY MAY IDENTIFY LOCATIONS WHERE EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSINGS ARE NEEDED TO SAFELY USE HORSE TRAILS. WHEN A LOCATION IS IDENTIFIED, THE MUNICIPALITY MAY CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN THE EQUESTRIAN ROAD CROSSING. THE CROSSING MUST:

(a) HAVE APPROPRIATE SIGNS NOTIFYING ROAD USERS OF THE EQUESTRIAN CROSSING; AND

(b) BE CLEARLY MARKED ON THE ROAD.

(3) A MUNICIPALITY SHALL OBTAIN THE PERMISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CONSTRUCT AN EQUESTRIAN FACILITY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION ON A STATE HIGHWAY OR A RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR A STATE HIGHWAY.

SECTION 7. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 31-23-228 as follows:

31-23-228. Equestrian map and signs. (1) A MUNICIPALITY MAY PUBLISH A MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED EQUESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE. THE MAP MAY BE PUBLISHED ON THE MUNICIPALITY'S WEBSITE. THE MAP MUST INCLUDE:

(a) EQUESTRIAN VENUES, INCLUDING FAIRGROUNDS, EQUESTRIAN PARKS, PUBLIC ARENAS, AND RIDING SCHOOLS;

(b) EQUESTRIAN TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING TRAILS, DESIGNATED TRAILER PARKING, AND ACCESS POINTS TO TRAILS;

(c) EQUESTRIAN-DESIGNATED ROAD CROSSINGS; AND

(d) EQUESTRIAN ZONES, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 31-23-206 (9)(a)(II).

(2) A MUNICIPALITY MAY POST ROAD SIGNS BEARING THE UNIVERSAL EQUESTRIAN SIGN SYMBOL AND THE WORDS "WIDE AND SLOW" ON ROADS DETERMINED TO BE EQUESTRIAN ZONES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 31-23-206 (9)(a)(II).

SECTION 8. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 31-23-206, **add** (9) as follows:

31-23-206. Master plan - definitions. (9) (a) AS USED IN THIS SUBSECTION (9):

(I) (A) "EQUESTRIAN" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS RIDING A HORSE, LEADING A HORSE, OR RIDING IN A VEHICLE DRAWN BY A HORSE.

(B) "EQUESTRIAN" INCLUDES THE HORSE BEING RIDDEN, BEING LED, OR DRAWING A VEHICLE, AS EACH ARE DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (9)(a)(I)(A) OF THIS SECTION.

(II) "EQUESTRIAN ZONE" MEANS AN AREA THAT A MUNICIPALITY DETERMINES IS SUBURBAN OR URBAN AND CONTAINS:

(A) AN EQUESTRIAN FAIRGROUND, PUBLIC EQUESTRIAN RIDING ARENA, PUBLIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER, OR PUBLIC RIDING TRAIL;

(B) AN EQUESTRIAN-CENTRIC RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE EQUESTRIANS REGULARLY RIDE AND THAT WAS ZONED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO ALLOW HOUSING PRIVATELY OWNED EQUINES BUT IS NOW BEING DEVELOPED FOR PRIMARILY RESIDENTIAL USE OR THAT IS ZONED IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO ALLOW HOUSING PRIVATELY OWNED EQUINES;

(C) A KEYSTONE PROPERTY; OR

(D) ROADS OR TRAILS THAT EQUESTRIANS USE AND THAT ARE RELATED TO AN AREA DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS (9)(a)(II)(A) TO (9)(a)(II)(C) OF THIS SECTION.

(III) "KEYSTONE PROPERTY" MEANS A PROPERTY THAT HAS AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES:

(A) BOARDING FACILITIES THAT PROVIDE HOUSING FOR EQUINES, TRAINING FOR EQUESTRIANS, OR EQUINE SERVICE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

(B) EQUINE STABLES THAT FACILITATE ANIMAL WELFARE RESCUE PROGRAMS OR EQUINE THERAPY PROGRAMS;

(C) BREEDING FACILITIES FOR EQUINES; OR

(D) NONPUBLIC EQUESTRIAN VENUES THAT PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE EQUESTRIAN COMMUNITY.

(IV) "SUBURBAN OR URBAN" MEANS THE POPULATION AND TRAFFIC DENSITY ARE SUFFICIENT TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT AND REGULAR INTERACTIONS BETWEEN EQUESTRIANS AND MOTOR VEHICLES OR OTHER RESIDENTS.

(b) A MUNICIPALITY WITH A MASTER PLAN MAY IDENTIFY AND SHOW ON THE MASTER PLAN THE LOCATION OF AND CHARACTER OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED EQUESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE, VENUES, AND EQUESTRIAN ZONES.

(c) A MUNICIPALITY MAY ORGANIZE PUBLIC EVENTS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT EQUESTRIAN USE OF RECREATIONAL TRAILS AND ROADS AND THE DUTIES OF USERS OF TRAILS AND ROADS WITH REGARD TO EQUESTRIAN USERS. A MUNICIPALITY MAY PARTNER WITH LOCAL HORSE ADVOCACY GROUPS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THESE MATTERS OR TO HOLD THE PUBLIC EVENTS.

SECTION 9. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 42-4-805, **amend** (1) as follows:

42-4-805. Pedestrians walking or traveling in a wheelchair on highways.

(1) Pedestrians walking or traveling in a wheelchair along and upon highways where sidewalks are not provided shall walk or travel only on a road shoulder as far as practicable from the edge of the roadway. Where neither a sidewalk nor road shoulder is available, any pedestrian walking or traveling in a wheelchair along and upon a highway shall walk OR TRAVEL as near as practicable to an outside edge of the roadway and, in the case of a two-way roadway, shall walk or travel only on the

left side of the roadway facing traffic that may approach from the opposite direction; except that:

(a) ~~any person~~ AN INDIVIDUAL lawfully soliciting a ride may stand on either side of ~~such~~ A two-way roadway where there is a view of traffic approaching from both directions; AND

(b) AN INDIVIDUAL RIDING OR LEADING A HORSE MAY TRAVEL ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD WITH THE DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC.

SECTION 10. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 42-2-603, **amend** (3) as follows:

42-2-603. Rules. (3) In adopting the rules, the department shall:

(a) Use the guidelines concerning commercial driving schools ~~promulgated~~ ADOPTED by the United States department of transportation; AND

(b) INCLUDE IN THE CURRICULA GUIDELINES FOR SHARING THE ROAD WITH EQUESTRIANS THAT INCLUDE, WHEN SHARING THE ROAD WITH EQUESTRIANS, THE ADVICE THAT THE DRIVER:

(I) PROCEED WITH DUE CARE AND CAUTION TO AVOID CAUSING INJURY TO THE EQUESTRIAN;

(II) NOT EXCEED TEN MILES PER HOUR; AND

(III) (A) MAINTAIN AT LEAST SIX FEET OF DISTANCE FROM THE EQUESTRIAN WHEN PASSING UNLESS TRAFFIC CONDITIONS MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN SIX FEET OF DISTANCE; OR

(B) MAINTAIN AS MUCH DISTANCE AS POSSIBLE FROM THE EQUESTRIAN IF TRAFFIC CONDITIONS MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN SIX FEET OF DISTANCE.

SECTION 11. Act subject to petition - effective date - applicability. (1) This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

(2) This act applies to offenses committed on or after the applicable effective date of this act.

Approved: May 28, 2025