



# A Message from Mike

President & CEO of Gary Community Investments

October 7, 2020

## Building Strong Children and Healthy Adults

When ballots start to arrive later this week, Coloradans will have a chance to support a historic first with Proposition EE. If passed by voters in November, Prop EE would create our first ever universal preschool program for 4-year-olds statewide and take bold steps to address the crisis of teen vaping.

Just two years ago, Colorado did not even offer full-day kindergarten, let alone universal preschool. Both Jared Polis and I campaigned for Governor in 2018 on a promise to deliver full-day kindergarten, and I was thrilled when Governor Polis signed a bill into law last year funding full-day kindergarten statewide.

But we can't stop there.

Proposition EE will make Colorado a national leader: the first state in the country to deliver a unique two-tiered approach that offers 10 hours a week of free and universal preschool to every 4-year-old in the state through a mixed delivery system that empowers parents to pick the local preschool provider they like best. Plus, almost half of the money will go to provide extended hours to our highest-need students to ensure they enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Colorado also has the highest teen vaping rate in the country and vaping is the only tobacco product that is not taxed AT ALL in Colorado. Proposition EE will ensure Colorado children get an early start and a healthy finish by increasing the tax on regular tobacco, and putting in place a tax on vaping for the first time that will equalize the taxation level of all forms of tobacco. We know the two populations that are most price sensitive are young people and low-income users. For every 10% increase in the price of tobacco, 7% of teenagers stop using tobacco products altogether, which means these tax increases are most likely to vastly improve health outcomes for teenagers and price sensitive low-income tobacco users.

This is why Gary Community Investments has made Prop EE one of our top priorities for 2020, working hard over the last nine months to help develop this proposal, shepherd it through the legislature with key allies, and support the [campaign](#) to pass it at the ballot. To learn more about how the policy will benefit Colorado kids and families, [check out this video](#), and remember this...

It was Frederick Douglass who once said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." It's a sentiment that is not just a moral truth, but also a financial one. To support this historic commitment to making sure Colorado leads the country in building strong children and healthy adults, [follow the Yes on EE campaign](#) or share my reasons for voting Yes on EE through the Gary Community Investments [facebook](#) and [twitter](#) pages.

Mike

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