

Colorado Common Cause is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to preserving the values of American democracy, including government transparency and accountability.

The Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) which allows any person access to government records, is important to ensuring that we know what our government is doing, and is a means to ultimately hold our government accountable to its citizens. Over the years, the form and breadth of government records have changed from paper files to digital files, from mailed letters to emails. Keeping CORA “current” in terms of access to records is important to securing its original purpose.

We endorse the provisions of HB 23-286. Providing public records in digital format and preserving the functionality of those documents, whether that is searchability or sortability or both, is important. Records are more flexible and useful with such features preserved. We also endorse the provisions that make the final reports of a government-authorized investigation into alleged sexual harassment in the workplace by an elected official subject to CORA.

While it is appropriate to allow the use of credit cards to pay CORA fees, we are disappointed that SB 286 does not address the issue of the rising CORA fees for the general public. It is important that the costs associated with accessing records not be prohibitive to the public.

Despite this omission, we ask for a Yes vote on SB 23-286.