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STATE OF COLORADO

"BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE"

GOOD MORNING.

THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW SESSION. IT IS ALSO THE BEGINNING OF A NEW DECADE. WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT OUR AGENDA FOR EACH.

OUR CHALLENGE IS TO FOCUS BOTH SHORT-TERM, ON SOLVING OUR IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS, AND LONG-TERM, ON BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR COLORADO'S FUTURE.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE: WHEN A PIONEER FARMER FIRST JOURNEYED TO THE ARKANSAS VALLEY IN MY HOME COUNTY, HIS IMMEDIATE PROBLEM WAS TO FIND LAND TO RAISE CROPS AND VEGETABLES FOR THE NEXT WINTER. HIS STRATEGIC PROBLEM WAS TO CONSTRUCT A CANAL THAT WOULD LET HIM IRRIGATE THAT LAND. HE HAD TO MAKE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM DECISIONS AT THE SAME TIME.

THAT'S WHAT WE MUST DO IN COLORADO IN 1990. OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA IS ON YOUR DESK. IT'S OUR SHORT-TERM TASK. I'LL HIGHLIGHT IT LATER.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT OUR LONG-TERM STRATEGY.

WE CANNOT BE STRATEGIC UNLESS WE KNOW THE WORLD WE LIVE IN. IT HAS TWO KEY CHARACTERISTICS. ONE, IT IS CHANGING VERY RAPIDLY. TWO, WE ARE PART OF A GLOBAL MARKETPLACE.

WE MUST BEGIN WITH THE FACT OF CHANGE. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE VELOCITY AND CHARACTER OF CHANGE.

FOR EXAMPLE, POLITICALLY, THE REVOLUTION IN EASTERN EUROPE HAS FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED THE FACE OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS.

ECONOMICALLY, 20 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S WEALTH NOW IS PRODUCED IN THE PACIFIC RIM. IN A FEW YEARS, IT WILL BE 40 PERCENT.

TECHNOLOGICALLY, WHAT BEGAN WITH THE TELEPHONE AND THE RADIO HAS EXPANDED TO TELEVISION, COMPUTERS, SATELLITES, FAX MACHINES, AND WILL EXPLODE IN ITS APPLICATIONS TO OUR LIVES IN THE YEARS AHEAD. THESE ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY WILL CHANGE WHERE WE LIVE, HOW WE WORK, HOW WE EDUCATE, HOW WE SHOP, HOW WE BANK, WHETHER WE TRAVEL (OR VISIT WITH INTERACTIVE VIDEO), HOW WE ARE ENTERTAINED, HOW WE SUPERVISE. BUT MOST OF ALL, IT WILL CHANGE HOW WE TRANSMIT VALUES.

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, THE TRIBE AND THE FAMILY WERE THE PRIMARY TRANSMITTERS OF INFORMATION, VALUES, AND LIFESTYLE. NOW, IN OUR AGE, THESE TRADITIONAL FORMS HAVE TO COMPETE WITH THE TV AND OTHER FORMS OF MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS.

WE CANNOT BUILD FOUNDATIONS FOR COLORADO'S FUTURE UNLESS WE UNDERSTAND HOW RAPIDLY THE WORLD IS CHANGING.

NOW LET ME SPEAK BRIEFLY OF THE GLOBAL NATURE OF OUR ECONOMY. IT IS CLEAR THAT COLORADO'S COMPETITION IS NOT JUST KANSAS, BUT ALSO KOREA. THAT IS TRUE TODAY. IT WILL BE EVEN MORE TRUE IN THE YEARS AHEAD. OUR TRADE, OUR BANKING, OUR PRODUCTION, OUR DELIVERY OF SERVICES, OUR TRAVEL ARE WORLDWIDE. THE NATIONAL AND STATE BARRIERS THAT WE ONCE KNEW ARE FAST DISSOLVING AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGES IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION AND IN INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE AND COMPETITION. IT IS A FACT OF LIFE. WE NEED TO ABSORB IT IF WE ARE GOING TO SUCCEED IN THINKING STRATEGICALLY.

NEXT STEP. TO BE STRATEGIC, WE NEED TO KNOW: WHAT DOES COLORADO BRING TO THE TABLE? WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT US? WHAT ARE OUR STRENGTHS? LET ME DESCRIBE THREE: FIRST, OUR GEOGRAPHY. SECOND, OUR ENVIRONMENT. THIRD, OUR PEOPLE.

FIRST, GEOGRAPHY. COLORADO IS THE CENTER OF THE WEST. WE'RE ALREADY THE REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR. WE'RE A CENTRAL TRANSPORTATION HUB OF THE UNITED STATES BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST COASTS.

IN ADDITION, WE'RE IN A UNIQUE POSITION TO CAPTURE THE BENEFITS OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS. OUR LONGITUDE GIVES US DIRECT SATELLITE UPLINK CAPABILITIES TO TWO HEMISPHERES.

WE'RE ALSO HALFWAY BETWEEN JAPAN AND GERMANY BY AIR. THEREFORE, WE CAN OFFER EUROPEANS AND PACIFIC RIM ECONOMIES A SINGLE STOPOVER FOR TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN THE TWO REGIONS AND A SINGLE SATELLITE UPLINK AND DOWNLINK CAPABILITY.

WE ALSO ARE STRATEGICALLY LOCATED ON THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT FOR NORTH-SOUTH COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION. WE'RE LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COUNTRY, BETWEEN TWO OF OUR MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS, CANADA AND MEXICO. IF YOU DRAW A LINE DOWN THE SPINE OF THIS CONTINENT, IT GOES THROUGH COLORADO. THEREFORE, WE ARE TRULY A CROSSROADS BOTH IN TRANSPORTATION AND IN COMMUNICATION.

THAT'S WHY WE ALL FOUGHT HARD FOR APPROVAL OF A NEW AIRPORT IN TWO ELECTIONS. THAT'S WHY WE WORKED TO GIVE COLORADO PRODUCTS AND SERVICES A FOOTHOLD IN THE PACIFIC AND EUROPEAN MARKETS AND IN THE CANADIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN MARKETS.

THE NEXT ADVANTAGE WE HAVE IN COLORADO IS OUR ENVIRONMENT. WE ARE ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE PLACES ON EARTH TO LIVE, TO WORK AND TO RECREATE.

THAT UNIQUENESS WILL BECOME MORE IMPORTANT IN THE FUTURE. IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS, BECAUSE OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, PEOPLE WILL HAVE MORE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE WHERE THEY LIVE. THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF A PLACE, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE WILL DRAW EMPLOYERS, ENTREPRENEURS, TALENTED WORKERS, AND TOURISTS.

THAT'S WHY WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR CLEAN AIR AND AN EXPANSION OF OUR PARKS. THAT'S WHY WE HAVE FOUGHT TO CLEAN UP ROCKY FLATS, THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL, AND OTHER CONTAMINATED SITES.

OUR THIRD ADVANTAGE IS OUR PEOPLE. WE HAVE A SKILLED AND TALENTED ADULT POPULATION. WE ALSO HAVE AN ETHIC THAT GREW OUT OF THE FRONTIER. ITS INGREDIENTS ARE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY, HARD WORK, A WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS, TO INNOVATE, TO BE DISCIPLINED, AND TO BE INDEPENDENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT.

THAT'S WHY, WHEN THE BOTTOM FELL OUT OF OUR ECONOMY IN THE MID-1980S, WE DIDN'T WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS. WE GOT UP EARLIER. WE WORKED HARDER. WE WENT TO BED LATER. TOGETHER, WE CALLED UPON THE STRENGTH OF THIS ETHIC TO PULL COLORADO OUT OF A DEEP RECESSION.

WE HAVE SAID THAT TO BE STRATEGIC, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE WORLD, ITS RAPID CHANGE, AND THE GLOBAL MARKET.

WE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT COLORADO BRINGS SOME UNIQUE STRENGTHS TO THE TABLE THAT GIVE US AN ADVANTAGE.

NOW WE'RE READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP. HOW DO WE SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY THAT IS OURS? I HAVE SUGGESTED IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FIVE-YEAR PLAN THAT IS ON YOUR DESK THAT THERE ARE FIVE KEY STRATEGIES. THEY CONSITITUTE OUR ONGOING ECONOMIC AGENDA.

THE FIVE STRATEGIES ARE:

- BUILD A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM;
- CREATE QUALITY JOBS;
- STRENGTHEN RURAL COMMUNITIES;
- PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT; AND
- BUILD NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE.

I BELIEVE EDUCATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT ARE THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE STRATEGIES TO OUR LONG-TERM SUCCESS. BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPORTANCE, I'M GOING TO DISCUSS THEM IN DETAIL LATER IN THIS SPEECH.

BUT LET ME COMMENT FIRST ON THE OTHER STRATEGIES.

THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN IS A CONTINUATION OF THE ECONOMIC AGENDA WE SET IN 1987 IN THE PLAN FOR A COMPETITIVE COLORADO. WE ALREADY HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL OF THAT 1987 AGENDA -- AND I MEAN YOU, THE

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS. WE MADE 124 SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS IN THAT FIRST PLAN AND WE'VE IMPLEMENTED OR ARE IMPLEMENTING MORE THAN 90 PERCENT OF THEM.

LOOK WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER.

WE'VE MOVED OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF A RECESSION.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS DOWN.

PERSONAL INCOME IS UP.

RETAIL SALES ARE COMING BACK.

COLORADO GAINED MORE THAN 30,000 JOBS LAST YEAR.

WE ARE GAINING OUR POPULATION BACK.

MOST SIGNIFICANTLY, FOR A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION, WE HAVE FORMED A WORKING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO CREATE NEW JOBS THAT IS STRONGER THAN THIS STATE HAS EVER SEEN.

WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS. YOU SHOULD FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT BECAUSE WE DID IT TOGETHER.

HAVING SAID THAT, LET'S NOW LOOK FORWARD.

IN TERMS OF JOBS, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND INFRASTRUCTURE, OUR DRAFT PLAN IS VERY SPECIFIC. WE HAVE PROPOSED 39 INITIATIVES FOR JOB CREATION, 29 INITIATIVES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND 17 INITIATIVES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE.

JOB CREATION MEANS ASSISTING COLORADO BUSINESSES AND RECRUITING NEW EMPLOYERS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE PROMISING STATE INDUSTRIES, SUCH AS THE AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING AND SPACE SCIENCE INDUSTRIES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO COMPETE AGGRESSIVELY FOR NEW BUSINESS, USING THE STRATEGIES THAT BROUGHT, AMONG OTHERS, NEW OR EXPANDED OPERATIONS OF U S WEST, AMERICAN EXPRESS, MERRILL LYNCH, NORDSTROMS, AND CABLE LABS TO COLORADO. WE SHOULD INCREASE ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR RURAL AND SMALL BUSINESSES. WE WILL ASK FOR FUNDS TO REESTABLISH THE WESTERN SLOPE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE THAT WAS CLOSED BECAUSE OF BUDGET CUTS LAST YEAR.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT MEANS STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF COMMUNITIES TO COMPETE AND ATTRACT NEW EMPLOYERS. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO ASSIST RURAL COMMUNITIES IN DEVELOPING THEIR OWN STRATEGIC PLANS AND IN FUNDING INFRASTRUCTURE. WE NEED TO EXPAND OUR RURAL DOWNTOWNS PROGRAM TO BRING NEW VITALITY TO THE MAIN STREETS OF RURAL COLORADO.

INFRASTRUCTURE MEANS BUILDING AN AIRPORT, FUNDING HIGHWAYS, STRENGTHENING RURAL AND URBAN TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORKS, AND

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION TO THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF THE METRO AREA. SENATOR STRICKLAND HAS BEGUN A PROCESS TO DO LONG-TERM, STATEWIDE PLANNING ON RAIL, HIGHWAY, AND AIR TRANSPORTATION, AND I WILL WORK WITH HIM IN THAT ENDEAVOR.

LET ME NOW TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATION. I BELIEVE THAT THE TWO GREATEST ASSETS WE HAVE TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE ARE THE PLACE IN WHICH WE LIVE AND THE SKILLS AND TALENTS OF OUR PEOPLE.

FIRST, LET ME DISCUSS THE ENVIRONMENT.

COLORADO IS A YOUNG STATE -- LESS THAN 120 YEARS OLD. AND IN THAT SHORT TIME, WE HAVE ALTERED THIS PLACE PROFOUNDLY.

WE SETTLED TOWNS WHICH DEVELOPED INTO TRANSPORTATION HUBS AND THEN INTO MODERN CITIES. WE DUG MINES THAT CHANGED QUIET MOUNTAIN VALLEYS INTO SOURCES OF GREAT WEALTH. WE CUT RAILROADS AND HIGHWAYS ACROSS OUR MOUNTAINS. WE DAMMED STREAMS AND TURNED ARID PRAIRIE INTO ONE OF THE MOST PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL REGIONS IN THE NATION. WE BUILT AIRPORTS AND SKI RESORTS.

WE DID ALL THIS WITH A STRONG FAITH THAT THIS PLACE WAS HERE FOR US TO USE. AND ALL TOO OFTEN, WE DID IT BASED ON FAITH ALONE, WITHOUT A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WE WERE DOING.

SO IT WAS THAT THE PART OF COLORADO WHERE I WAS RAISED TURNED TO DUST AND SEEMED TO BLOW AWAY DURING THE DROUGHT OF THE 1930S. SO IT WAS THAT DENVER DEVELOPED ONE OF THE WORST CARBON MONOXIDE PROBLEMS IN THE NATION. SO IT WAS THAT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL BECAME ONE OF THE MOST CONTAMINATED PLACES ON EARTH. SO IT WAS THAT WE LITTERED OUR MOUNTAINS WITH MILL TAILINGS THAT POLLUTE STREAMS AND KILL FISH.

THE LESSONS ARE IMPORTANT TO LEARN, BECAUSE IF WE CAN LOOK BACK AT THE HISTORY OUR FOREFATHERS MADE, WE ALSO CAN LOOK FORWARD TO THE HISTORY WE ARE MAKING. WE KNOW WHAT WE'VE DONE WITH THIS PLACE IN 120 YEARS. BUT CAN WE SEE WHAT WE WILL DO IN THE NEXT 120 YEARS?

FOR POLICY MAKERS, THE CHALLENGE IS TO LOOK FORWARD AS FAR AS WE CAN AND TO TRY TO IDENTIFY THE RESPONSIBLE ACTIONS TO TAKE TODAY. THAT IS WHY I INITIATED THE COLORADO ENVIRONMENT 2000 PROCESS, WHICH HAS BROUGHT TOGETHER CITIZENS FROM THROUGHOUT COLORADO TO IDENTIFY THE ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES WE WILL FACE IN THE NEXT CENTURY, AND TO BEGIN TO SHAPE POLICY RESPONSES.

WE NEED TO LEGISLATE AND REGULATE. BUT THESE ARE REAR-GUARD ACTIONS. WE WILL NOT SOLVE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN ANY LONG-TERM SENSE UNTIL WE AS INDIVIDUALS SEE THE ENVIRONMENT AS OUR HOME AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT WE DO THERE -- FOR HOW WE BUILD AND CONSUME AND TRAVEL, FOR THE PRODUCTS WE USE AND THE CHOICES WE MAKE.

IN THE NEARER TERM, WE NEED TO CONTINUE OUR WORK OF THE PAST THREE YEARS ON A BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES -- FROM AIR AND WATER QUALITY TO HAZARDOUS WASTE CLEANUP TO PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND OPEN SPACE.

AIR QUALITY

1. WE NEED TO PASS AND SEND TO THE VOTERS A METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE THAT INTEGRATES AIR QUALITY AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.
2. WE NEED TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE REGIONAL AIR QUALITY COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE WRITING PLANS TO MEET FEDERAL AIR QUALITY STANDARDS.
3. WE NEED A TRIP REDUCTION BILL THAT WILL ENCOURAGE LARGE EMPLOYERS IN THE METRO AREA, INCLUDING ALL GOVERNMENTS, TO REDUCE THE MILES THEIR EMPLOYEES TRAVEL BY CAR.
4. WE NEED TO DEVELOP NEW DESIGNS FOR LESS-POLLUTING FIREPLACES FOR OUR HOMES.
5. WE NEED TO CONTINUE ACTION ON THE 10-POINT PLAN TO FIGHT THE BROWN CLOUD, INCLUDING DIESEL INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE AND CUTTING POWER PLANT EMISSIONS.
6. WE NEED TO CONTINUE RESEARCH ON THE SOURCES OF THE BROWN CLOUD.
7. WE SHOULD FUND THE HIGH ALTITUDE HEAVY DUTY VEHICLE RESEARCH CENTER AT THE SCHOOL OF MINES, WHICH WILL STUDY EMISSIONS FROM BUSES AND TRUCKS.
8. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO CUT PARTICULATE LEVELS IN MANY MOUNTAIN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.
9. WE CAN TURN THE AIR QUALITY FIGHT TO OUR ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE BY MAKING COLORADO A NATIONAL CENTER FOR WORK ON ALTERNATIVE FUELS. COLORADO WAS THE FIRST STATE TO USE OXYGENATED FUELS. LET'S BUILD ON THAT STRENGTH.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

10. WE NEED TO FULLY FUND OUR PART OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAM TO CLEAN UP URANIUM MILL TAILINGS ON THE WESTERN SLOPE. THE CLEANUP CREATES JOBS WHILE PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH.
11. WE MUST CONTINUE TO BE TOUGH ON ROCKY FLATS. WE HAVE GAINED UNPRECEDENTED ACCESS AND AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE STRICT STANDARDS AT THIS FEDERAL FACILITY. I WILL CONTINUE TO DEMAND THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS CONTRACTORS OPERATE THE PLANT SAFELY, ACCELERATE CLEANUP OF PAST CONTAMINATION AND ENSURE THAT ROCKY FLATS DOES NOT BECOME A DUMP OF LAST RESORT.
12. WE NEED TO CLEAN UP THE TAILINGS AND STREAMS AT MINE SITES LIKE IDARADO IN WAYS THAT PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES WHILE RESPECTING THE NEEDS OF THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES.

13. WE NEED TO REQUIRE THAT THE ARMY'S CLEANUP OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL MEETS STRICT STANDARDS TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. WE ALSO NEED TO ENSURE THAT THESE 27 SQUARE MILES ARE PRESERVED AS USABLE OPEN SPACE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

14. THE FUTURE OF HAZARDOUS WASTE IS IN PREVENTION. WE CAN NO LONGER FOCUS SOLELY ON BURNING IT OR BURYING IT. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER WITH INDUSTRY TO REDUCE WASTE AND EMISSIONS AT THE SOURCE.

15. COLORADO CAN BECOME A NATIONAL CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE. WE NEED TO FORM AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY AND OUR UNIVERSITIES TO STUDY AND DEVELOP STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP.

SOLID WASTE

16. WE NEED TO CHANGE HOW WE MANAGE OUR SOLID WASTE. THIS MEANS USING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH, INCLUDING RECYCLING. WE MUST WORK WITH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, CITY OFFICIALS AND THE RECENTLY FORMED SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE TO SOLVE OUR TRASH PROBLEMS. I KNOW THIS ISSUE IS OF GREAT CONCERN TO EVERY COMMUNITY IN THE STATE.

WATER

17. WE NEED TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY. WE HAVE SET TOUGH STANDARDS, AND ARE MOVING TO CONTROL GROUNDWATER POLLUTION AND NON-POINT SOURCES LIKE ABANDONED MINES. BUT FEDERAL SUPPORT IS DECLINING, AND STANDARDS MAKE NO DIFFERENCE IF WE CANNOT FINANCE EFFORTS TO ENFORCE THEM.

18. WE NEED TO ENSURE A DEPENDABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND WATER SUPPLY FOR THE METRO AREA THROUGH COOPERATIVE EFFORTS. IF WE DO NOT, WE RISK HAPHAZARD DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE.

19. WE NEED TO GET THE MOST OUT OF OUR EXISTING WATER RESOURCES THROUGH EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.

MOUNTAIN SCARS

20. WE NEED TO PREVENT FUTURE SCARS AND RECLAIM PAST MISTAKES BY ACTING ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON MOUNTAIN SCARS.

WILDLIFE, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO SIMPLY PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT FROM DAMAGE AND CORRECT PAST ERRORS. SOME GROWTH IS INEVITABLE. AS OUR POPULATION EXPANDS, WE MUST PRESERVE AND ENHANCE WHAT MAKES THIS PLACE UNIQUE. THAT MEANS PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT. IT MEANS MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WHO WATCH WILDLIFE. IT MEANS MORE TRAILS, MORE RIVER RECREATION, MORE PARKS AND MORE WILDERNESS. AND IT MEANS WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO PRESERVE OPEN SPACE, ESPECIALLY ALONG THE FRONT RANGE.

WE HAVE TO DO MORE IN THESE AREAS. SO IN 1990, I WANT TO JOIN WITH OTHERS TO STUDY OUR NEEDS AND COME BACK IN 1991 WITH A CONCRETE PLAN FOR NEW PARKS, NEW TRAILS AND RIVER CORRIDORS, NEW WATCHABLE WILDLIFE FACILITIES, AND AN EFFECTIVE STATE AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIP ON OPEN SPACE.

APRIL 20, 1990, WILL BE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY. LET'S KEEP FAITH WITH THE IDEALS IT COMMEMORATES. LET'S RENEW OUR ENVIRONMENTAL ETHIC. LET'S RESOLVE TO KEEP WHAT WE VALUE AND FIX WHAT WE'VE DAMAGED. WE OWE THIS TO OURSELVES AND FUTURE COLORADANS.

NOW, LET ME TURN TO EDUCATION.

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EDUCATION DO NOT PREPARE US TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE 90S.

IN A WORLD OF RAPID CHANGE AND GLOBAL MARKETS, WE MUST PREPARE OUR CITIZENS TO BE LIFE-LONG LEARNERS -- PEOPLE WHO CAN THINK CRITICALLY, COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND PERFORM AT A SKILL LEVEL EQUAL TO THEIR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION.

WE ARE FALLING SHORT.

LAST YEAR OVER 60 PERCENT OF THOSE WHO TOOK THE BASIC ARITHMETIC AND SPELLING TEST FOR CLERICAL POSITIONS AT U S WEST FAILED.

EARLIER THIS WEEK, WE LEARNED THAT AMERICAN STUDENTS HAVE MADE MINIMAL GAINS IN READING AND CONTINUE TO SCORE POORLY IN WRITING SKILLS.

JAPAN HAS HALF THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES, BUT IS GRADUATING TWICE AS MANY ENGINEERS.

IN MATHEMATICS, WHEN COMPARED TO THE TOP GRADUATES IN 13 MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES, OUR TOP HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES RANK LAST.

ONE OUT OF EVERY FOUR OF OUR STUDENTS WHO BEGINS THE EIGHTH GRADE WILL NEVER FINISH HIGH SCHOOL. AND NATIONALLY, AMONG HISPANICS, BLACKS AND OTHER MINORITIES, THE DROPOUT RATE CAN BE AS HIGH AS 50 PERCENT.

WE ARE NOT DOING THE JOB. BUT I BELIEVE COLORADO CAN RISE TO THE CHALLENGE. FIRST WE NEED A SHARED VISION OF WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE. TODAY, I WANT TO BEGIN A STATEWIDE DISCUSSION OF WHAT THAT VISION SHOULD BE.

A VISION OF COLORADO'S EDUCATIONAL FUTURE

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY OF LEARNERS, WHERE LEARNING IS DEEPLY VALUED BOTH AS A WAY OF DEVELOPING NEW SKILLS AND AS AN END IN ITSELF. STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY, TO REASON, AND TO BE THOUGHTFUL. STUDENTS SHOULD BE HIGHLY PROFICIENT IN ACADEMIC SKILLS. MORE IMPORTANT, THEY SHOULD BE SKILLED LEARNERS WHO CAN CONFRONT CHANGE, NEW INFORMATION, AND COMPLEXITY WITH CONFIDENCE.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE COLORADANS OF ALL AGES UNDERSTAND THAT LEARNING IS A LIFELONG PROCESS; WHERE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, COLLEGE AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL; WHERE WE ARE KNOWN FOR OUR SENSE OF CURIOSITY AND OUR DESIRE TO MASTER NEW CHALLENGES; WHERE EVERYONE READS.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE CHILDREN GROW UP TO BE TRUSTWORTHY, RESPONSIBLE, CARING AND DISCIPLINED INDIVIDUALS; WHERE THEY LEARN THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY AND APPRECIATE THE CULTURAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY THAT GIVES COLORADO ITS STRENGTH.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY OF ACTIVE AND INFORMED CITIZENS WHO TAKE THE PRIVILEGE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT SERIOUSLY. WE SHOULD KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE AND THE INTERDEPENDENCY OF THOSE WHO INHABIT IT. WE SHOULD KNOW OUR HISTORY AND UNDERSTAND THE CAPACITY OF MAN FOR BOTH GREAT GOOD AND GREAT EVIL.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE TEACHING IS VALUED AND WHERE THAT RESPECT IS REFLECTED IN THE SALARIES TEACHERS RECEIVE.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE ALL PARENTS ARE ALLOWED AND EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE SCHOOLS ARE THE CENTER OF COMMUNITY LIFE: WHERE PARENTS, BUSINESS PEOPLE, SENIOR CITIZENS, EDUCATORS -- EVERYONE -- HAS A ROLE TO PLAY; WHERE THE SCHOOL BUILDING IS SEEN AS THE MOST IMPORTANT BUILDING IN TOWN.

WE SHOULD BE A SOCIETY WHERE STUDENTS ACTIVELY PURSUE KNOWLEDGE, INSTEAD OF PASSIVELY RECEIVING INFORMATION; WHERE TEACHERS FUNCTION AS COACHES, NOT LECTURERS; WHERE CHILDREN LEARN TO STRETCH TO THE LIMITS OF THEIR ABILITIES.

WE CAN MAKE THIS VISION A REALITY.

TO DO SO, WE MUST LOOK FOR MORE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF ENGAGING STUDENTS THAN THE TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM OF OUR OWN EXPERIENCE. AS BUSINESSES AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE RESTRUCTURED TO KEEP PACE WITH SOCIAL CHANGE, SO MUST SCHOOLS.

LET ME SUGGEST AN AGENDA:

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

1. I HAVE TODAY PROCLAIMED 1990 AS THE YEAR OF THE TEACHER. THIS PROCLAMATION UNDERSCORES THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF TEACHERS IN EDUCATION REFORM. WE SIMPLY CANNOT BUILD A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM UNLESS WE ENGAGE THE ENERGY AND THE CREATIVITY OF TEACHERS. SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT OFFERS TEACHERS GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO EXERCISE THEIR PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT. AS TEACHERS ENJOY NEW RESPONSIBILITIES AND DISCRETION, THEY WILL BE COMPENSATED ACCORDINGLY.

2. I PROPOSE THAT WE SUNSET AND REWRITE THE CURRENT TEACHER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS BY JULY 1991. TEACHERS AND CITIZENS WILL BE KEY PARTICIPANTS IN REWRITING THE RULES. OUR GOALS WILL BE TO REDUCE THE COMPLEXITY IN THE CURRENT LAW, TO OPEN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION TO APPROPRIATELY TRAINED NON-EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS, AND TO IMPROVE TEACHER EDUCATION.

3. WE NEED TO REVISE TEACHER TENURE LAWS TO MAKE THEM WORK. DUE PROCESS FOR TEACHERS EVOLVED DECADES AGO TO PROTECT THOSE TEACHERS WHO WERE THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE. WE MUST PROTECT TEACHERS FROM ARBITRARY ACTION AND PRESERVE ACADEMIC FREEDOM THROUGH DUE PROCESS. BUT, WE ALSO NEED TO AVOID LENGTHY AND EXPENSIVE LITIGATION ASSOCIATED WITH TENURE DISPUTES AND WE MUST BE ABLE TO REMOVE TEACHERS FROM THE CLASSROOM WHO DEMONSTRATE UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, I AM FORMING A TASK FORCE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS AND OTHERS TO REVIEW THE TENURE LAW. THE TASK FORCE WILL BE ASKED TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO PROTECT DUE PROCESS AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM, MAKE UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL AND SHORTEN AND SIMPLIFY THE DISMISSAL PROCEDURES WITH THE POSSIBLE USE OF ARBITRATION. THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE WILL BE SENT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITHIN 60 DAYS FOR NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE ACTION THIS SESSION.

SCHOOL YEAR AND SCHOOL DAY

4. IN ADDITION TO USING THE TIME STUDENTS PRESENTLY SPEND IN SCHOOL BETTER, WE NEED TO DEDICATE MORE TIME TO GETTING THE JOB DONE. WE MUST EVALUATE EXTENDING THE LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR FROM 180 DAYS TO 200 DAYS BY 1995. BETWEEN NOW AND THEN, WE CAN DEDICATE OURSELVES TO PLAN FOR THIS TRANSITION AND TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGES IN OUR SCHOOLS SO THAT IN EXTENDING THE SCHOOL YEAR, WE WILL SIMPLY NOT HAVE MORE OF THE SAME. AS WE CONSIDER EXTENDING THE SCHOOL YEAR, ISSUES OF TEACHER COMPENSATION AND PLANNING TIME MUST BE ADDRESSED. ALSO, WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE LENGTH AND TIMING OF THE SCHOOL DAY TO SEE HOW IT MIGHT BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES.

5. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INVESTMENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION OFFER A PROVEN RETURN IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND SELF-ESTEEM. I PROPOSE THAT WE EXPAND CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TO AN ADDITIONAL 1,500 STUDENTS THIS YEAR, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO 3,500. AND THAT WE SHOULD SET A GOAL TO PROVIDE PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR 7,500 AT-RISK FOUR-YEAR-OLDS AND 3,000 AT-RISK THREE-YEAR-OLDS BY 1995.

CREATIVITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

6. LAST YEAR, I LAUNCHED THE EDUCATIONAL CREATIVITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INNOVATION IN OUR SCHOOLS. APPLICATIONS FOR THE INITIATIVE WERE SUBMITTED BY NEARLY 350 SCHOOL TEAMS, REFLECTING A WEALTH OF IDEAS AND COMMUNITY RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO CHANGE BUSINESS AS USUAL IN OUR SCHOOLS. FROM THIS POOL, 25 SCHOOLS WERE SELECTED TO RECEIVE SPECIAL SUPPORT AND A \$5,000 PRIVATELY FUNDED GRANT.

WITH STRONG LEADERSHIP FROM TEACHERS AND THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY, THESE SCHOOLS REPRESENT ONGOING LABORATORIES FOR SCHOOL REFORM. FROM THEM, WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT THE BARRIERS TO INNOVATION AND IDENTIFYING THE KINDS OF CHANGES THAT HOLD THE GREATEST POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING. I AM ASKING THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF THE CREATIVITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND THIS SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT.

CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

7. TO SEE A REAL TRANSFORMATION IN OUR SCHOOLS, WE MUST FIRST BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM TO CHANGE ITSELF. WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE CONCURRENCE OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, WE WILL CREATE A CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE. THE CENTER WILL BE A PRIVATE, NON-GOVERNMENTAL FOUNDATION. IT WILL SERVE AS A THINK TANK, PROVIDING ACTION-ORIENTED, RESEARCH-BASED SUPPORT TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION GRAPPLING WITH THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY CHANGE.

CHOICE

8. CHOICE IS ONE OF MANY TOOLS TO BE CONSIDERED IN IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION. COLORADO NOW OFFERS CHOICE TO THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS THROUGH VOLUNTARY INTRA-DISTRICT PLANS, INFORMAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN DISTRICTS, AND SEVERAL DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO EXPERIMENT WITH CHOICE TO DETERMINE WHERE IT WORKS AND HOW IT MIGHT BE USEFUL. WITH THIS INFORMATION, WE CAN THEN MAKE WISE DECISIONS ABOUT ITS APPROPRIATE USE OR EXPANSION.

INCENTIVES FOR PERFORMANCE

9. INCENTIVES CAN ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS TO MAKE THE CHANGES IN THEIR STRUCTURES AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS THAT WILL IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE. I HAVE ASKED THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO SET ASIDE AN ADDITIONAL \$1.5 MILLION AS INCENTIVES TO SCHOOLS WHICH MAKE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING THE STATE GOALS FOR INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, GRADUATION RATES, AND STUDENT ATTENDANCE FOR COLORADO STUDENTS.

MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY

10. TO HELP OUR STUDENTS ATTAIN HIGHER LEVELS OF MATH AND SCIENCE PROFICIENCY, I HAVE ASKED THE COLORADO ALLIANCE FOR SCIENCE, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY. USING THE EXPERTISE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE ACADEMY WILL PROVIDE IMPROVED MATH AND SCIENCE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO COLORADO'S STUDENTS.

COMPUTERS

11. COMPUTER LITERACY IS A BASIC SKILL IN OUR INCREASINGLY TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD. TO ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS KNOW HOW TO USE COMPUTERS, I AM ASKING EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ESTABLISH A GOAL OF OFFERING COMPUTER INSTRUCTION TO STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SIXTH GRADE BY THE YEAR 1993 AND TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE COMPUTER CURRICULUM THAT WILL ENSURE ALL COLORADO STUDENTS ARE PROFICIENT IN USING COMPUTERS.

CLASS SIZE

12. I JOIN THE SCHOOL FINANCE COMMISSION IN THE PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS SO THAT WE CAN LIMIT CLASS SIZE IN GRADES K-3 TO 24 STUDENTS. IN SOME DISTRICTS, CLASSES NOW EXCEED 30 STUDENTS. A SMALLER CLASS SIZE WILL ALLOW TEACHERS TO PROVIDE BETTER QUALITY INSTRUCTION TO STUDENTS DURING THIS CRITICAL AGE TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN BECOME SUCCESSFUL READERS AND WRITERS.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

13. TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE, WE MUST FIRST ARTICULATE THE LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT THAT WE KNOW STUDENTS MUST MEET TO WORK AND PARTICIPATE IN THE WORLD THEY WILL INHERIT. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS CAN THEN BE TARGETED ON BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF STUDENTS TO MEET THESE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS.

COLORADO'S SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE REQUIRED TO DEFINE THESE EXPECTED PROFICIENCIES FOR STUDENTS BY JULY 1, 1991. TO ASSIST SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THIS UNDERTAKING, WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE STATE BOARD, WE HOPE TO ESTABLISH THROUGH A CONSENSUS PROCESS A RECOMMENDED SET OF EXPECTED STUDENT PROFICIENCIES FOR STUDENTS, BY SUBJECT AND GRADE, FOR CONSIDERATION BY LOCAL BOARDS.

ALONG WITH THESE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, WE MUST DEVELOP MEANINGFUL AND ACCURATE MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THESE MEASURES SHOULD INCLUDE PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITORS.

SCHOOL FINANCE

14. WE MUST CONTINUE OUR COMMITMENT TO FULLY FUND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1988 SCHOOL FINANCE ACT, NOW IN ITS THIRD YEAR, WITH AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION THAT BRINGS THE TOTAL NEW FUNDING COMMITMENT TO K-12 IN FISCAL YEAR 1990 TO \$97.3 MILLION. THIS WILL LESSEN DEPENDENCE ON PROPERTY TAXES FOR SCHOOLS AND MOVE THE STATE TO A 50 PERCENT SHARE OF THE COSTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

HIGHER EDUCATION

WE ALSO MUST CONTINUE OUR COMMITMENT TO MAKE COLORADO'S HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM THE BEST IN THE NATION. I AM PROPOSING A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESSES SEVERAL KEY GOALS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION -- INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE OF OUR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES; BETTER STUDENT ACCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT; AND INCREASED FOCUS ON ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY.

INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE

15. I HAVE RECOMMENDED INCREASED FUNDING OF \$41 MILLION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. TWENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS SHOULD GO FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO BUILD UPON THE INVESTMENT WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST THREE YEARS. WE MUST HOLD THESE INSTITUTIONS TO THEIR COMMITMENT TO TARGET A LARGE PORTION OF THESE NEW DOLLARS TO COMPETITIVE SALARIES FOR FACULTY.

FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

16. I AM PROPOSING THAT WE DOUBLE STATE FUNDS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID, PROVIDING INCREASED OR NEW GRANTS TO 18,000 MINORITY AND LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME STUDENTS. WE MUST DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO BRING DOWN THE BARRIERS TO ACCESS.

17. I ALSO AM CHALLENGING THIS STATE TO PROVIDE \$1.5 MILLION TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL COSTS OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS WHO MUST PURSUE COURSEWORK IN BASIC SKILLS SUCH AS READING, WRITING AND MATH.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

18. WE MUST PROVIDE A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND APPLICATION IN THIS STATE. I RECOMMEND THAT WE INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE COLORADO ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE BY \$750,000 TO STRENGTHEN OUR RESEARCH CAPACITY AND IMPROVE OUR ABILITY TO MAKE RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESS APPLICATIONS IN THESE CRITICAL AREAS.

THE COMMISSION ON SPACE SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY WILL SUBMIT ITS REPORT TO ME AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIS MONTH: I SUPPORT THE FORMATION OF A SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL TO ADDRESS AND COORDINATE STATE-LEVEL SPACE POLICY TO MAKE COLORADO PREEMINENT IN SPACE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

FAMILIES

ALL OF THESE IDEAS ABOUT EDUCATION ARE ONLY PART OF THE SOLUTION. INVESTING IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM CANNOT PAY OFF UNLESS THE CHILDREN ENTERING SCHOOL ARE READY TO LEARN, AND UNLESS THEY HAVE THE VALUES AND SELF-ESTEEM TO MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR EDUCATION.

WHAT ENABLES A CHILD TO SUCCEED? FIRST AND FOREMOST, THE FORM OF PARENTING A YOUNGSTER RECEIVES IS CRITICAL TO THE CHILD'S PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND POTENTIAL TO LEARN AND PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY. A CHILD WHO IS ADEQUATELY NURTURED DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF LIFE HAS A TREMENDOUS ADVANTAGE FOR THE REST OF HIS OR HER LIFE.

FAMILIES HAVE CHANGED WITH THE REST OF SOCIETY. FAMILIES TAKE MANY DIFFERENT FORMS TODAY, AND WE HONOR THAT DIVERSITY. BUT THE FAMILY IS STILL THE PRECONDITION TO THE OTHER INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES OF OUR SOCIETY. IF FAMILIES DON'T WORK, OUR OTHER INSTITUTIONS WON'T WORK EITHER.

MOST PARENTS WANT AND TRY TO DO A GOOD JOB OF RAISING THEIR CHILDREN, BUT IT'S A HARDER JOB THAN IN THE PAST. WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES HOW, IN THE MIDST OF OUR MODERN ECONOMIC STRESS, WE CAN FUNCTION MOST EFFECTIVELY AS PARENTS. WE ALSO SHOULD ASK OURSELVES HOW, AS A SOCIETY, WE CAN HELP FAMILIES ADAPT TO A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD.

MOST OF THE SOLUTION TO HELPING FAMILIES SUCCEED LIES OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT CAN HELP CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN COLORADO THAT ALLOWS FAMILIES TO FLOURISH. WE CAN DO THIS BY TAKING A CAREFUL, LONG-RANGE VIEW AND RESULTS-ORIENTED APPROACH TO MAKING THE MOST OF COLORADO'S HUMAN POTENTIAL. WE DID THIS IN PLANNING FOR AND GUIDING COLORADO'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY. WE KNOW THAT IT WORKS. I AM CALLING UPON THE PEOPLE OF COLORADO TO MAKE THE 1990S THE DECADE OF THE CHILD AND THE FAMILY.

IN CONNECTION WITH THIS EFFORT, I AM PROPOSING THE FOLLOWING:

1. WE HAVE STARTED A STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS TO EXPLORE HOW WE CAN BETTER COORDINATE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES. THIS PROCESS IS PART OF A NATIONAL POLICY ACADEMY ON FAMILIES AND CHILDREN AT-RISK. COLORADO IS ONE OF ONLY 10 STATES CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS 18-MONTH PROCESS, AND WE ARE PROUD WE WERE SELECTED.

2. I WILL DIRECT THE HUMAN SERVICE DEPARTMENTS IN STATE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE IMPACT ON THE WHOLE FAMILY WHEN IT OFFERS SERVICES TO ONE OF ITS CLIENTS. WE MUST BE SURE THAT WHAT WE DO REINFORCES THE FAMILY RATHER THAN ERODING ITS STRUCTURES.

3. I WILL FURTHER DIRECT THESE DEPARTMENTS, TOGETHER WITH THE COORDINATING COUNCIL ON THE HOMELESS, TO CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE PROBLEM OF THE HOMELESS AND THEIR CHILDREN, TO ADDRESS THE RAPIDLY GROWING POPULATION OF HOMELESS FAMILIES.

4. I WILL ASK SCHOOLS IN COLORADO TO EXPLORE WAYS OF MAKING THEIR FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE.

5. WE WILL MAKE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY, LOCATION, AND COST OF CHILD CARE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERY PARENT IN COLORADO. FIRST IMPRESSIONS, THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE IN MY OFFICE, IS WORKING WITH LOCAL AGENCIES TO ESTABLISH A CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM THROUGHOUT COLORADO, FUNDED BY PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND BUSINESSES.

6. I HAVE ESTABLISHED A BUSINESS AND CHILD CARE COUNCIL TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO EMPLOYERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE ABOUT THE IMPACT OF CHILD CARE ON BUSINESS, AND ABOUT EMPLOYER OPTIONS CONCERNING CHILD CARE. WE OUGHT TO SET A GOAL OF A SIXFOLD INCREASE IN EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD CARE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

NOW LET ME HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE OTHER ISSUES WE NEED TO WORK ON THIS SESSION. THE COMPLETE LIST IS ON YOUR DESK.

1. IN EDUCATION, WE OUGHT TO CONTINUE INCREASED FUNDING FOR PRESCHOOL, K-12, AND HIGHER EDUCATION, SET ASIDE FUNDS AS INCENTIVES FOR CREATIVE AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS, BEGIN A PROCESS TO DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES TO THE CURRENT TEACHER CERTIFICATION LAWS, ADDRESS TENURE AND THE OTHER EDUCATIONAL ISSUES DISCUSSED EARLIER.

2. WE NEED TO PASS A TRANSPORTATION BILL THAT WILL SEND THE MTDC PLAN TO THE VOTERS FOR THEIR APPROVAL. THIS BILL IS THE RESULT OF A TWO-YEAR EFFORT THAT BEGAN WITH THE TRANSPORTATION ROUNDTABLE AND CONTINUED THROUGH LAST YEAR'S SPECIAL SESSION. SPEAKER BLEDSOE AND SENATE PRESIDENT STRICKLAND WILL SPONSOR THE BILL. IT HAS BROAD BIPARTISAN SUPPORT. LOCAL OFFICIALS, BUSINESSES AND AIR QUALITY ADVOCATES SUPPORT IT. I SUPPORT IT. LET'S FINISH OUR WORK ON TRANSPORTATION EARLY IN THE SESSION.

3. WE NEED TO ACT THIS YEAR ON PRISONS. THE PROBLEM THREATENS TO OVERWHELM US AND DIVERT RESOURCES FROM OUR OTHER CRUCIAL AGENDA ITEMS. THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION HAS BEEN WORKING ON THIS ISSUE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. NOW IT'S TIME TO ACT. I WANT TO WORK WITH YOU TO FIND A SOLUTION INVOLVING SOME COMBINATION OF IMPROVED LAW ENFORCEMENT, CAPACITY EXPANSION, COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS, INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PROBATION AND PAROLE, AND EARNED TIME FOR INMATES WHO DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO REHABILITATE THEMSELVES.

4. WE'VE GOT TO GET A HANDLE ON WORKER'S COMPENSATION COSTS. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN BUILD ON THE WORK DONE BY THE INTERIM COMMITTEE, THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, AND OTHERS, TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF THE INJURED WORKER, BUT REDUCE THE AMOUNT BUSINESSES HAVE TO PAY.

5. WE NEED TO REMOVE THE SALARY CAP ON STATE EMPLOYEES AND MAKE BASIC HEALTH INSURANCE MORE AFFORDABLE FOR STATE WORKERS.

6. WE NEED TO DIRECT THE AIR QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION TO SET STANDARDS FOR NEW FIREPLACES AND PASS A REASONABLE TRIP REDUCTION PROGRAM.

7. WE SHOULD FUND THE STATE SHARE OF THE URANIUM MILL TAILINGS CLEANUP PROGRAM ON THE WEST SLOPE. WE CONVINCED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT THE RAIL OPTION FOR SHIPPING THE TAILINGS OUT OF GRAND JUNCTION. NOW WE NEED TO KEEP FUNDING THE STATE'S 10 PERCENT SHARE SO WE CAN FINISH THE CLEANUP WORK IN GRAND JUNCTION AND OTHER WEST SLOPE SITES.

8. WE NEED TO REFORM COLORADO'S SECURITIES LAWS TO BETTER PROTECT INVESTORS.

9. WE SHOULD PROVIDE IMPROVED INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT FOR CHILD CARE FACILITIES.

10. WE NEED TO LOOK HARD AT INNOVATIVE WAYS OF REDUCING HEALTH CARE COSTS IN COLORADO. THIS IS A COMPLEX ISSUE. IT AFFECTS THE COST OF WORKERS COMPENSATION. IT AFFECTS THE COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES. IT AFFECTS THE AVAILABILITY OF BASIC HEALTH CARE. I WILL SUPPORT A REASONABLE BILL TO STUDY SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS.

THIS IS ONLY A PART OF OUR LEGISLATIVE AGENDA. THERE ARE OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES IN THE LIST ON YOUR DESK WHICH I COMMEND TO YOUR ATTENTION.

CONCLUSION

ALL OF US - YOUNG OR OLD - SHARE ONE THING IN COMMON. WE WANT TO GET AS MUCH AS WE CAN OUT OF THIS LIFE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO LIVE. WE WANT TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT.

THAT IS WHY - IN THIS ADDRESS - I HAVE TRIED TO GET TO THE VERY BASICS THAT SHAPE A SOCIETY. I BELIEVE THEM TO BE THE PLACE THAT A SOCIETY INHABITS AND THE SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING A SOCIETY AND ITS MEMBERS ACQUIRE.

THAT IS WHY I BELIEVE THAT HOW WISELY WE DEAL WITH THE ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATION WILL FUNDAMENTALLY SHAPE OUR FUTURE. THEY ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS IN OUR FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

COLORADO AND ITS PEOPLE STAND ON A THRESHOLD. WE HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF GREATNESS. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN MORE TO WORK WITH THAN OTHERS.

THE QUESTION IS - WILL WE RISE TO THIS CHALLENGE - INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY?

I BELIEVE WE WILL. IT IS IN OUR CHARACTER. IT IS IN OUR HISTORY.

THE COLORADANS THAT I KNOW ARE PROUD OF WHO THEY ARE - THEY ARE PROUD OF THIS STATE. THEY ARE NOT WILLING TO BE MEDIOCRE OR AVERAGE.

I BELIEVE THEY WILL LOOK AT THE OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE OF THE 90s AND SAY:

THIS IS OUR TIME -- WE ARE GOOD - BUT WE CAN BE BETTER.

THIS IS OUR TIME -- WE CAN NOT ONLY SAVE THE BEAUTY OF THIS PLACE, WE CAN ENHANCE IT.

THIS IS OUR TIME -- WE CAN EDUCATE OURSELVES SO THAT OUR SKILL, OUR UNDERSTANDING AND OUR CHARACTER WILL BE RECOGNIZED BY ALL OTHERS AS EXCEPTIONAL.

THIS IS OUR TIME. A TIME FOR DECISION. A TIME FOR COMMITMENT. A TIME WHEN WE ACT OUT WHAT WE VALUE MOST.

IT IS TIME TO BEGIN.