

Questions We Didn't Get To

Our public lands are suffering from increased oil and gas leasing and timber harvests. As a Senator, how would you protect the public lands that belong to all of us?

What will you guys do to help protect public land and hiking/hunting/fishing/camping/backcountry skiing opportunities in Colorado? There are some major pushes to try to sell off public land...

What are you going to do to try to protect the public's right to accessing those lands?

Public Lands –

I would want to rewrite the enabling legislation for the US Forest Service and the BLM to prioritize ecological health over timber and oil and gas development. This is important to protect us from climate change also. Hickenlooper supports removing environmental review on logging projects. His bill to exempt 10k acre projects will likely be approved and signed by Trump. I would oppose that.

Would you vote to remove the covert department of the CIA?

There are aspects of the CIA that are important to national security; the abuses and secrecy could be regulated via legislation and reconfiguring the agency.

We need another Church Committee process to document the actions of the national security state, including the torture and abuse of detainees at Guantanamo and modern surveillance practices.

With the current DOJ requesting voter rolls in an effort to thwart the elections, what would you do to ensure the integrity of our elections?

Amend the Voting Rights Act to control executive branch access is a longer term fix, in the short term communicate consistently about the request as a threat to fair elections.

Will you continue to fight to release the Epstein files and hold accountable those people ?
yes

What immigration reform do you support?

What are your plans to return those who have been illegally deported?

What plans do you have to protect DACA citizens?

Prompt path to citizenship, interim legal status that is less onerous than green card requirements and more prompt after background checks, expedited path to citizenship for DACA recipients, legislation to compensate those illegally deported through a claims process/and or return to this country for adjudication.

Do you support continued Flock expansion and contracts?

No – to the extent possible, prevent use of federal funds for that purpose.

Do you support putting restrictions on the use of AI? If so, what kind of restrictions?

Answered in forum – but absolutely, need a comprehensive regulatory scheme to deal with safety, consumer and economic impacts.

Will you vote to protect existing Colorado gun safety laws? **Wouldn't be a federal vote to do that as federal law would not override more restrictive laws; that said constitutional requirements could.**

Will you work to establish universal background checks nationwide? **There are federally-required background checks in place, they just don't function properly or apply to all sellers; would eliminate the 3 day loophole and push for funding to make the system more functional.**

Will you ban the sale of automatic weapons nationwide?

Would support that but not likely constitutional under a recent Supreme Court decision

Will you ban ghost guns? **Sale of ghost guns is already prohibited under federal law.**

Will you fight against the Concealed Carry Mandate that allows anyone with a concealed carry permit to carry in any other state, ignoring state laws? **As I understand it, the Supreme Court decision in Bruen only requires states to allow ONE form of public carry – concealed or open.**

Would you support a law to return federal lands in and around the black hills to the Sioux tribes that had their land illegally taken from them. The Supreme Court recognized this illegal taking and refused to force the land be returned to tribes and instead just awarded money which the tribes have refused to accept. **Yes – it is in my platform.**

Please give your thoughts on Greenland, Venezuela, and Ukraine. **Support protecting Ukraine, oppose intervention in Greenland and Venezuela.**

How will you protect women's reproductive health care, including women who come into Colorado from out of the state, for care? **Federal legislation to protect women traveling across state lines; there are legislative proposals to do that.**

Will you vote for science-backed climate legislation? **Yes; I have been studying climate policy for decades.**

Do you support equitable policies and legislation that address the disproportionate impacts of fracking, coal, and other fossil fuel activities on affected Coloradans? **Yes, both for those impacted by the use and those affected by policies that reduce development.**

What role do you see data centers playing in Colorado? **I would expect water to be a restraint in how many such facilities are proposed for the state but I believe comprehensive federal regulation of data centers is necessary to ensure that ALL states targeted are protected from the consumer and environmental impacts.**

As a senator representing Colorado, what would be your priorities for bringing federal funding to our state? **I would start every legislative session with townhalls to solicit feedback on funding needs as well as connect with local elected officials and community leaders to help draw up priorities.**

Karen Breslin - why did you not speak out about the terrorist attack on our community in Boulder?

I did on FB. I had attempted to get to one of the memorial events – not the large one with all of the politicians – but one just for me to pay my respects, but I had a scheduling issue that would have resulted in my arriving too late. I would like to walk with that group if that is still occurring. I recall that they were suspended. My statements re: Gaza are reflective of my commitment to human rights, and that commitment stems in large part from my understanding of the Holocaust and the persecution of Jews across time. My statement below is insufficient to convey what I was truly feeling in the moment and I felt

at the time that the attack did not get the coverage or attention that it warranted. I spoke out about the attack in Australia, too.

Karen Breslin for US Senate

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My thoughts today are with the victims of the horrific attack in Boulder today. Violence against any group is unacceptable for any reason. We must come together and uphold the values of peace and mutual respect.

What are your plans to reduce the debt and rebuild our economy?

We need to right size the defense budget – it's a nearly \$1 trillion, and if memory serves is 3x what China spends and much more than Russia. We need to revert back to corporations paying the share they paid in the 1950s. We need a wealth tax on the individuals of extremely high net worth. We need to move toward full employment with a federal jobs guarantee for jobs rebuilding infrastructure, supporting communities with child and elder care, food pantries, community facilities, etc. Much of this should be private with federal funding and contracting, but some of it could be in the form of grants and other more direct federal support.

Do you support raising worker wages? **yes**

Do you support higher taxes on corporations and on billionaires? **yes**

Do you support reforming the Filibuster? If so, how? **No – the filibuster is an important lever for controlling extreme proposals. Democrats have used it effectively against Trump and there is precedent in other situations as well. Had the filibuster been in place on Supreme Court nominations, we would have a different court. Democrats removed it on lower federal appointments and Republicans responded in kind.**

How do we insure the self determination of Palestinians?

Self-determination is a right under international law and as such Palestinians deserve to govern themselves. The “two-state solution” has been widely recognized as a proper response yet conditions on the ground after Israel's destruction of Gaza make that more difficult. I would support any measures that would halt the destruction, give Palestinians self-determination in fact, while also obtaining security guarantees for Israel.

What will Professor Breslin do when Republicans inevitably attack SNAP benefits again?

I think the Democrats generally, including Hickenlooper, did a good job conveying the gravity of that attack and I would adopt a similar approach.

What would you do to advance alternative energy and steer our country away from fossil fuels?

How would you suggest that we coordinate with international entities on this issue?

I support a carbon tax which is well studied and probably the most effective way to shift from fossil fuels. It can be done while also protecting middle and lower income taxpayers. The US needs to re-engage with the Paris Agreement and commit to binding restrictions and sell those restrictions to the American people. Ratification may not occur, but at least the US signals its intention. Obama would not do that. So Trump only left an agreement that committed the US to some procedural obligations but not actual reductions.

What would you do as a Senator to hold other Dems and independents to thwart Steven Miller/Christian Nationalist/MAGA agenda?

I would use the persuasive power of the office to ensure that every Coloradan and as many Americans as can be reached understand that the Trump agenda is a threat to the equality gains over the centuries. I have done that as a candidate. It has been one of my primary focuses, otherwise people won't understand why Trump is a fascist, and a particular kind of fascist at that.

In Colorado, many families, especially in low-income and disproportionately impacted communities are exposed to overlapping risks from air pollution, contaminated water, and nearby industrial development, with well-documented links to asthma, cancer, and childhood health harms. As a U.S. Senator, what specific federal policies would you champion to require cumulative impact analysis, strengthen EPA enforcement, and ensure communities have real power and not just notice, when decisions are made that affect their air, water, and health? **We must restore the EPA environmental justice offices; I would support greater funding for understanding the health impacts of multiple pathways of exposure and multiple toxins; this is an area that to my knowledge is not well-understood. We need a superfund type program for communities that are suffering disease, economic loss, and other ill effects from pollution. The funds should go to those communities directly, rather than through a complex grant process. Once the fund is established and funded, the money should go directly to the local governments. An activist on this issue had suggested to me a reparations fund. I think that is an excellent idea as well, i.e., compensation for past harm.**

Would you fight to fund a high speed train from Denver to Grand Junction?
Yes and along the Front Range

To both candidates: How will you be able to compete with the campaign dollars, insider network connections, and name recognition that Hickenlooper already has?

Hickenlooper has some negative polling numbers – or did in the fall, if my memory serves. He is upping his game but I think it will be too little, too late. I think when people realize that he is closer to the Republicans in his positions than to Sanders – who has repeatedly done well in Colorado – voters will shift. Money doesn't dictate the outcome in 10 to 15 percent of elections. Once a primary ballot has been set, funding should improve for challengers. His insider status and the strings that get pulled for him are things that voters are REALLY tired of. I wouldn't have entered this without believing it was possible – and necessary.

Tell us about your foreign policy views.

I believe in international cooperation, diplomacy over force, compliance with international law, upholding human rights, addressing global poverty, nuclear disarmament, international regulation of AI and using US power to advance democracy and material well-being, while also maintaining superior military strength. I believe that the US risks its national security by supporting undemocratic states and by taking imperialist and abusive actions that undermine international support and the rule of law.

Do you agree to vote for bills that follow climate science? **yes**

What would you do to reform ICE? **ICE didn't exist until post-9/11 so we can secure our borders without ICE because we have. Trump has turned ICE into a white supremacist paramilitary force and if experts re: authoritarianism are correct, forming such a force is**

one of the mechanisms of total control. So it is important to end ICE both to stop the terror but also to avoid giving Trump a sizable paramilitary force at his command. I think the agency must be abolished and whatever aspects of ICE work that doesn't involve assaulting immigrant communities and otherwise carrying out the white nationalist/white supremacist agenda could be reassigned to other agencies or departments or a new one created.

I believe CO is #4 among states for fossil fuel. Can you oppose their disinformation about climate? Can you win without taking money from the oil companies in CO?

I have decades of studying climate and other environmental issues, so I do think I am well-positioned to counter disinformation. I also think that winning is possible without fossil fuel money.

to protect us from the type of executive direction and power taken to make sweeping changes. How do you see us bring order back to our system? and is that actually possible?

I think it is possible and essential. And I think we are actually making progress, inch by inch. The anger over the killings in Minnesota has reshaped public understanding of what ICE has done, and the resistance is impressive. That has made it harder for Republicans to ignore the abuses. More pressure is the answer, and that pressure MUST include our elected officials, especially members of the House and the Senate.

On the judicial branch topic, does the candidate support immediate accountability, consequences and actual penalties for elected and appointed officials when they break the law? **Yes, but the Senate has no direct ability to bring offenders to justice. This is why Trump's attack on the neutrality of the Justice Department and the AG is so incredibly damaging. That said, putting pressure on the proper officials to investigate and charge is something that elected officials can do. Senators can also call for hearings into alleged illegal activities, request GAO to conduct non-criminal investigations, such as audits of compliance with program requirements, and they can request an FBI investigation.**

Christian Nationalism twists, distorts, and cherry-picks Christ's teachings to legitimize a white, hetero, cis-male, controlled society. But, many faith-based communities truly support core values of humility, grace, and caring for our neighbors. How can we best embrace and engage faith-based communities to fight Christian Nationalism?

I believe there are several interdenominational groups that are already engaged. Faith in Action held a candidate forum a while ago; maybe Interfaith Alliance?

What are concrete ways people can support you in the primaries? I am so ready for a candidate who will actually fight this regime.

- 1. Spread the word and recruit people to register as a Democrat and show up for caucus, county assembly and state assembly.**
- 2. Spread the word and ask friends and relatives and social media followers to donate. All candidates need cash at this stage, lots of extra expenses associated with the caucus and assembly process.**
- 3. Write letters to the local news media promoting our campaign, with a weblink.**
- 4. Help us phone and text bank. info@breslinforcolorado.com**

This is all truly great for people who need affordable housing, assistance with insurance etc. how about people like me...caught in the middle? I'm fortunate to be able to afford a home, insurance, child care etc. but I feel like I'm paying more than my share for everyone...the poor and the rich. I get no breaks. it's been that way for 4 decades for me. thoughts?
I realize I am blessed

Your concerns are justified; you might be comfortable with your expenses but the tax burden is still not equitably distributed. Corporations formerly paid up to 40 percent – if memory serves – and now are down to 10 to 15 percent of the total. A recent book by a law prof makes the case that the really rich typically don't pay federal tax at all. When some pay and others don't, it shifts the burden. Let's shift it back.

There are just too many Americans who do not vote, for whatever reason, what will you do specifically to encourage people to vote.

As a political science professor, I constantly tell students that when they don't vote, they give the people who do disproportionate power. And I also try to help them understand WHY voting matters by showing them concrete examples of policies that hurt, or help them, and why selecting the representatives who share their views is so important. I would continue that messaging.

Two questions that are similar.

Repealing Citizens United is at best, a long shot. There's an ingenious plan to make Citizens United all but irrelevant, it's called The Montana Plan.

The Montana Plan is a brilliant idea that removes the power of corporations to spend in politics. With that power no longer in place, Citizens United is irrelevant.

It's rumored that state representative Javier Mabry will introduce a bill, a Montana Plan here in Colorado.

Will you both commit to backing representative Mabrey's bill?

Will you both commit to publicly funded elections?

I heartily endorse the idea that corporate charters should be a mechanism for corporate control but as someone who teaches constitutional law to undergrads, and as someone who has thought about using the corporate charter process as a "death penalty" for abusive corporations, I am skeptical that the Montana Plan – or a Colorado version of it – would survive a constitutional challenge. The plan essentially conditions a government benefit – a corporate charter – on foregoing political speech. Citizens United was a non-profit. Imagine that formation of a non-profit –which would include so many progressive groups - was conditioned on foregoing political speech. Citizens United didn't involve direct contributions. It involved independent ads – in that case, a feature film – critical of Hillary Clinton. Of course, such restrictions exist for 501c3 corps anyway, but you can form as a 501c4 or forego tax exemption entirely and still take advantage of the corporate form and still engage in political speech. I think the parties should explore regulating themselves and controlling what candidates can spend and what they can take in. Insist that the other party do as well. I also believe in public funding, but I don't think

the government can force candidates into a public election process, i.e., the wealthy candidates can still opt out.

Here's what Ai pulled from the opinion:

The Government may not suppress political speech on the basis of the speaker's corporate identity."

— Citizens United v. FEC, 558 U.S. 310, 365 (2010).

2. Corporations cannot be banned from independent expenditures

"The First Amendment does not allow political speech restrictions based on a speaker's corporate identity."

— Citizens United, 558 U.S. at 349.

"No sufficient governmental interest justifies limits on the political speech of nonprofit or for-profit corporations."

We have a mental health crisis. There are insufficient long term beds for people with serious mental illness. They receive short term care and are released to the street and become homeless and often end up in jail without mental health services.. What can be done on the federal level to increase services?

A shocking percentage of incarcerated people have mental health issues – like 40 to 50 percent. We need to prioritize funding for mental health services by taking it away from prison funding and by programs to reduce the number of people in prison due to substance abuse. We need to redirect prison funding to community-based mental health centers.

Private equity is now involved in everything from nursing homes to veterinary care, always to the detriment of most people. Do you have ideas on how private equity could be purged from society?

Not sure about purged as it is a type of business model that probably has some legitimate uses, but I have been talking about PE since the start as I agree that it is incredibly disruptive and abusive. Sen. Warren has a bill that is co-sponsored by Sanders and others (not Hickenlooper or Bennet) that would regulate their practices by making it harder for them to destroy companies, but I would look to strengthen those provisions and perhaps taxing the ill-gotten gains at proper levels would reduce the incentive for the smash-and-grab form of capitalism that they practice. It might also be possible to create a private right of action (the ability of workers and consumers) to sue when injured by an illegal transaction (one that violated any restrictions). I think there is a lot that should and could be done and it would be a high priority for me.

Talk about the military budget and where money can come from for your proposals?

We need a serious reassessment of our military spending. National security doesn't just involve military strength. The strength of country's economy and social structure matter substantially and that is where the US seriously lags. Let's redirect. I will just guess that it could probably be cut by one-third without harm to our security, but that would have to be analyzed more fully. Taxing the largest corporations and the richest people who avoid taxes can also free funds for meeting other aspects of national security.

Would you fund prioritize helping people form housing cooperatives as a primary way for people to build and own housing?

I am not aware of what federal subsidies or tax breaks are available, but there certainly should be and yes I would support that.

improved Medicare for all is single payer. As shown in Colorado HB1176, single payer covers everyone, would save up to 1 billion dollars per year and result in better health outcomes. Public option multiplayer system was the most expensive. Do you support single payer?

yes

If you could only focus on 1 priority, what would it be? - Flatlrns Indivisible

Restoring our democracy and stamping out fascism is tops, but from a policy standpoint, single payer health care.

Are either of you prepared to speak out in national forums like Bernie Sanders and AOC? We need louder progressive voices on the national stage denouncing what this administration is doing, not just on the senate floor.

Yes. I was surprised when I began speaking out on social media, mostly Tiktok, how much people need progressive voices. I have no hesitation in speaking about the perils of this moment and the way forward.

Most Americans, including yours truly, are against illegal immigration.

Saying "abolish ICE" sounds like "defund the police". The right will have a field day with this, spreading lies that democrats are against law enforcement, same as they did with defund the police.

Shouldn't the policy be enforcing the immigration laws already on the books and reform, such as granting citizenship to undocumented workers who've proven to be outstanding members of the community?

I think Democrats unwillingness to defend the morality – the right and wrong – of a policy is how we ended up here. Immigration is not – from anything I can tell from a policy perspective – a significant issue for the U.S. That's not to say that there aren't disruptions and influxes that are difficult for communities to manage and/or concerns about jobs and whether newcomers bring unfamiliar ideas or customs. All of those things are ALWAYS true whether our immigrant ancestors were Irish, Mexican, Italian, etc. My ancestors came here – from what I can tell – because they HAD TO. They couldn't survive where they were. The same is SO true today for many immigrants, and the twist is, the U.S. contributes to the conditions that make their survival precarious. Venezuela, for example, was subjected to sanctions under Trump 1.0 and that made the economic situation even more perilous. If I remember correctly, 4 digit inflation! Imagine trying to survive that. Address the root cause of immigration spikes, which often is tied to US policy in some way. Treat the influx for what it is: a humanitarian crisis. Honor our commitments under international law to provide asylum to those eligible. Provide a prompt path to citizenship for those who clear background checks and other requirements. Give people legal status here who are here out of desperation and are not otherwise violating the law. In truth, it is extraordinarily difficult for almost anyone to come to the US legally; and those that do face a long and challenging process. That said, communities should not have to bear the cost of immigration themselves nor should violent offenders and drug traffickers have ANY PLACE in the United States and should be removed via lawful process.

It would be good to have these candidates talk about their biographies and how their experience prepares them to be a US Senator.

I have been a Colorado resident since 1969. I have a B.A. in journalism and political science, an M.A. in political science, a J.D. and additional graduate coursework in international studies, I have taught political science for more than 30 years with a focus on American government and law. I worked as a journalist covering Congress and the executive branch and that let me see up close how Congress functioned, but also how the executive branch implements the law, e.g., the development of regulations and standards for environmental protection, consumer protection, bank regulation and regulation of the financial markets, as well as tax and budget policy. So I have knowledge of all of those areas of government activity and an understanding of core policy issues.

I worked for 25 years in the National Park Service regional office in Denver where I held various positions including asst. regional director for communications, legislation and park planning and retired as senior policy advisor. My law practice has focused on public interest law helping community groups protect the land, protect animals, or advocate for social justice causes. I worked for Community Environment Legal Defense Fund which helped assist local communities in defeating fracking, factory farms and other noxious uses, but also advanced the rights of nature and the rights to a healthy environment. My entire adult life has been focused on understanding and working to overcome the structural barriers to economic fairness, racial justice and ecological protection.