THE TRUTH

Money Needed to Pay Bills
- $5.4 billion

Taxpayer Burden™
- $2,600

Financial Grade
C

Ranking
20 out of 50

Colorado Ranked No. 20 for its Fiscal Health

Truth in Accounting

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Financial State of Colorado

This report shows that Colorado did not go into the coronavirus pandemic in good fiscal shape, and it will probably come out of the crisis even worse. Based upon the state's latest audited financial report, which is dated before the crisis began, Colorado had a Taxpayer Burden™ of $2,600, earning it a "C" grade from Truth in Accounting.

Colorado's elected officials have made repeated financial decisions that left the state with a debt burden of $5.4 billion. That burden equates to $2,600 for every state taxpayer. Colorado's financial problems stem mostly from unfunded retirement obligations that have accumulated over the years. Of the $26.4 billion in retirement benefits promised, the state did not fund $11.1 billion in pension and $1.3 billion in retiree health care benefits.

Colorado did not have enough money set aside to weather the current pandemic and fluctuations in the market. According to rough estimates by Truth in Accounting, Colorado is projected to lose $7 billion in revenue as a result of this crisis. The uncertainty surrounding this crisis makes it impossible to determine how much will be needed to maintain government services and benefits, but Colorado's overall debt will most likely increase.

The data included in this report is derived from the state of Colorado's 2019 audited Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and retirement plans' reports. To compare states' financial information go to Data-Z.org.

Colorado Financial Breakdown

Fast Facts

- Colorado had $14.9 billion available to pay $20.3 billion worth of bills.
- Colorado's unfunded pension benefits decreased by $8.2 billion because of changes brought by Senate Bill 18-200, including an increase in the state's contributions.
- This bill resulted in the pension plan readjusting its assumptions, which led to a decrease in pension benefits.

THE STATE'S BILLS EXCEEDED ITS ASSETS

Total assets	$46,425,646,000
Minus: Capital assets	-$22,721,830,000
Restricted assets	-$8,849,752,000
Assets available to pay bills	$14,854,064,000
Minus: Total bills	-$20,255,199,000
Money available (needed) to pay bills	-$5,401,135,000
Each taxpayer's share of this debt	-$2,600

BILLS THE STATE ACCUMULATED

Bonds	$4,963,189,000
Other liabilities	$9,443,757,000
Minus: Debt related to capital assets	-$6,620,189,000
Unfunded pension benefits	$11,139,099,000
Unfunded retiree health care benefits	$1,329,343,000
Total bills	$20,255,199,000

Grade:

C

Bottom line: Colorado needed $2,600 from each of its taxpayers to pay all of its bills, so it received a "C" for its finances. According to Truth in Accounting's grading scale, any government with a Taxpayer Burden between $0 and $4,900 receives a "C."

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.