

LettersToTheEditor

State's child poverty growth rate is unacceptable

Re: "Child-poverty jump in Colo. leads nation," June 10 news story.

It is well documented that poverty is the single-greatest threat to children's well-being. According to a newly released report by the Colorado Children's Campaign, Colorado now has the nation's fastest-growing number of children living in poverty. This alarming statistic is unacceptable, especially given that Colorado ranks as the eighth-wealthiest state in per capita income.

Research shows the economic impact of children growing up in poverty to be \$500 billion annually because these children grow into adults who are less productive, earn less money, commit more crimes and have more health-related expenses. If the economic argument weren't enough, the moral argument should be. State budgets and policies are moral documents, as they reflect our priorities as a society. If we continue to ignore this issue, the burden of Colorado's poor children will be with us for generations to come.

The hopeful news is that this problem has solutions that make sense morally and economically. Policy makers have opportunities to greatly reduce child poverty in Colorado via such vehicles as earned-income tax credits, children's saving accounts and affordable child care.

This election season, voters need to demand solutions from candidates, and support candidates who will work to make child well-being a priority.

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