2026 CATHOLIC VOTER GUIDE · COLORADO · LETTERS FROM LEO

U.S. Senate

Hickenlooper is seeking a second term after defeating state Sen. Julie Gonzales in the June 30 Democratic primary. Rated Solid Democratic by Cook Political Report (Oct 2026).



Mark Baisley

REPUBLICAN · CHALLENGER

Colorado state senator and former state representative; software executive and former aerospace engineer.



John Hickenlooper

DEMOCRAT · INCUMBENT

U.S. senator since 2021; former two-term governor of Colorado and mayor of Denver.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress "to work for peace and to reject war and violence."* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

MARK BAISLEY

Defended the Trump administration's war with Iran in an October 2026 debate; signed a 2024 letter supporting Israel after the Hamas attack.

[1] Axios Denver: Senate debate (Oct. 15, 2026)
[2] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Calls for ending "Trump's war in Iran," citing its effect on gas prices.

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

VOTING RECORD

Yes Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 86), June 2026
Yes Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 89), Sept. 2026
Yes Russia sanctions bill (H.R. 5334), Aug. 2026

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *"No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data."* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

MARK BAISLEY

Says he introduced state AI legislation protecting "economic growth, innovation, and privacy"; pledges to cut taxes and "roll back job-killing regulations."

[1] Baisley for Senate
[2] Baisley campaign: Issues

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Supports regulating the artificial intelligence industry and co-sponsors the PRO Act; calls himself "a strong supporter of labor unions and American workers."

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is "a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society."* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

MARK BAISLEY

Favors "freer markets rather than expanded bureaucracy or dependency programs" for farmers and has backed narrowing eligibility for health-insurance subsidies.

[1] Baisley campaign: Issues
[2] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Calls health care "a right not a privilege"; supports a public option and restoring funding for Medicaid, ACA subsidies and SNAP cut under the Trump administration's budget.

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

VOTING RECORD

No One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — tax cuts with Medicaid and SNAP changes

ELECTIONS & CIVIC LIFE

POPE LEO XIV *Authentic democracy, "far from being a mere procedure," "recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."* Message to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Apr. 9, 2026

MARK BAISLEY

Supports requiring proof of U.S. citizenship to register to vote.

[1] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Says he is fighting efforts "to suppress the vote, end vote by mail, and deploy ICE agents to polling places"; opposes the SAVE Act.

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues
[2] OnTheIssues: John Hickenlooper

VOTING RECORD

No Objection to counting Arizona's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 6, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 6–93)

No Objection to counting Pennsylvania's 2020 electoral votes, Jan. 7, 2021 — a Yes vote supported the objection (failed, 7–92)

Yes For the People Act (S. 2093), June 2021 — vote to begin debate (failed, 50–50; 60 needed)

No SAVE America Act (S. 1383), Mar. 2026 — motion to take up the bill requiring proof of citizenship to register and photo ID to vote (passed, 51–48)

No Photo ID amendment to the SAVE America Act, Mar. 2026 — vote to end debate on requiring photo ID to vote (failed, 53–47; 60 needed)

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion "cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life."* Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026

MARK BAISLEY

As a state legislator, consistently voted against bills strengthening abortion protections, according to OnTheIssues' review of his record. His campaign site does not address abortion.

[1] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Supports restoring Roe v. Wade protections, protecting access to mifepristone and establishing "a nationwide right to access IVF."

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

VOTING RECORD

No Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (S. 6), Jan. 2025 — vote to advance the bill (failed, 52–47; 60 needed)

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty "is not really pro-life."* AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025

MARK BAISLEY

No public position found.

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

As governor, issued a stay of execution for a death-row inmate; has said he changed his mind to oppose capital punishment, calling it too random and not a deterrent.

[1] OnTheIssues: John Hickenlooper

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *"Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

MARK BAISLEY

Supports legal immigration for applicants who will be "self-reliant contributors" and "proudly assimilate"; calls for reversing laws that shield immigrants in the country illegally who commit crimes.

[1] Baisley campaign: Issues
[2] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Says ICE needs to be "completely overhauled or shut down"; opposes additional ICE funding and has introduced bills restricting masked agents and raids at sensitive locations.

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

VOTING RECORD

No Laken Riley Act (S. 5), Jan. 2025 — requires detention of undocumented immigrants charged with theft and certain crimes

No Secure America Act (S. 2), June 2026 — reconciliation funding for ICE and Customs and Border Protection

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is "the right of every person to worship according to conscience."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

MARK BAISLEY

Has said "the government's job is to protect, not to preach"; sponsored a state bill to put "In God We Trust" on license plates.

[1] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Has opposed vouchers for private or religious schools (2020).

[1] OnTheIssues: John Hickenlooper

VOTING RECORD

No One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — created a federal tax credit for donations to K–12 scholarship organizations

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *"We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures."* AP, Oct. 1, 2025

MARK BAISLEY

Pledges to "restore American energy dominance" and says he has protected Colorado's energy industry; voted against requiring real-time monitoring of air-toxics emissions (2021).

[1] Baisley campaign: Issues
[2] Baisley for Senate
[3] OnTheIssues: Mark Baisley

JOHN HICKENLOOPER

Backs federal clean-energy investment to fight climate change; touts the methane rules Colorado adopted while he was governor and says public lands will "NEVER be for sale."

[1] Hickenlooper campaign: Issues

VOTING RECORD

No Resolution overturning EPA approval of California vehicle-emission rules (H.J.Res. 87), May 2025

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