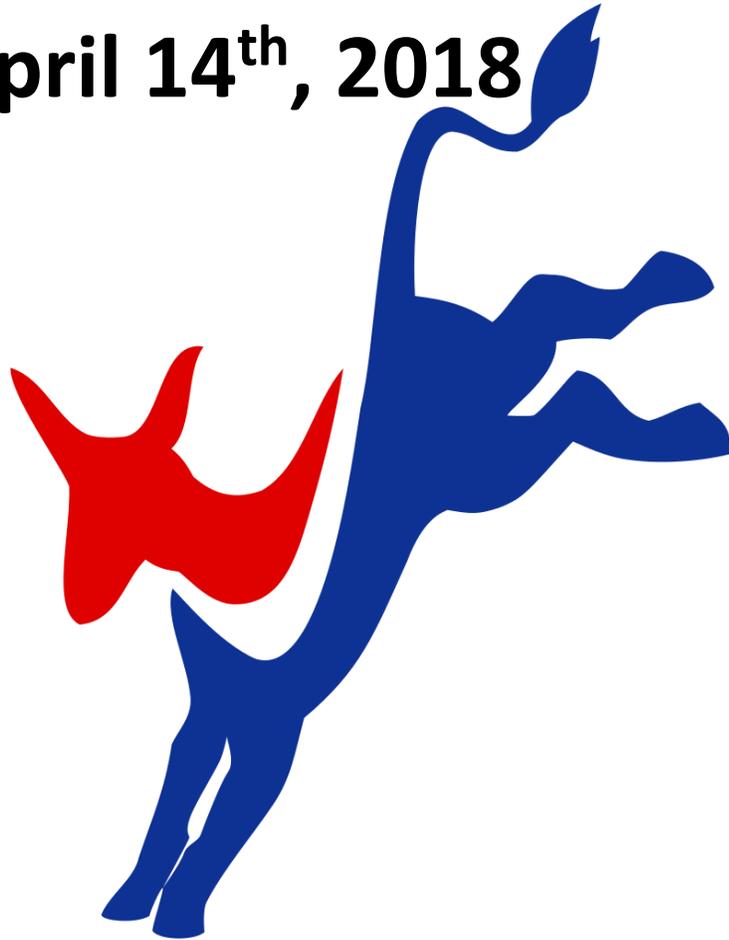


Erik Underwood

Democratic Party State Assembly Speech

April 14th, 2018



Beginning:

Hello, my name is Erik Underwood, and I am running for Governor of Colorado. I live in Marshall, Colorado, just outside of Boulder. Today, I am not going to give you a speech that you want, I'm going to give you a speech that you need to hear. I need your votes in order to continue this race. Today, I just need 1300 votes out of 4000. This speech is dedicated to my late grandmother, Victoria Nicholas, who helped to raise me. Grandma, I love you.

My life has so many avenues of experiences that qualify me for this office. From working in D.C. in the U.S Senate as a Staffer; to being a founder of a digital media technology company, executing a \$102 million dollar joint venture with AT&T. My story begins in a single parent household, living in 3 housing projects, with violence and despair all around us. My mom had 6 children, 2 sets of twins, and I am a twin myself. My fellow democrats, it took a village to raise me into the man that I have become. I lived with my grandmother for a time and with the Clark family, whom I met through the Big Brothers and Big Sisters Program. We were on food stamps and Medicaid. Just trying to get by. Health care is Right, not a privilege.

I am not running on movements, I'm running on a vision that will unite us all. I know something about when women lead, it's called growing up in a single parent household.

I am one of 3 unique gubernatorial candidates before you today. You have an amazing accomplished woman, an accomplished, proud and openly gay man, and an accomplished young man of color from the projects, all of us running to be your next Governor. This is what progress looks like in our country! This is what our Democratic Party is all About! We still have to make more progress, and we will get there together.

Let's get serious for a moment. My fellow democrats, you have turned this into a popularity contest, instead of a contest of ideas. What is going on? You guys are sleep at the wheel. You've been sleeping at the wheel too long. Wake up. You've been taking the candy from my opponents, instead of eating from the table, where I have prepared a well balanced nutritional meal for us all. The kind of meal that feeds your body and soul, and leaves you full and inspired. The kind of dinner table where everyone is welcomed, where the least of them shall be served first.

You say you want to repeal Tabor, but you have not voted that way. Have we lost hope? I am the only candidate that has a 4 step plan to repeal Tabor and Gallagher. We need to fix our schools, roads, bridges, create new transportation options...and we have to pay our teachers. We have to stop our race to the bottom! How can you look your fellow Coloradans in the eye, here in this very arena from counties that are on a 4 day school week such as; Washington County, Logan, Elbert, Heuerfano, Las Animas, and say that they don't matter? If people tell you that we can't repeal Tabor, then I stand before you as living proof on how I defied all of the odds, and you tell them...Yes we can.

You say you want free College and Trade school for your children, but you're not voting that way thus far. I have a plan for this called, the Colorado Hope Grant, giving free in state tuition at a public College and or trade school, funded by the excess state lottery revenues.

You say you care about Daca and undocumented immigrants, but again your not voting for the candidate who is taking this on. The other candidates don't have a bold plan like my Come Out Of The Shadows Program. My 2 year program will give State Legal residency to

undocumented immigrants, so we can fight for them at the courthouse against Trump and Jeff Sessions.

My rural Coloradans, you say that you're often forgotten, and that you need access to opportunities. But you're not voting that way either. How about my economic plan for Industrialized Hemp called, **CRUAHMI**, CRUAHMI stands for Colorado Rural Urban Agricultural Hemp Manufacturing Initiative. It will be a state funded loan program for farmers and manufacturers, manufacturing hemp based goods, creating a new billion dollar economy here in Colorado. I'm the only candidate proposing a **Department of Rural Affairs**, we need to put 4 satellite Governors' offices around the 4 corners of this State. A Governor should be connected to his people. You cannot connect to rural Coloradans all the way from Denver.

How about building a new major airport like DIA somewhere on the western side of Colorado, on the I70 corridor? Creating new jobs and attracting new companies.

Maybe we all need to take a look in the mirror, and point the fingers back at ourselves. *Is the fix really in today?*

We've tried popularity contests before. We gave the world Donald Trump, and it started with our national party undermining Bernie Sanders. Remember the super

delegates, the party establishment who would not vote for Bernie. Remember, our super delegates here in Colorado, who would not vote the way our state did for Bernie. We lost 2016 and handed it to the Republicans. And now you have one of those super delegates who is running for governor, Jared Polis, who ironically is asking for your vote. How soon we forget. By the way, Jared has his petition signatures already, he doesn't need your votes the way I do. Yes, I'm against the ropes, but help me to deliver the knockout punch, so I can fight for you and all of Colorado.

This is about ballot access for me. Let's talk about a movement where it includes everyone. The Civil rights movement. It doesn't matter if you are gay, transgendered, or straight. Black or white, man or woman, immigrant or not. Two weeks ago, was the anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. So many fallen heroes have fought, died, and bled for someone like me to run for Governor of a beautiful State such as ours. The blood soaked soil still screams out for the many injustices that still occur to this day.

Can we finally tell the truth about the opioid epidemic? The heroin and opioid epidemic did not begin in the suburbs or in rural America...it began in communities of

color, long ago. We should be sending people to treatment programs, not to our county jails.

If elected governor, I will reject every budget bill that does not include a budget for building and funding treatment facilities. We need criminal justice reform! No more Private prisons!!!!

We need words that bring us together instead of separating us. We need to eliminate the word Minority! Minority, is a word that separates us, it's an epithet. The beginning word is minor. It means less than. It means that I'm over here, and that yall are over there. That is not who we are. White is a color too. We are all Americans of Color.

The Time is now to join me at the table where I prepared a great meal for us, where we will confront our tough challenges together. Where we will have conversations of hope and understanding. The Time is Now.

[Begin End Wrap Up:](#)

The Time is now to Stand Up, if you want free college education and trade school for your children and grandchildren.

The Time is now to stand up if you want to Repeal Tabor, so we can get this State back on track.

The Time is now to stand up, if you want a Department of Rural Affairs, so we can take care of our rural Coloradans.

The time is now to stand up against injustice, where all men and women are created equal regardless of race, creed, or gender, or sexuality.

The time is now where we stand up and get up off the sidelines and vote for new energy and hope, as I will not let you down.

The time is now to stand up for my Industrialized Hemp Manufacturing initiative, so we can create jobs for rural and urban Coloradans,...Gone will be the days where we tribalize, and ignore our neighbors, we need each other now more than ever. We are family.

The time is now to stand up! Lord, do not let my feet fail me now, we are all going to get there together, I promise. Stand Up if you believe that! We can do it.....we can all do it together as one.

Democrats, my family, Colorado my home, thank you for giving me this chance. I am the grandson of the late

Victoria Nicholas.....My name is Erik Underwood, I am running for Governor of Colorado, and I am reporting....I am reporting for duty! It is now in your hands. Thank you, and God Bless Colorado and these United States of America.