



Live from the statehouse, it's the Colorado Senate - Denver Post, The (CO) - November 30, 2009 - page A-15

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No one's expecting TV critics to take notice, but the **Colorado Channel** - the legislature's cable access channel - returns to the airwaves this session with a new offering in its lineup.

The Colorado Senate is going live in 2010, following in the footsteps of the House, which has been broadcasting live video of its floor proceedings for the past two sessions.

"I'm excited," said Senate President Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont. "I think it'll be a good thing for the Senate and a good thing for the public."

The Senate spent \$119,000 on cameras, wiring and equipment to ready the chamber for the TV broadcasts, and it will cost each chamber an estimated \$112,000 yearly to operate the video broadcasts and pay the two full-time and two part-time staff needed.

While some might question such expenditures during the worst state budget downturn since the Great Depression, Shaffer said lawmakers had approved the funding in 2008 and decided to move forward with it.

"It's transparency and accountability," he said. "People have a right to see our proceedings in action. This is the best way we can provide that access."

Like the House, the Senate's broadcast will air on Comcast channel 165. However, only one chamber at a time can be broadcast live, so the House and Senate may have to take turns going live, with one chamber's taped proceedings airing later in the day.

In any case, legislative junkies can still catch both chambers' proceedings through live streaming video online at [coloradochannel.net](http://coloradochannel.net)

House Speaker Terrance Carroll said he believes the live broadcasts have brought the House's proceedings into the homes of many Coloradans outside the metro area who might never see their legislators in action.

And Carroll admits to sometimes wincing when he sees himself on TV in the evenings as the House's action is replayed.

"I watched myself once last year and decided I needed to lose weight," he said. "You also get to hear your own arguments and say, 'That really wasn't the best argument. I need to try something different next time.'"

"The only thing that I'm happy for is that we're not in HD."

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