

OPINION

THE GAZETTE'S VIEWPOINT

If Coffman leads Aurora, he'll help all of Colorado

Colorado Springs was fortunate when the former state's attorney general, U.S. attorney, state prosecutor, and director of the Colorado Department of Corrections ran for mayor. It is hard to imagine someone with such high qualifications running for a local leadership position.

John Suthers' leadership, early in a second term, has played a major role in Colorado Springs becoming the most envied city in the United States — as determined for two successive years by a U.S. News & World Report survey. The local housing market is among the best in the country. Unemployment is low, wages are growing and young people are moving to the community in droves. Investment has poured in to create and enhance cultural amenities.

Confidence in government pays off.

Aurora has a similar opportunity this fall when voters choose a new mayor Nov. 5. Running among a crowded field is former U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman, whose qualifications far surpass those we typically see among candidates for local office. Few cities will have an opportunity to elect leadership this well-qualified.

A 55-year-resident of Aurora — growing up there from childhood — Coffman is Colorado's former state treasurer. He is Colorado's former secretary of state. He spent 10 years in Congress. He served in the Colorado Senate. He is a combat veteran of the Persian Gulf War, earning the Combat Action Ribbon. His military service includes 20 years of combined service in the Army, the Army Reserve, the Marine Corps and the Marine Reserve.

After winning reelection as state treasurer, Coffman left the comfort and safety of domestic public office to serve in the Iraq war and help establish interim local govern-

ments in the Middle East's western Euphrates Valley. It was a selfless decision made for the good of his country.

As Coffman saw more Latinos moving into his hometown, he adapted by learning to speak Spanish. It was no surprise because Coffman devotes his life to serving others. He understands public service and the way government works inside and out, perhaps better than any of Colorado's other political leaders.

Only Aurora residents can vote in this election, but everyone in Colorado should care about the outcome. Aurora matters to all of Colorado:

- It is home to the massive Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center.
- It is home to the flagship campus of Children's Hospital Colorado.
- It is home to the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.
- It is home to UCHealth and the UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital.
- It is home to Cherry Creek State Park; the Colorado Freedom Memorial; the Plains Conservation Center; Aurora Reservoir and other great public attractions.
- It is the gateway to Denver International Airport and serves as the jurisdiction housing most of the booming office, retail and commercial development surrounding the airport.
- It is home to Buckley Air Force Base, an important component of our country's national defense system.

For the sake of the city's residents and the rest of Colorado, Aurora must remain an increasingly welcoming, safe, affordable, diverse and business-friendly city. Under Coffman's proven leadership, Aurora's present and future will shine bright.

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