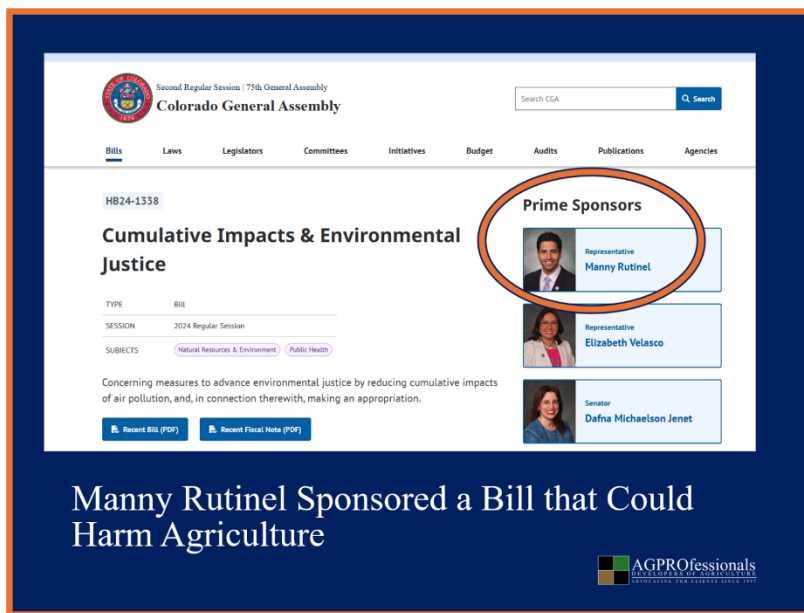




## Manny Rutinel Sponsored a Bill that Could Harm Agriculture

Sponsored by Manny Rutinel, Colorado House Bill 24-1338 was signed into law on May 28, 2024. It aims to promote environmental justice by addressing cumulative air pollution impacts. It creates a new regulatory framework that could have significant implications for Colorado agriculture, particularly for dairy operations, feedlots, livestock facilities, food processors, grain-handling facilities, ethanol plants, and other agricultural businesses that require state air or environmental permits.

Given his almost two decades of campaigning to advance the animal rights ideological agenda via various activities including a climate platform, his assertion that his views of animal agriculture are “nuanced” is simply outrageous and insulting to Colorado livestock producers. Now Rutinel is wearing a cowboy hat and claiming to support Colorado ranchers. His recent cosplay highlights his disregard for the state's producers and their importance.

HB24-1338 establishes Colorado's Office of Environmental Justice and mandates the development of Environmental Equity and Cumulative Impact Analyses (EECIAs) for communities identified as "disproportionately impacted." The bill broadens state environmental oversight by incorporating cumulative impact assessments, community engagement, new regulatory staff, and stronger enforcement powers.

While the bill mainly focuses on environmental justice issues and petroleum refineries, its framework for assessing cumulative impacts is not limited to refineries alone. Instead, it provides tools that "may be used" by any state agency. For Colorado agriculture, the main concern is not the bill's immediate effect but its potential regulatory consequences over time. As agencies adopt cumulative impact assessments into permitting and rulemaking, livestock producers, processors, and rural businesses might face more complex permit processes, longer review times, increased compliance costs, and heightened uncertainty when planning future investments.

With only a short time as a Colorado resident and as a Colorado state lawmaker, Rutinel sponsored this legislation, which contains language that could harm agricultural production in the state. This activity, combined with his more than two decades of crusading against agriculture, makes the idea of voting him into the 8th Congressional seat representing a district that is among the nation's highest agricultural producers seem completely insane.