

= Dan Gibbs =

Dan Gibbs (born c . 1976) is a legislator in the U.S. state of Colorado .

Gibbs worked as an outdoor guide and as a staffer for U.S. Representative Mark Udall before being elected to the Colorado House of Representatives as a Democrat in 2006 . In the legislature , Gibbs was noted for his focus on transportation and environment issues in the state legislature , particularly in response the fire dangers posted by Colorado 's mountain pine beetle epidemic ? Gibbs is a volunteer wildland firefighter and has served fighting fires in Colorado and California .

Gibbs was appointed to a vacancy in the Colorado State Senate in late 2007 , won election to a Senate term of his own in 2008 , and currently represents a multi @-@ county region stretching from the Colorado Front Range near Boulder into Rocky Mountain ski country west of Denver . Gibbs rose quickly to chair the Colorado Senate 's Transportation Committee , but announced that he would seek election to a Summit County Commissioner seat in 2010 rather than run for another term in the legislature .

= = Biography = =

Gibbs ' parents were both public school teachers and later school principals ; they divorced when Gibbs was young and he split his childhood between Gunnison , Colorado and East Lansing , Michigan . He was influenced at an early age toward public service after meeting former U.S. President Jimmy Carter . Gibbs earned a bachelor 's degree in sociology from Western State College , and then attended the University of Colorado at Denver , where he worked towards a graduate degree in political science .

Gibbs has worked in the timber industry , as a manager with a whitewater rafting company in Lake Luzerne , New York , and as an outdoor adventure guide in Gunnison , Colorado . As a local businessperson , he was a member of and diplomat for the Summit Chamber of Commerce , and was elected to their board for a three @-@ year term in 2006 .

An athlete and outdoorsman , Gibbs has competed in marathon and ultramarathon running races (including the Leadville Trail 100) and helped coach the Battle Mountain High School cross @-@ country ski team . He has also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity , Eagle River Clean Up , and the I @-@ 70 Clean Up Team , and sat on the boards of Club 20 , the High Country Conservation Center , the Vail @-@ Eagle Valley Rotary Club , and Vail Valley Hospital Home Health / Hospice . He has cited being a volunteer youth mentor with the Buddy Mentors program as his most meaningful volunteer experience .

Gibbs worked in the Washington , DC office of U.S. Congressman Mark Udall before becoming the director for Udall 's Western Slope office in Minturn in 2003 . As a Congressional staffer , Gibbs sat on the Congressional Legislative Staff Association Board of Directors . He also helped launch the Summit County Young Democrats in 2004 .

= = Legislative career = =

= = = 2006 election = = =

Currently a resident of Silverthorne , Colorado , Gibbs first ran for the state legislature in 2006 for a seat being vacated by Gary Lindstrom , who served as his campaign chair . Running for office at the age of 30 , Gibbs faced criticism for his relative youth and inexperience , however , spending over \$ 90 @, @ 000 on his campaign ? more than twice as much as Republican opponent Ken Chlouber , ? Gibbs ultimately defeated Chlouber by a 2 : 1 margin . His constituency , House District 56 , encompassed Eagle , Lake and Summit Counties , including the skiing communities of Vail and Breckenridge .

= = = 2007 legislative session = = =

In his first year in the legislature ? the 2007 session of the Colorado General Assembly ? Gibbs sat on the House Agriculture , Livestock and Natural Resources Committee and was Vice @-@ Chair of the House Transportation and Energy Committee . That same year , Gibbs was also appointed to the Colorado Interbasin Water Compact Committee and the board of directors of the Colorado Tourism office .

Starting when he was a staffer for Congressman Udall and continuing into his legislative career , Gibbs promoted increased government assistance on forest management issues , particularly in response to the increased fire danger caused by mountain pine beetle infestations . In the legislature , Gibbs sponsored legislation which established the Colorado Community Forest Restoration grant program , setting aside \$ 1 million for projects to reduce fire risks . The bill was signed into law by Gov. Bill Ritter and ultimately yielded \$ 176 @,@ 000 for forest restoration projects within Gibbs ' district . Following the legislative session , in order to better understand issues surrounding forest wildfires , Gibbs trained for and received certification in wildland firefighting , becoming certified Type II Wildland Firefighter with Lake Dillon Fire @-@ Rescue . Gibbs ' first deployment as a volunteer firefighter was to assist fighting the Santiago Fire during the October 2007 California wildfire epidemic .

After successfully sponsoring a 2007 bill requiring collaboration between the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission and Colorado Division of Wildlife to minimize the impact on wildlife from oil and gas drilling , Gibbs testified before the U.S. House 's Natural Resources committee on cooperative efforts between oil and environmental interests .

After initial resistance , Gibbs also successfully pushed legislation in 2007 to increase penalties for truck drivers who fail to comply with Colorado 's law requiring snow chain on roads in winter , a move designed to improve accessibility and safety on I @-@ 70 , which bisected Gibbs ' house district . In later years , Gibbs and state officials attributed decreases in accidents and tickets issued for violating the chain law to the passage of the bill . Gibbs was named to the interim Transportation Legislation Review Committee at the end of the 2007 regular session .

= = = 2007 senate appointment = = =

Following the resignation of Colorado Senate President Joan Fitz @-@ Gerald in November 2007 , Gibbs was unanimously elected by a vacancy committee to take her seat in the Colorado State Senate . He resigned from the House of Representatives at 9 a.m. on Tuesday , December 11 , 2007 , and was sworn into the Colorado State Senate an hour later to represent Senate District 16 , which covers Clear Creek Gilpin , Grand , Summit and portions of western Boulder and Jefferson counties . Because of his interim appointment , Gibbs faced an election in November 2008 to retain his new Senate seat . Christine Scanlan was appointed to fill Gibbs ' vacant house seat on December 19 , 2007 .

= = = 2008 legislative session = = =

In his first year in the Colorado State Senate , Gibbs sat on the Senate Agriculture , Livestock , Natural Resources and Energy Committee and the Senate Transportation Committee ? the counterparts of both of the House committees he served on ? and was named vice @-@ chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee . He also co @-@ chaired the General Assembly 's Sportsmen 's Caucus .

During the 2008 session , Gibbs sponsored a total of 26 bills as either the lead sponsor or the Senate sponsor of a House bill . Twenty @-@ two of his bills were passed ? an average of more than one per week during the legislative session ? including :

the Colorado Forest Restoration Act , a reauthorization of Gibbs ' 2007 house bill to provide funds for local forest restoration projects through 2012 , cosponsored with Rep. Christine Scanlan ;

the Workplace Accommodations for Working Mothers Act , which requires employers to provide accommodations for breastfeeding mothers ;

the Firefighter Protection Act , which would grant additional legal protections for firefighters ;
a bill clarifying rules regarding sales of gaming machines ;
a bill to prohibit soft drinks from being sold at public schools ,
a bill lowering the blood alcohol limit for boat operators .
a bill allowing water boards to issue bonds for fire @-@ mitigation projects .

Several of Gibbs bills failed in committee , including legislation to provide \$ 10 million in tax incentives for the film industry in Colorado . With Rep. Scanlan , Gibbs was a prominent opponent of several proposals to charge tolls along the I @-@ 70 mountain corridor within his district ; he later cited this as his most significant accomplishment of the session .

In response to Gibbs ' efforts to advance understanding of the ongoing bark beetle epidemic , Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter signed an executive order in February 2008 creating the Colorado Forest Health Advisory Council ; Gibbs was named to the 24 @-@ member panel shortly after its creation . Following the legislative session , Gibbs was also named the chairman of an interim legislative committee to study wildfire issues , but was criticized by Republicans for delaying the start of the committee 's work . The following day , Gibbs announced plans for the committee 's first meeting .

In July 2008 , Gibbs was a prominent critic of Denver Water 's sudden closure of the Lake Dillon Dam Road for security reasons . Shortly after the road was reopened , Gibbs and Rep. Christine Scanlan announced plans for legislation to prevent future unilateral closures and to encourage cooperation between agencies to share vulnerability assessments and emergency plans

= = = 2008 election = = =

In the 2008 general election , Gibbs faced Republican Don Ytterberg , whom he had outraised roughly \$ 80 @,@ 000 to \$ 50 @,@ 000 by mid @-@ October . Gibbs cited his track record of passing legislation and his connections and experience at the state capitol as part of his case for re @-@ election , and named wildfire and business concerns as his major priorities for a continued term in the Colorado Senate . He also called for reducing business personal property taxes and growing local small businesses . Gibbs ' re @-@ election bid was endorsed by the Denver Post , the Summit Daily News , and the Boulder Daily Camera , the Arvada Press , and the Golden Transcript . Gibbs raised over \$ 100 @,@ 000 during his campaign to Ytterberg 's \$ 60 @,@ 000 , and ultimately won re @-@ election with about 59 percent of the vote , taking three @-@ quarters of votes cast in Summit County , but losing narrowly to Ytterberg in suburban Jefferson County .

= = = 2009 legislative session = = =

In the 2009 session of the Colorado General Assembly , Gibbs rose to chair the Senate Transportation Committee and sat on the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee .

Gibbs missed some of the opening ceremonies of the 2009 General Assembly after being called to help fight a wildfire near Boulder , Colorado ; his absence was cited by Gov. Ritter during the governor 's " State of the State " address . With Rep. Christine Scanlan , Gibbs travelled to Washington DC in February and in June to lobby for resources to deal with Colorado 's mountain pine beetle epidemic .

Gibbs was the Senate sponsor of a major transportation proposal , introduced by Rep. Joe Rice and backed by Gov. Bill Ritter and other Democratic leaders , to increase transportation funding by \$ 250 million per year , primarily for road and bridge repair , by increasing a range of vehicle registration fees . The proposal , labeled " FASTER , " an acronym for Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery , stalled in the state senate , but advanced after a compromise was reached to drop a pilot program to charge drivers based on vehicle miles travelled and to allow locally authorized toll roads. and eventually passed out of the legislature , FASTER was passed without the support of Republicans , who objected to the level of fee increases and called for resources besides fees to be used to support transportation . The increased registration fees drew significant protest from the public when they took effect in July 2009 .

Other legislation sponsored by Gibbs included bills to extend Colorado 's habitat stamp program , to

create a specialty license plate for skiing and snowboarding , to overhaul regulations on oil and gas drilling operations , and to facilitate local planning and fundraising for fighting wildfires .

Gibbs was also viewed as one of the crucial swing votes on a measure to repeal the death penalty in Colorado and use the resulting savings to fund a statewide cold case unit . Although he first voted to remove the death penalty repeal from the legislation , he later voted in support of a version of the bill containing the repeal , which came within one vote of passing the legislature on the final day of the session .

In January 2009 , Gibbs was named one of the Western Colorado Conservation Corps ' Legislators of the Year , and in May 2009 , he was the keynote speaker at Summit High School 's graduation .

= = = 2010 election = = =

In November 2009 , Gibbs announced that , rather than running for re @-@ election to the state senate in fall of 2010 , he would run for the Summit County Commissioner seat being vacated by Bob French . Gibbs 's retirement opened up a seat that Republicans viewed as a pickup opportunity .

In 2014 , Gibbs discussed his preference for local politics : ? At the state level , it ? s much more about whether you are a Republican or a Democrat and winning and losing , rather than making decisions that are good for Colorado . The more dysfunctional things get at the federal and state levels , the more people seem to come together at the local level to accomplish goals that are important to communities . ?

In November 2014 , he easily defeated Republican Allen Bacher , winning re @-@ election by over 66 percent of the vote .