**Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies**.

January 13, 2014

***http://www.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker-votes/0/391/2014/0/***

**Groucho Marx**

***Days Until Sine Die: 114***

*Axiom thanks the many news sources from which we gather relevant stories for our weekly newsletter. In most cases you will be able to read the full text article for each headline below by clicking on the link provided. The purpose of this format is to share newsworthy items while ensuring we adhere to copyright law.*

**Fields Named Speaker Pro-tem**

Speaker Mark Ferrandino announced last week that Rep. Rhonda Fields (D-Aurora) is the new speaker pro tempore of the Colorado House of Representatives. The speaker pro tem presides over the House of Representatives whenever the speaker is absent. Rep. Fields succeeds Claire Levy, who resigned from the House in October.

Rep. Fields was elected to represent House District 42 in Aurora in 2010. A tragedy launched Rep. Fields’ political activism. Her son, Javad Fields, and his fiancée, Vivian Wolfe, were murdered in June 2005, less than a week before Javad was scheduled to testify as a key witness in the murder of his best friend.

She is chairwoman of the House Local Government Committee and a member of the Education Committee and the Health, Insurance & Environment Committee.

Speaker pro tem is strictly the speaker’s appointment, and is the only House leadership position that is not elected by the full House or the majority or minority caucuses.

**Two Colorado Legislators Announce Formation of Rural Caucus**

Colorado state Representative Timothy Dore from Elizabeth and Senator Mary Hodge from Brighton announced the formation of a bipartisan rural caucus this week, comprised of both senators and representatives who are committed to representing rural Colorado. The rural caucus is expected to host monthly or bimonthly speakers as well as supporting pieces of legislation that advance the interest of rural Colorado.

Representative Dore represents House District 64, which is comprised of Washington, Lincoln, Elbert, Kiowa, Cowley, Bent, Prowers, Baca and Las Animas Counties. Senator Hodge represents Senate District 25, which includes the city of Brighton, parts of Aurora, and stretches east to include Bennett, Strasburg, and rural Adams County.

**Air Quality Rules – Oil & Gas Industry**

In mid-November, Governor Hickenlooper unveiled the State’s new proposed air quality rules at a press conference at the capitol, joined by three of Colorado’s biggest oil and gas companies and an environmental group. The Governor said the new regs would cut pollution from oil and gas operations and, as proposed, would be the tightest in the nation and the first to ask companies to cut leaks of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. At his side that day at the state Capitol were state officials and representatives from three of the state’s biggest energy companies, Anadarko Petroleum Corp., Noble Energy Inc. and Encana Corp and the Environmental Defense Fund, an advocacy group that’s worked to tighten rules on the industry.

In the weeks following the press conference, critics of the new regulations have offered hundreds of pages of comments and criticisms, many of which come from parties left out of the talks that led to the proposal. Comments and additional information can be found [here](http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPHE-AP/CBON/1251635574914), on the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s Air Quality Division website. The Division is scheduled to hold hearings on the proposed rules Feb. 19-21.

**Businesses Brace for Workers’ Comp Bill in 2014 Session**

Topping the watch list this session for Colorado business leaders is a proposed bill on workers’ compensation that some business groups believe could be bad for business. Bill supporters say it will restore balance to a system that has for too long favored employers over employees. Rep. Angela Williams, D-Denver, will be the prime sponsor of the workers comp bill being shopped around the business and labor communities. A first draft met with less than enthusiastic support from some business groups, and a second draft is now in the works.

The Colorado AFL-CIO is pushing the proposal. However, several business leaders who have seen the first draft say the bill is unnecessary. The current system makes Colorado a national leader in workers’ compensation and doesn’t need change, they claim. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment has not taken a position on this proposed legislation.

The first draft proposed changes in benefits for workers injured on the job as a result of employer negligence. Benefits would increase by 50 percent if the employer has disregarded safety rules. Current law allows a worker’s benefits to be cut by 50 percent if the employee is injured as a result of ignoring safety rules, but there are no provisions for employer negligence. The first draft also suggests changes to the way doctors are chosen for an injured worker. The current law allows the employer to choose up to two doctors. The proposed bill allows a worker to choose as long as the choice is a “level two-accredited” doctor. The draft also contains new requirements for employment separation agreements.

Other issues on the business radar include what will happen to K-12 education reform in the wake of the defeat of Amendment 66 last November, energy, health care, labor and tax issues, as well as legislation that could change tax increment financing for blighted areas and legislation on multi-family residential units.

**Saving the Safe2Tell School Safety Program**

Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle are uniting to introduce a bill to keep a key school-safety program from closing its doors. Safe2Tell, created after the Columbine shooting to give K-12 students an anonymous hotline to report safety issues was at risk of shutting down due to lack of funding. The bill will move the program from its nonprofit status to the Colorado Attorney General’s Office, with an annual budget of about $250,000.

Anonymous tips to Safe2Tell can be made year-round and round-the-clock, and information is immediately forwarded to local school officials and law enforcement.

**Lawmakers Aim to Shift $50 million Phone Subsidy toward Broadband**

Colorado lawmakers and industry officials are working to overhaul a program that reimburses carriers more than $50 million annually for providing land-line phone service in rural areas. A revamp of the so-called High Cost Support Mechanism is expected to rank among the top business issues this coming session after efforts over the past three years failed. The federal government and other states have already restructured similarly outdated subsidies, shifting the money toward broadband expansion.

Though competing measures are afloat, it seems likely that Colorado will also aim to repurpose the funds for broadband rather than eliminate the subsidy, which is funded by a 2.6 percent surcharge on land-line and mobile phone bills. The Colorado Public Utilities Commission has initiated a review to determine which areas of the state have sufficient competition and should no longer qualify for High Cost support. Industry leaders expect that process to free up several million dollars as early as this year.

The High Cost fund was established in the 1990s, before the proliferation of cellular coverage, to ensure that all Colorado residents have access to affordable phone service. Previously, proposals to phase out or phase down the fund have been tied to sweeping and complicated updates of the state's telecom rules and terminology. And broadband expansion hasn't always been included in efforts to overhaul the program.

The details that are likely to present the most conflict include:

         Whether the broadband funds would cover both unserved and underserved areas of the state, or only unserved areas.

         Whether grant recipients would be required to contribute matching funds.

         Which agency would administer the program.

         How much would remain for land-line service in areas that are still "high cost" to serve.

Currently, telecom giant CenturyLink receives more than 90 percent of High Cost funds annually and has, in the past, resisted efforts to change the program. The carrier now appears resigned to the fact that the program will shift toward broadband.

**Construction Defects Reform Long Overdue**

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock called on Colorado lawmakers Monday to pass a reform law that will make it easier to build condos without fear of getting sued.

Hancock is the most prominent of metro-area mayors to advocate for a construction defects reform proposal that was killed in committee last year.

Hancock made his plea at a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Denver legislative breakfast, speaking before legislative leaders took the podium to discuss their ideas for the 2014 session. House Minority Leader Brian DelGrosso, R-Loveland, agreed with the mayor on the idea, but House Speaker Mark Ferrandino, D-Denver, and Senate President-elect Morgan Carroll, D-Aurora, did not respond directly to him. Shortly after the session ended last May, the Metro Mayors’ Caucus took up the issue as its own, arguing that the current law is leaving the state without affordable housing for younger residents and baby boomers who want to downsize. A November report for the Denver Regional Council of Governments linked current laws to the lack of new condos. Currently, Only about 2 percent of new housing in the state is multifamily units made for ownership — far lower than the 20 to 25 percent of such housing stock in other states represented by condos.

**Senate Dems Key Issues for 2014**

Below are a few key policies the Senate democrats have prioritized for the 2014 session.

Key policies for education:

         Ensure that college is accessible.

         Provide a twenty-first century K-12 education.

Key policies for financial security:

         Restore the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program.

         Expanding rural internet access.

Key policies for disaster relief:

         Repairing roads and bridges after disasters.

         Keeping local firefighters safe and able to fight wildfires.

**Ammunition Magazine Manufacturer Magpul Follows through with Threat to Leave Colorado**

Magpul Industries threatened to leave Colorado last year after the legislature passed a measure banning weapons magazines with more than 15 rounds. The Erie-based ammunition magazine manufacturer recently announced it is relocating its operations to Cheyenne and Texas. "Moving operations to states that support our culture of individual liberties and personal responsibility is important," CEO Richard Fitzpatrick said in a news release. The move is expected to happen within the next 12 to 16 months, the company said, and it hopes to relocate at least 92 percent of its workforce outside of Colorado in that time.

**“Right to Local Self Government” Initiative**

A movement is underway to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November that would give local governments across the state the power to protect the health and safety of residents by banning or restricting oil and gas drilling and other industrial activities now permitted by state law. The effort, which would be an amendment to the state constitution known as the "Right to Local Self-Government Act," is being pushed by the budding [Colorado Community Rights Network](https://www.facebook.com/COCommunityRights).

According to organizer Cliff Willmeng, who led the charge to ban oil and gas drilling in Lafayette, the measure would address any type of corporate project that a local community would deem to be a threat. "That could include hydraulic fracturing (or fracking), but would not be limited to it." Willmeng said the intent of the proposed act would be to ensure that state law and corporate interests don't trump local law when it comes to making decisions about what's best for the health and wellbeing of a community, but it would clearly affect way more than oil and gas development.

Ballot measure proponents have six months to collect signatures from the time the ballot title is set, with a deadline of Aug. 1 to turn in all signatures.

**Connect for Health Colorado and Colorado Medicaid Update**

Between October 1 and December 31, more than 138,000 Coloradans signed up or were approved for health coverage that took effect January 1, 2014, according to data recently released from Connect for Health Colorado and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing.

The first half of the open enrollment period saw a strong increase in the pace of enrollments as the December deadline approached for customers seeking health insurance coverage on January 1st of 2014. Connect for Health Colorado, working in partnership with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, extended the deadline from December 15th to December 27th to accommodate as many additional customers as possible.  The enrollment period for private health insurance continues until March 2014, with customers currently enrolling in plans with coverage starting February 1st.

The enrollment numbers for Connect for Health Colorado exceeded their own early conservative projections of approximately 37,000 enrollments by the December deadline by 16,000 additional lives covered.

The Medicaid expansion numbers announced at the end of December reflect individuals actually enrolled in the program. Since Medicaid eligibility is determined on a monthly basis, the prior numbers reflected estimates of eligibility at a point in time. Medicaid enrollments can and do change as individuals income or personal circumstances change. Colorado Medicaid refers individuals who are over income for Medicaid directly to Connect for Health Colorado as these individuals could benefit from an advance premium tax credit or other financial assistance offered through the marketplace.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category**  | **Total** | **Medicaid** | **Connect for Health Colorado** **(private health insurance)** |
| Individual and Family Enrollments(starting 1/1/2014) | **138,160** | **86,432** | 51,728 |
| Individual and Family Customer Accounts |   | 71,688(from PEAK) | 141,545 |
| Daily Website Visitors(average daily) |   | 3,303 (Oct. 1-31)3,553 (Nov. 1-30)4,722 (Dec. 1-31) | 8,636 |
| Number of employees and estimated number of dependents enrolled through Small Business Marketplace(starting 1/1/2014) |   |   | 1,045 |
| Total number of Coloradans signed up for private health insurance(starting 1/1/2014) |   |   | 52,773 |

 Through state laws, Connect for Health Colorado was established as a non-profit entity with a Colorado mission. In addition, Colorado is expanding eligibility for Medicaid. Private health insurance purchased through Connect for Health Colorado’s competitive marketplace and the expanded eligibility for Medicaid both take effect starting January 1, 2014. Enhanced federal funding that is available starting January 1, 2014 will support the Medicaid expansion.

Connect for Health Colorado has been open since October 1 and operates with separate technology and customer service operations from the federal marketplace, healthcare.gov. Connect for Health Colorado is open to individuals, families and small businesses. Individuals and families can choose from up to 150 private health insurance plans from ten carriers and small employers can create small group plans from up to 92 health insurance plans provided by six carriers. More information is available at [www.connectforhealthco.com](http://www.connectforhealthco.com).

Colorado Medicaid and the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) are public insurance programs for low income Coloradans. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing administers these programs. For more information visit [www.colorado.gov/health](http://www.colorado.gov/health).

**Key Dates**

**January 1, 2014 –** Coverage begins for newly eligible Medicaid or private health insurance plans purchased through Connect for Health Colorado
**January 10, 2014** – Deadline for Connect for Health Colorado customers to make first month’s premium payment for January 1, 2014 coverage
**January 15, 2014 –** Deadline to sign up for private health insurance that takes effect February 1, 2014
**February 15, 2014** – Deadline to sign up for private health insurance that takes effect March 1, 2014
**March 31, 2014\*** – Open enrollment for Connect for Health Colorado ends

\*Medicaid does not have an open enrollment period.

**Colorado to See Broad-based Job Growth in 2014, CU-Leeds Predicts**

According to the annual University of Colorado-Boulder Leeds School of Business economic forecast released at the beginning of December, Colorado is expected to be among the top five states for job growth in 2014, with a gain of 61,300 jobs in the goods-producing and services sectors.That’s down slightly compared with a gain of 66,900 jobs in 2013.

Other predictions included in the forecast:

         The state is likely to keep its unemployment rate below 7 percent in 2014

         The professional and business services sector is expected to see the most job growth next year, with a forecast gain of 14,200 jobs, or an increase of 3.8 percent from this year.

         The construction sector, which was the hardest-hit sector during the recession, is expected to see an 8.7 percent increase in jobs, with a net gain of 11,000.

         Even Colorado’s manufacturing sector is expected to grow next year, adding 1,700 jobs, or an increase of 1.3 percent from 2013.

 Only one sector of the 13 analyzed in the Leeds forecast — information, which includes publishing and telecommunications — is likely to experience a decline in jobs in Colorado next year, going from 69,700 this year to an estimated 69,400 next year.

**Gov. Hickenlooper and CDOT Preview Improved Eastbound I-70 Twin Tunnel**

After just eight months of rock blasting, rock bolting and paving, the third lane of eastbound I-70 between east of Idaho Springs to U.S. 6, including through the Twin Tunnels, opened to traffic in mid-December.

By widening eastbound I-70 through the Twin Tunnels, CDOT will be able to build an Express Lane for eastbound peak periods that uses the shoulder lane. Using the existing wide shoulder from Empire Junction through Idaho Springs, motorists will be able to travel the peak period shoulder lane by paying a toll only during peak travel times. In return, they will have a reliable travel option with consistent speeds that will save motorists an average of 30 minutes in travel time.

The peak period shoulder lane will be constructed and open to traffic in summer 2015. Although the new lane through the eastbound Twin Tunnel is part of the Express Lane, the fees will be waived until the peak period shoulder lane is complete and open. Meanwhile, motorists can travel the lane for free. For additional information on the peak period shoulder lane, visit the [project website](http://www.coloradodot.info/projects/i-70-eastbound.).

The Kraemer-Obayashi Joint Venture is the contractor for the $106 million project. Minor work off the roadway will continue next spring and the tunnel project will be completed in the spring of 2014.

**Denver’s City Attorney Takes Lobbyist Position**

*The Denver Business Journal reported (excerpts below):*

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck announced that “Doug” J. Friednash, Mayor Hancock’s City Attorney joined the firm on January 1, 2014, as a shareholder. Friednash’s practice will focus on public policy, government affairs and commercial transactions. He will work closely with attorneys and policy directors across Brownstein’s 14 offices to help clients interpret and navigate government actions, solve challenges and seize opportunities through interaction with government officials. A Denver native, Friednash most recently served as Denver’s city attorney for Mayor Michael B. Hancock.

Since August 15, 2011, Friednash has served as Denver’s city attorney and has managed one of the largest law firms in Colorado, with 100 attorneys and 90 staff members comprised of paralegals, victim advocates, and other support and supervisory staff members. His team supports the mayor, auditor, the Clerk and Recorder, City Council and all city agencies, departments, boards and commissions from Denver International Airport to the Denver Police Department. Friednash’s practice has focused on representing Mayor Hancock in all matters involving the administration as well as municipal operations, litigation, and airport legal services.

**Pro-A66 Funding Topped $11 million**

Spending on the failed pro-Amendment 66 campaign to overhaul state funding for education topped $11 million, according to final finance reports filed with the Secretary of State’s office.

The bulk of that money came from Colorado Commits to Kids, the campaign committee that drove the pro-A66 campaign. The committee received a total of $11,079,408 in contributions, including $839,270 in the final week leading up to the election.

The Walton Family Foundation, Fort Collins philanthropist Pat Stryker, and Houston hedge fund billionaire John Arnold are among the committee’s big contributors. Previous filings revealed major donations from outgoing New York City Major Michael Bloomberg and Bill and Melinda Gates. The Walton Family Foundation, which supports education reform initiatives in several states, gave $150,000 under the name Sam Walton during the last filing period. Pat Stryker gave $1 million, including $175,000 in the last reporting period. Stryker is a major contributor to the Democratic Party.

Also of note were smaller contributions from education associations in St. Vrain, Mesa County, Poudre, Pueblo, Jefferson County, Pikes Peak, Brighton, Littleton and Westminster.

Other significant contributors in the final reporting period:

         The American Federation of Teachers, the national teachers’ union, gave $100,000.

         The Service Employees International Union, which includes public school and healthcare employees, gave $100,000.

         Bell Policy Action Committee contributed $23,249.

The campaign against A66 gained traction in the final days of the campaign, raising the bulk of its funding during the final reporting period. Coloradans for Real Education Reform, A66′s primary opponents, raised a total of $145,800, with nearly two thirds of that coming in the final reporting period. The overwhelming majority of their funds, $110,600, came from the Independence Institute, a libertarian/conservative think thank. The committee spent $124,817, largely on political consulting and advertising.

Another group, Kids Before Unions, raised a total of $12,783, including $1,140 in the final reporting period. Roughly a third of that went to robocalls and radio ads opposing the amendment.

**Colorado explores online gambling as virtual and mobile casinos boom**

*Excerpts taken from* [*an article*](http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_24720778/colorado-explores-online-gambling-virtual-and-mobile-casinos) *in the Denver Post.*

This year, three states legalized some form of online gambling within their borders, with New Jersey recently joining Nevada and Delaware to allow live Internet-based casinos.

Quietly, Colorado lawmakers and industry officials drafted legislation late last session to authorize Internet poker. Though that effort stalled, the industry says it will continue to explore the issue, with another push possible in 2014.

On the smartphone side, gambling giant MGM Resorts International last month released the first casino mobile app to offer real comps and rewards, such as free rooms and buffets, for gambling with play chips. The rewards are redeemable at 11 brick-and-mortar casinos in Las Vegas, such as Bellagio and the Mirage. If there's any question about the appetite for such games, look no further than the results of MGM's app, called myVegas, since it appeared in the Google Play and Apple App stores.

Downloads are in the millions. Many of those downloads came from residents of Colorado, a significant feeder market for Las Vegas-based casinos. MGM has a joint marketing agreement with Ameristar Black Hawk, sending Colorado gamblers offers and rewards based on their player up the hill..

Online gambling in Nevada, New Jersey and Delaware is limited to players who are physically within the respective state's borders. Nevada has authorized Internet poker, while New Jersey and Delaware permit other online casino games such as slots.

Colorado is closely watching Nevada's process.

One of the challenges is that the industry is still unsure about Internet gambling's impact on land-based revenue.

Black Hawk, Colorado's largest gambling destination, commissioned a statewide poll this summer to gauge voter interest in expanding betting to the Internet.

"Our survey showed that the voters of the state did not have much appetite for online gambling," said Black Hawk city manager Jack Lewis.

Industry observers believe California will be the next state to permit Internet gambling. Federal lawmakers are considering a bill to authorize online poker nationwide.

In the meantime, Delaware and Nevada have already had discussions about linking up their player pools.

**5th annual Procurement Expo for Colorado businesses to be held Jan. 22, 2014**

[*Office of Economic Development & International Trade*](http://www.advancecolorado.com/news/5th-annual-procurement-expo-colorado-businesses-be-held-jan-22-2014-minority-business-and-state)

The Minority Business Office, a division of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and the State Purchasing Office, a division of the Colorado Department of Personnel & Administration, will hold the 5th annual Advance Colorado Procurement Expo on Jan. 22, 2014.

The Colorado Department of Transportation, University of Colorado, Colorado State University, City and County of Denver, Denver International Airport, the Regional Transportation District and Denver Public Schools have reserved Expo space. Many more state agencies, state institutions of higher education, local governments and K-12 schools are expected to attend.

**WHAT:** 5th Annual Advance Colorado Procurement Expo

**WHEN:** Jan. 22, 2014 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

**WHERE:** [Denver Athletic Club](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=0017ytydzCbP9E6q6a9-dw3bWdloiw1hEXeleBSU9YutOzNg8bI3Knq2sPGbCta5dmbBhqlIQcTKcikJVnrU5MIkgwcr4PRtUEJMYsEyUp7QFMQRUTsMBzuTw==), 1325 Glenarm Place, Denver

**REGISTRATION:** Advance registration is recommended at [www.colorado.gov/spo](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=0017ytydzCbP9GOq6FivPRka5am5FiDLQPcdwmtYum_MLZInIcjF40QRV2hxj00yBJ--ocTE_OF-H4xDwZxwq9XTU0vcVIpQ1vIDemwyZ_88d0=). Attendees can also register at the door.

**SPONSORSHIPS/EXPO BOOTHS:**  Businesses offering goods and services that seek greater exposure and access to the Colorado public procurement community may consider participating through advertising, sponsorship and Expo booths. Contact LeRoy Romero at l.romero@state.co.us.

**Governor’s NGV Summit Produces MOU**, **Colorado Energy Office announces next Step in Fleet Adoption**

[*Colorado Energy Office*](http://www.colorado.gov/energy/)

The Colorado Energy Office (CEO) released a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State of Colorado, the City of Denver, local governments, private sector companies with large vehicle fleets, and other public entities, members of the natural gas industry, and other organizations that will help accelerate the deployment of natural gas vehicles (NGVs) and the development of associated fueling stations in Colorado to encourage the use of a cleaner, domestic fuel, and contribute to a more diverse transportation energy sector.

Gov. John Hickenlooper supports the acquisition of fleet NGVs. With the Governors of 15 other states, Hickenlooper helped lead the development of a multi-state Memorandum of Understanding committing to the purchase of NGVs for each State’s fleet. Colorado has made the deployment of NGVs and expansion of the natural gas fueling infrastructure a priority. The CEO will support interested parties and continue to work on regulatory issues and remove market barriers to assist this effort.

MOU signatories are:  City and County of Denver, City of Grand Junction, City of Montrose, Denver International Airport, Weld County, Pueblo Area Council of Governments, Xcel Energy, Black Hills Energy, Colorado Springs Utility, Roaring Fork Transportation Authority, Colorado/Wyoming Petroleum Marketers Assoc., Colorado Oil and Gas Assoc., Colorado Motor Carriers Assoc., Noble Energy, Encana Natural Gas, Ward Alternative Energy, Rocky Mountain Alternative Fueling - Swallow Oil Co.,  Northern Colorado Clean Cities, American Lung Assoc., Burgener Trucking, Western Disposal Services, Via Mobility Services, Ensign Energy Services, Aqua-Hot Heating Systems, The Gas Connection, Westco Express, Clean Energy, Mile Hi Foods, Berthod Motors.

**University of Colorado Health System Jumps into Insurance Business**

University of Colorado Health will offer third-party administration service for companies' self-funded health insurance plans beginning in 2014, becoming the first hospital system in the state to get into that business.

The new division -- UCHealth Plan Administrators -- expects to be able to enable companies of at least 75 workers that have not self-funded their coverage before to do so, thereby learning more about how their disease-management and other health plans are effective or ineffective. By doing so, officials believe they can add thousands of patients to the health system next year and watch those numbers grow even larger in the future.

Many hire third-party administrators to do the actual oversight and paperwork.

UCHealth is made up of the University of Colorado Hospital in Aurora, Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland and Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs. It's a coalition of independent hospitals formed in recent years to be able to compete more effectively with the growing number of hospital chains that dominate the state.

Several of the facilities had experimented with serving as third-party administrators to a small number of local businesses before, but not actively had marketed the product before the new initiative.

Self-funded plans are exempt from some taxes paid by commercial insurers and immune from some of the federal health-care reform rules. They have come under fire from several groups. The Colorado Legislature last year passed a law making it more expensive for companies to buy stop-loss insurance — policies to cover bills that exceed a certain spending cap — and some business leaders have said they fear a similar bill that will raise costs again this year.

And some groups have criticized small companies that use these plans, saying they are taking healthy employees out of the risk pool and raising costs for other businesses.

But Major said UCHealth will administrate self-funded plans only for companies of 75 or more employees, eliminating the chance that small companies will self-insure unwisely.

And she said that while no one can predict what legislation will affect self-insured companies, she believes there is a market that UCHealth can get into to benefit both the companies that use it and the health system that will treat their workers.

**Nominations Open for 2014 Governor’s Creative Leadership Awards**

[*Office of Economic Development & International Trade*](../../AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.Outlook/W59A38B1/Office%20of%20Economic%20Development%20%26%20International%20Trade)

Colorado Creative Industries announced in mid-December that nominations are open for the 2014 Governor's Creative Leadership Awards. The Governor's Creative Leadership Awards (formerly the Governor's Arts Awards) recognize organizations and individuals that have demonstrated a significant commitment to Colorado's creative landscape through civic leadership and volunteerism including advocacy, vision, collaboration or innovation.

The awards are presented to individuals, arts organizations, creative businesses, arts administrators, corporations and volunteers that have demonstrated significant support or participation in activities on a statewide basis that advance the value of the creative industries in Colorado communities.

Nominations are accepted under the following categories:

         Arts and creative place-making: individuals or organizations that use the arts to envision new futures through activities such as activating a public space, animating a community or sparking redevelopment.

         Arts and community action: individuals and organizations that have demonstrated selfless service, inspired others to take action or catalyze change in their community using the arts.

         Arts and social change: individuals or organizations that work to solve a critical social problem such as homelessness, drug prevention, abuse, poverty or racism using creativity and/or arts.

Nominations will be accepted online through Feb. 27, 2014 at 4 p.m. Awards will be announced on May 2, 2014 during a ceremony hosted in conjunction with the 3rd annual Colorado Creative Industries Summit.

Visit [www.coloradocreativeindustries.org/communities/nomination-instructions](http://www.coloradocreativeindustries.org/communities/nomination-instructions) for online nominations.

**CCJL Elects New Board Chair**

Loren Furman, CACI Senior Vice President, State and Federal Relations, has been elected Board Chair of the Colorado Civil Justice League (CCJL), with which CACI is closely affiliated in the effort to protect and improve Colorado's civil justice system as it pertains to the state's business climate.

Loren oversees the day-to-day operation at the Colorado State Capitol of the CACI lobbying team.

CCJL was founded in 1999 to provide the Colorado business community with an organization focused solely on improving the civil justice system for the statewide business community.   CCJL concentrates, in cooperation with CACI, on legislative and regulatory matters.  In addition, CCJL also keeps an eye on lawsuit abuse as it concerns businesses.

CCJL and CACI will focus on the following legislation during the 2014 session of the Colorado General Assembly:

         Changes to the employment discrimination law (HB-1136) passed during the 2013 session;

         Construction defects;

         Employee wages and "wage theft";

         Workers compensation benefits; and

         Legal reform.

**Governor Hickenlooper Announces Appointments**

*Judicial and Judicial Nomination Commission Appointments*

On December 31, 2013, the Governor announced appointments to the 1st, 6th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 20th, 21st and the Supreme Court Judicial District nominating commissions.

The member appointed to the 1st Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Marie Belew Wheatley of Lakewood, to serve as an non-attorney and as a Democrat from Jefferson County.

The member appointed to the 6th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Kim Martin of Hesperus, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from La Plata County.

The member appointed to the 9th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         David Fiore of Basalt, Colorado, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Republican from Pitkin County.

The member appointed to the 10th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Sharon Swerdfeger of Pueblo West, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Republican from Pueblo County.

The member appointed to the 12th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Carla Gomez of Center, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Republican from Saguache County.

The member appointed to the 13th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Brigitte Shafer of Akron, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from Washington County.

The member appointed to the 15th Judicial District Nominating Commission for terms effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Marlin Miller of Eads, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Republican from Kiowa County.

The members appointed to the 16th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Robert Stwalley of Las Animas, to serve as a non-attorney and as an Unaffiliated from Bent County.

         Dwight Gardner of Ordway, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from Crowley County.

The member appointed to the 17th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Linda Rodriguez of Broomfield, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from Broomfield County.

The member appointed to the 20th Judicial District Nominating Commission for a term effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Karla Rikansrud of Boulder, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from Boulder County.

The member appointed to the 21st Judicial District Nominating Commission for terms effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Eric Sandstrom of Grand Junction, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Democrat from Mesa County.

The members appointed to the Supreme Court Nominating Commission for terms effective Jan. 1, 2014 and expiring Dec. 31, 2019:

         Robert Scott of Pagosa Springs, to serve as a non-attorney and as a Republican from the 3rd Congressional District.

         James Carpenter of Englewood, to serve a non-attorney and as a Democrat from the 6th Congressional District.

         Connie McArthur of Denver, to serve as a non-attorney and as Democrat and at-large member.

Also on Dec. 31, 2013 the Governor announced the appointment of Andrew McCallin as a district court judge for the 2nd Judicial District (Denver). McCallin will fill a vacancy due to the appointment of the Hon. William Hood III to the Colorado Supreme Court.

McCallin is currently a First Assistant Attorney General in the Consumer Protection Section of the Colorado Attorney General’s Office, where he currently serves in the Antitrust, Tobacco and Mortgage Fraud Unit. Also, he is an adjunct professor at the Sturm College of Law at the University of Denver. Previously, McCallin was an associate at Rothgerber, Johnson & Lyons LLP in the complex commercial litigation section and a law clerk to the Hon. Lewis T. Babcock, U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Colorado. McCallin earned a bachelor’s degree from Claremont McKenna College and a J.D. from the Sturm College of Law at the University of Denver.

*Boards & Commissions Appointments*

The Governor announced several Boards and Commissions appointments in the past month, including appointments to the Colorado Racing Commission; the Colorado State Fair Authority Board of Commissioners; the State Board of Equalization; and the Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Board.

The Colorado Racing Commission regulates and supervises pari-mutuel wagering (for horses and dogs), including enforcement of rules, supervision of race meets and racing officials and collection of revenues to the State. The appointment must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The member appointed for a term expiring July 1, 2017:

         Pam Oldham Inmann of Castle Rock, to serve as a resident of the 4th Congressional District, who has been engaged in business in a management-level capacity for at least five years.

The Colorado State Fair Authority Board of Commissioners directs and supervises the Colorado State Fair and Industrial Exposition. The fair is held annually at Pueblo for the display of livestock and agricultural, horticultural, industrial, mining, recreational, educational and scientific products of the State of Colorado. The members must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed for terms expiring Nov. 10, 2017:

         William Joseph Hybl of Colorado Springs, to serve as a Republican residing in the 5th Congressional District.

         Michael Cafasso of Pueblo, to serve as a Democrat residing in the 3rd Congressional District and the county of the fair, who has expertise in finance through management-level experience in banking.

         David J. Galli of Pueblo, to serve as a Democrat residing in the 3rd Congressional District and the county of the fair, who has expertise in finance through management-level experience in banking, reappointed.

The State Board of Equalization reviews the valuations of real and personal property and, upon a majority vote, raise, lower and otherwise change such valuations so that the state’s tax burden is equally and fairly distributed. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed for terms expiring Sept. 2, 2017:

         Sandra M. Adams of Denver, to serve as a representative with knowledge of property taxation, reappointed.

         Charles S. Brown of Littleton, to serve as a representative with knowledge of property taxation, reappointed.

The Water and Wastewater Facility Operators Certification Board establishes rules and regulations concerning the application, admission to the exam, and issuance of certificates to operators of water and wastewater treatment plants. The member appointed for a term expiring June 30, 2016:

         Laura Lynch of Silverthorne, to serve as a representative with various interests in the water and wastewater facility certification program, west of the Continental Divide, and occasioned by the resignation of Robin Joyce Schiro of Pagosa Springs.

Appointments to the Board of Trustees for the Colorado School of Mines:

The Board of Trustees for the Colorado School of Mines makes policy for the school and oversees its operations. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed, effective Dec. 31, 2013 for terms expiring Dec. 31, 2017:

         Stewart A. Bliss of Denver, to serve as a Republican who is not a graduate of the Colorado School of Mines, reappointed.

         Thomas E. Jorden of Centennial, to serve as an Unaffiliated graduate of the Colorado School of Mines.

Appointments to the Board of Trustees for Western State Colorado University:

The Board of Trustees for Western State Colorado University makes policy for the school and oversees its operations. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed, effective Dec. 31, 2013 and expiring Dec. 31, 2017:

         Noelle E. Hagan of Gunnison, to serve as a Democrat, reappointed;

         James G. Oates of Gunnison, to serve as a Republican.

         Aquino G. Gallegos of San Luis, to serve as a Democrat

Appointments to the Board of Trustees for Colorado Mesa University:

The Board of Trustees for Colorado Mesa University makes policy for the school and oversees its operations. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate.

The member appointed, effective Dec. 31, 2013 for a term expiring Dec. 31, 2016:

         Tilman “Tillie” Bishop of Grand Junction, a Republican, and occasioned by the resignation of Margo M. Pinto of Englewood.

The members appointed, effective Dec. 31, 2013 for terms expiring Dec. 31, 2017:

         Robert Glen Wilson of Grand Junction, to serve as a Republican and resident of Mesa County, reappointed.

         Daniel R. Robinson of Grand Junction, to serve as a Democrat and resident of Mesa County, reappointed.

         Randolph “Ray” Martinez of Fort Collins, to serve as a Republican.

The Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System is the governing board for CSU in Fort Collins, CSU-Pueblo and the online CSU-Global Campus. The board selects the presidents of these schools and generally oversees the schools, including determination of salaries and tuition, conferring degrees and carrying out other legal functions. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed for a term expiring Dec. 31, 2017:

         Scott C. Johnson of Kit Carson, to serve as a member who has substantial experience in the production of agriculture, and as a Republican, reappointed.

         Nancy R. Tuor of Parker, to serve as a Democrat.

Additional appointments were made to the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp Committee; the Pinnacol Assurance Board of Directors; and the Physical Therapy Board.

The Colorado Wildlife Habitat Stamp Committee shall annually review proposed projects for expenditure of Colorado wildlife habitat stamp funds and make recommendations to the director and the wildlife commission. The appointment must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The member appointed for a term effective Dec. 31, 2013 and a term expiring Dec. 31, 2017:

         Patricia Dorsey of Bayfield, to serve as a representative of the Division of Parks and Wildlife who is also a wildlife biologist.

The Pinnacol Assurance Board of Directors promulgates rules and regulations pertaining to the operation and administration of the Colorado Pinnacol Assurance Fund. The appointment must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The member appointed for a term expiring Jan. 1, 2016:

         Bonnie Brown Dean of Greeley, to serve as an employer whose liability is insured by Pinnacol, and occasioned by the resignation of John C. Plotkin of Lakewood.

The Physical Therapy Board is responsible the regulations of the practice of physical therapy in Colorado. It grants licenses to qualified applicants, adopts all reasonable and necessary rules for the administration and enforcement of regulations, supervises unlicensed persons by physical therapists, taking into account the education and training of the unlicensed individuals and the physical therapy of animals, including without limitation, education and clinical requirements for the performance of physical therapy of animals and the procedure for handling complaints to the Department of Regulatory Agencies regarding physical therapy of animals. The members appointed for terms effective Jan. 1, 2014 and terms expiring Jan. 1, 2018:

         Cindy Charlton of Englewood, to serve as a member of the public, reappointed;

         Britt Matthew Smith of Grand Junction, to serve as a physical therapist, reappointed.

Still more appointments were made by the Governor, to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education: the Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council; the Colorado Juvenile Parole Board; the Colorado State Child Fatality Prevention Review Team; the Governor’s Council for Active and Healthy Lifestyles; the Radiation Advisory Committee; the State Board of Accountancy; the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council; and the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Board.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education sets policies for all state-supported institutions of higher education. The appointment must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The member appointed for a term expiring July 1, 2015:

         John L. Anderson of Durango, to serve as a member west of the Continental Divide, a representative of the 3rd Congressional District and as a Republican, and occasioned by the resignation of  Kevin Lamar Reimer of Grand Junction.

The Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council fosters a healthy food supply available to all Coloradans while enhancing the state’s agricultural and natural resources, encouraging economic growth, expanding the viability of agriculture, and improving the health of our communities and residents. The council makes recommendations to the General Assembly and to the appropriate regulatory agencies, not to create policy. The member appointed for a term expiring Oct. 7, 2016:

         Victoria Marie Treski of Denver, to serve as a representative of food wholesalers or food retailers

The Colorado Juvenile Parole Board grants, denies, modifies, suspends or revokes parole for juvenile delinquents committed to the Department of Human Services. The appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado Senate. The members appointed for terms expiring Nov. 15, 2017:

         Margaret “Meg” H. Williams of Golden, to serve as a representative of the Colorado Department of Public Safety, reappointed.

         Paula Ramaekers-Mattas of Grand Junction, to serve as a public at-large member from the Western Slope, reappointed.

         Carmen Q. Nelson of Denver, to serve as a public member.

         James A. Keown of Thornton, to serve as a representative from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, reappointed.

The members appointed for terms expiring Nov. 15, 2018:

* David Owen Sleigh of Grand Junction, to serve as a public member/not employed by state government.
* Daniel L. Casey of Thornton, to serve as a representative from the Colorado Department of Human Services.
* Karen L.G. Wilmes of Westminster, to serve as a public member/not employed by state government.
* Candace Marie Hawkins of Thornton, to serve as a representative of the Colorado Department of Education.

The Colorado State Child Fatality Prevention Review Team reviews specified deaths of children from birth to 18 years of age involving circumstances in which the children are receiving services from a county department or in which there has been a report of suspected abuse or neglect in order to develop a community approach to the problem of child abuse and neglect. The member appointed for a term expiring Sept. 1, 2016:

         Sabrina Byrnes of Golden, to serve as a representative of the Office of Colorado’s Child Protection Ombudsman.

The Governor’s Council for Active and Healthy Lifestyles provide information and programs necessary for the acquisition and maintenance of physical fitness. The council encourages a healthy lifestyle for the people of the State of Colorado and assists with the diversification of the economy of the state by enhancing its attraction as a place to live and work. The member appointed for a term expiring Sept. 1, 2014:

         Rachel A. Naden of Fort Collins, to serve as a member and occasioned by the resignation of Colleen Idell Filak of Castle Rock.

The member appointed for a term expiring Sept. 1, 2016:

         Kurt Weinreich of Denver, to serve as a member and occasioned by the resignation of Paula J. Neubert of Elizabeth.

The Radiation Advisory Committee regulates the possession, use and disposal of radioactive material and radiation producing machines. The program regulates highly technical and specialized activities across a broad range of practices, including the use of radiation on humans for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, in research at a variety of private and university settings, and in a wide variety of industries. The committee provides access to knowledgeable representatives of these various practice areas who can advise and educate the program about the technical concerns, standard and unusual practices, and the business realities of the regulated operations in a non-confrontational, collaborative setting.

The member appointed for a term expiring Jan. 1, 2015:

         Phillip J. Koo, MD of Denver, to serve as a healing arts representative and occasioned by the resignation of Douglas E. Pfeiffer of Westminster.

The members appointed for terms expiring Jan.1, 2018:

         Craig A. Little of Grand Junction, to serve as an industry representative.

         Jennifer R. Stickel of Golden, to serve as a healing arts representative.

         Riad Safadi of Arvada, to serve as a higher education representative.

The State Board of Accountancy regulates public accountants and reviews applications, gives examinations, grants certificates and permits, and acts on complaints against certified public accountants. The members appointed for terms expiring Aug. 1, 2017:

         Kristal Lee Bernert of Denver, to serve as a certified public accountant, reappointed.

         Cynthia Chung Aki of Colorado Springs, to serve as a member of the public

The State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council advises the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment on all matters relating to emergency medical and trauma services programs. The council’s duties include developing curricula for the training of emergency medical personnel, establishing requirements for ambulance vehicles and services, and determining the eligibility of facilities to receive trauma center designation. The member appointed for a term expiring July 1, 2014:

         Stephanie T. Harrison of Centennial, to serve as a trauma nurse coordinator, as a Democrat and occasioned by the resignation of Travis C. Polk of LaSalle.

The member appointed for a term expiring July 1, 2015:

         Deborah L. Gallaher Moynihan of Trinidad, to serve as a registered nurse involved in rural emergency medical and trauma services care, as an Unaffiliated, and occasioned by the resignation of Steven Wayne Hilley of Steamboat Springs.

The Tony Grampsas Youth Services Board funds local organizations that serve youth and their families with programs designed to reduce youth crime and violence and to prevent child abuse and neglect. The board’s responsibilities include developing program guidelines for proposal design, local public-to-private funding match requirements and application review processes. They develop criteria for awarding grants and develop result-oriented criteria for measuring the effectiveness of programs. The board establishes timelines for submission and review of grant applications. They review all applications for funding and submit grant recommendations to the governor for approval. The members appointed for terms expiring July 1, 2017:

         Minna Castillo Cohen of Parker.

         David Stalls of Denver.

**The Calculator**

House Bills Introduced: 86 Senate Bills Introduced: 62 Number of Bills PI’d: 0