



Legislative Newsletter

March 11, 2013



*An up-to-date review of Colorado government and politics especially for the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.
Compiled and edited by Axiom Strategies, Inc.*

Bill Tracking: <http://www.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker-votes/0/391/2013/0/>

"When the people fear their government, there is tyranny; when the government fears the people, there is liberty." – Thomas Jefferson

Days Until Sine Die: 59

Mid Term Legislator's Breakfast set for April 1

The second breakfast gathering that brings together Eastern Metro Legislators and the business and professional community leaders is scheduled for Monday, April 1 at 7:15 a.m. at The Medical Center of Aurora South Campus Main Conference Room. Hosting what is dubbed the Mid Term Legislator's Breakfast will be TMCA President and CEO Richard Hammett. Invited to the gathering is Sens. Mary Hodge, Linda Newell, David Balmer, Nancy Todd, and Morgan Carroll as well as Reps. Jenise May, Joe Salazar, Dominick Moreno, Su Ryden, Spencer Swalm, Polly Lawrence, John Buckner, Jovan Melton, Rhonda Fields and Kevin Priola. Those wishing to attend should RSVP either by going to the Aurora Chamber web site at www.aurorachamber.org or by calling the Chamber at 303-344-1500.

CACI: House Committee Slated to Take Up Enterprise-Zone Reform Bill for Second Time

The House Finance Committee will take a second run at HB1142, the bill that descended from last year's recommendations of the Enterprise Zone Task Force, when it convenes at 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 13th, in Room A of the Legislative Services Building.

On February 28th, the Committee took testimony from the sponsor, House Majority Leader Dickey Lee Hullinghorst (D-Boulder), several legislative staff members and two opponents. At that point, the Committee Chair, Representative Lois Court (D-Denver), laid the bill over, noting that the bill is still a work in progress with "many moving parts."

For details on why the bill was laid over, read "[Oops: enterprise-zone reform bill needs work](#)," by Ed Sealoover, *The Denver Business Journal*, February 28th.

Since then, Ken Lund, Executive Director of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, has held conversations with Representative Hullinghorst and the bill's Senate sponsor, Senator Rollie Heath (D-Boulder), as well as with CACI, the Governor's Office and other interested parties. Lund's Office is responsible for overseeing the state's enterprise-zone program.

Lund attended a recent meeting of the CACI Tax Council and explained the substance of the agreement to modify the bill. The Council agreed afterwards to continue its neutral position on the bill. Council members, nonetheless, remain concerned that the bill sends a message to companies – which make large, capital-intensive investments and employ high-wage workers—that their operations are not valued in Colorado, which is an inducement for them to look to other states where they can operate.

Lund said that the result of the negotiations is an agreement among all parties to modify the bill to lower the cap on the investment tax credit to \$750,000 per year from the bill's current \$1 million but stretch out the period over

which the credit can be taken from the current 12 years in the bill to 15 years. A company would be allowed to appeal for a credit in excess of the \$750,000 to the Colorado Economic Development Commission.

HB1142 would apply to qualified investments made after January 1, 2014, and would not affect investments made prior to that date.

Although the introduced bill would have modified four tax credit programs of the enterprise zone program, the one that has drawn the most interest from CACI members was the one that would have limited the amount of the investment tax credit that can be claimed in a year to \$1 million with a 12-year carry-forward period.

A company would have been allowed to appeal for a credit in excess of the \$1 million to the Colorado Economic Development Commission under the introduced bill.

The introduced measure's fiscal note states that the effect of the bill would have been to increase tax revenue to the state by \$7.05 million in the fiscal year beginning July 1st and by \$14.8 million the following year.

For more on HB-1142, read: "[Enterprise zones get a little boost in Statehouse](#)," by Ed Sealover, *The Denver Business Journal*, February 26, 2013.

Bipartisan Bill: No Regulation of Internet Protocol-Enabled Services by PUC

This week a bipartisan group of 68 state legislators introduced House Bill 1255 to encourage innovation with Internet Protocol (IP) networks and applications.

The measure would clarify that certain internet protocol-enabled services including voice-over-internet protocol services, are exempt from regulation by the state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Wholesale rates, services, and agreements among telecommunications service providers and the aggregation and transport of emergency 911 service provided by basic emergency service providers would continue to be regulated.

Some examples of innovation that will benefit from the bill's passage include telemedicine, baby monitors and home security systems, online customer support systems, videoconferencing capabilities, and video games, many of which now have social interaction and conversation aspects embedded in their games.

California passed this law four months ago with the urging of high-tech entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley. Two weeks ago, Wyoming adopted a similar measure.

To encourage expansion of broadband networks and future IP applications and services to be developed and deployed in Colorado, AT&T and many of the state's other telecom providers support the legislation.

The bill has been assigned to the House Committee on Business, Labor, Economic, & Workforce Development. The Committee Chair, Rep. Angela Williams (D-Denver) is a co-prime sponsor of the legislation along with Rep. Carole Murray (R-Castle Rock) and Senators Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood) and Mark Scheffel (R-Colorado Springs).

Denver Post: Colorado Gun Bills: Marathon Session Stirs Strong Emotions

A somber state Senate debated gun control measures for hours Friday in a historic showdown that some Second Amendment activists fear will forever alter Colorado's western image.

But proponents argued the gun-safety laws are intended to protect the public and limit gun violence in a state rocked by twin tragedies — the shootings at Columbine High School in 1999 and an Aurora movie theater in 2012 — and further moved to action after first-graders were slain at a Connecticut elementary school in December.

"We are trying to do pretty simple common-sense things that can reduce gun violence," said Senate Majority Leader Morgan Carroll (D-Aurora).

Senate Minority Leader Bill Cadman (R-Colorado Springs) countered that Democrats are carrying out a gun agenda masterminded by the White House and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Throughout the day there were sly references to East Coast assistance on the gun bills.

Democratic Gov. John Hickenlooper is on the record supporting three gun bills: universal background checks, requiring gun customers to pay for their checks and magazine limits.

His office said he is studying the other bills.

Democrats scheduled Friday's calendar so that the three most controversial bills were the final three bills heard. The bills limit ammunition magazine rounds; ban concealed-carry weapons on campus; and assign liability for assault-style weapon damages to manufacturers and sellers.

At least two Democrats opposed all three measures; all it would take is one more Democratic vote to kill them.

A formal vote on the bills that received initial approval Friday is scheduled for Monday.

The epic gun debate came on the same day as another historic event under the Gold Dome: the passage of a bill 10 years in the making that allows illegal immigrants to pay in-state tuition to attend college. The cheers and applause could be heard in the Senate chambers after the House passed the tuition bill.

As the hours dragged on, lawmakers and their staffs ordered in food, and checked reports that a snowstorm was headed Denver's way. Sen. Pat Steadman (D-Denver) canceled an engagement for Friday night he made weeks ago.

"We're in gun-bill hell at the Capitol," he said, when called to reschedule. "The debate has been pretty civil, with only little bits of filibusters around the edge," he later said. "This is clearly an issue where there are a lot of deeply held convictions."

Democrats hold a 20-15 majority in the Senate, and most of the talking Friday was done by Republicans trying to kill the bills.

Cadman said when he woke up Friday and considered the day ahead he became emotional.

"I thought, 'Is this really happening on my watch?'" Cadman said. "I can't think of anything in the 13 years I've been here that is more serious and hits closer to home than an attack on a constitutional right."

A few hours later Cadman brought some of his colleagues to tears during debate on a bill concerning possession of firearms by domestic violence offenders. He revealed growing up in a home with an abusive father, and a mother worried about the guns there. Cadman had asked for more time to study the amended bill because he said he wanted to be able to support it, but Democrats turned him down.

Republicans argued Democrats want the bill approved as soon as possible to thwart cries they are insensitive to women after two Democratic lawmakers have been savaged nationally for their comments on rape during the debate on a bill to ban concealed weapons on campus.

"Politics is part of what happens here, but good luck with them trying to say we're not worried about domestic-violence victims," Cadman said.

The gun battle at Colorado's Capitol has been closely watched since Democrats on Feb. 5 unveiled the most sweeping package of gun bills in Colorado since Columbine.

"The eyes of the nation are upon us. What we do today matters to everyone," Sen. Greg Brophy (R-Wray) said during one of his many trips to the microphone to oppose gun bills.

"The whole country is watching?" Senate President John Morse (D-Colorado Springs) said from the sidelines. "That's even better. Follow our lead."

Before the Senate convened at 9 a.m., people were lined up to get into the Senate gallery to watch the fate of the bills.

"It's awful, it's terrible. It's feel-good nonsense that isn't going to affect the criminal on Colfax, but it will affect people like me," said William Clark of Larkspur.

Ron Cardwell, of Denver, said he wanted to see all seven bills killed.

But one proposal, Senate Bill 195 by Sen. Lois Tochtrop (D-Thornton) received initial approval with support from Republicans. The measure changes online training for concealed handgun permits.

Tochtrop, a Second Amendment rights lawmaker who earlier announced she opposed five of the seven gun bills, made it clear she didn't consider her bill part of the Democrats' gun package. Afterward, she said she worried about the impact of the proposals on Democrats in 2014.

"I feel like all these gun bills have done — to quote the last words in the movie 'Tora! Tora! Tora!' — is to awaken a sleeping giant," she said.

Republican senators read letters from their constituents who had traveled to the state Capitol Monday to testify on gun bills but weren't allowed to because testimony was limited. They also read letters from 4-H members and veterans opposed to the measures.

They also talked about business operations that have said they will leave Colorado should the bills pass.

Cadman read a letter from Michael Bane, executive producer and host for the Outdoor Channel, who said his operation already has canceled a shot because of the gun bills.

"Obviously, part of this is due to our own commitment to the right to keep and bear arms," he wrote, "but it also reflects three lawyers' opinions that these laws are so poorly drafted and so designed to trap otherwise legal citizens into a crime, one of our attorneys referred to them as 'flypaper laws,' that it is simply too dangerous for us to film here."

He added that a meeting next month in Texas with top outdoor and hunting producers, the No. 1 topic likely will be Colorado.

Colorado has faced those kinds of threats before.

Gay-rights activists boycotted the state after voters in 1992 passed Amendment 2, which was viewed as discriminating against gays. And several businesses in 2010 told the Colorado legislature they would have to reduce their work forces if the state eliminated tax breaks their industries had enjoyed for years.

One gun bill required universal background checks for gun sales or transfers. Another required gun customers pay for their own background checks.

"All we are doing is imposing costs and burdens on law-abiding citizens and not making them safer," said Sen. Steve King (R-Grand Junction).

Some Republicans argued charging a fee amounted to a poll tax and was unconstitutional, but Sen. Mike Johnston (D-Denver) pointed out free speech and other Constitutional rights often involve fees.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) said when the legislature first instituted its background check program fees were charged. The program was discontinued then restarted after a man with a restraining order filed against him was able to buy a firearm, which he used to kill his three children.

The re-instituted program did not contain a fee; the state at the time was trying to figure out how to deal with a budget surplus.

Republicans turned a bill limiting ammunition magazines into a debate about jobs and the economic impact it would have on the state if the state's chief ammunition magazine manufacturer, Erie-based Magpul, leaves the state.

"This bill is for nothing except to destroy jobs," said Sen. Vicki Marble (R-Fort Collins). "It give criminals the ability to keep their magazines of whatever capacity they chose to use against the citizens who are rendered, in a way, defenseless."

Sen. Randy Baumgardner (R-Cowdrey) argued that the bill would not make a single Coloradan safer. He also ridiculed an amendment in the House that allows magazine manufacturers to sell larger rounds outside the state.

"Are we concerned about safety or are we concerned about money, revenue to the state?" he said.

Using diagrams and various props, GOP lawmakers consistently assailed the bill as ineffective and flawed.

But the sponsor, Sen. Mary Hodge (D-Brighton) insisted the measure would reduce mass killings by placing the limit on ammunition magazines.

Throughout the day, lawmakers wondered whether Heath would kill his measure banning concealed carry weapons on college campuses. Democrats initially said Heath planned to kill it but he said he was still talking to his colleagues.

The debate has been a brutal one for Democrats in both the House and the Senate, after two members of their caucus — Rep. Joe Salazar of Thornton and Sen. Evie Hudak of Westminster — both made insensitive remarks about rape.

A student who had been raped, Amanda Collins, told a Senate committee Monday that if she had been permitted to use her concealed-carry permit and carry her gun on campus, the incident may have ended differently.

Hudak disagreed.

"I just want to say that, actually statistics are not on your side even if you had a gun," Hudak said. "And, chances are that if you would have had a gun, then he would have been able to get that from you and possibly use it against you."

The lawmaker apologized but a video of the exchange went viral.

"So many people are pointing at Evie's comments, but Evie's comments are not what is driving this," said Sen. Ted Harvey (R-Highlands Ranch). "Amanda Collins' comments are driving this. You can't say we're more fearful of you having a gun on campus than we are of rapists on campus. You just can't cross that line."

***Denver Post:* Colorado Supreme Court Justices Offer Strong Reactions in Lobato Case**

Arguments before the Colorado Supreme Court in a landmark lawsuit over whether public schools are adequately funded elicited strong reactions from justices hearing the case Thursday.

Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Fero, representing the state of Colorado, argued that the amount of spending on K-12 education should be left to the legislature and voters.

The state also contends that more money alone is not necessarily the solution to better schools.

He noted that the judge at the district-court level in Lobato vs. State of Colorado had not permitted the state to present evidence that its hands were tied by such mandates as the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, which limits state revenues and requires voter approval of tax increases.

"You have to look at how the legislature actually appropriates money to education," he said. "They have limited funds. They cannot become indebted. They cannot raise revenue on their own power."

Justice Gregory Hobbs questioned that logic.

"I'm a little bit concerned that the argument is, 'We can't do it,' and therefore becomes an excuse for, 'We won't do it,' when I think the evidence is fairly overwhelming that there's disparate treatment," Hobbs responded.

Hobbs pointed to evidence in the case that Latino, American Indian and rural students fared more poorly than their peers in academic achievement and graduation rates and that districts with these students tended to be funded less well.

Six justices, not the full seven, heard arguments because Justice Monica Marquez recused herself. Prior to being appointed to the court in 2010, Marquez served as a deputy attorney general under Attorney General John Suthers and worked on the state's defense from the lawsuit.

The case was filed in 2005 by a group of parents from around the state and school districts from the San Luis Valley. Denver District Judge Sheila Rappaport in 2011 ruled in favor of plaintiffs that the state's current school-funding system fails to provide a "thorough and uniform" system of education as outlined in the Colorado Constitution.

On Thursday, when Terry Miller, an attorney representing the plaintiffs, took the podium, justices also jumped in quickly. At one point, Chief Justice Michael Bender asked him to describe the balance between the role of the court and the legislature in the case.

"How can we provide the General Assembly with guidance without directing it to pass certain legislation?" Bender asked.

"Give the legislature a chance to do its job," Miller said. "The guidance ... is that the legislature has to have some kind of rational determination of the cost of a thorough and uniform system and actually fund it in alignment with that determination."

Bender asked if that wouldn't require a lot of time.

"It doesn't have to happen in one year, as long as they're making reasonable progress toward a constitutional fix," Miller said.

In contrast to Hobbs, Justice Nancy Rice was openly critical of Rappaport's ruling.

"She basically decided that her definition of thorough and uniform was to look at the statutes which had been passed with respect to education and in essence to superimpose them on the constitution — is that correct?" Rice asked Fero.

"Absolutely," Fero responded.

Marquez's recusal in the case opens the possibility of a 3-3 tie ruling on the court, which could mean Rappaport's ruling would stand.

The lawsuit doesn't seek a specified sum of money, but plaintiffs estimated that the state's current funding system falls short by as much as \$4 billion a year.

The state now spends more than 39.8 percent, or \$3 billion in the 2012-13 fiscal year that ends in June, of its \$7.5 billion general fund on K-12 schools.

***Denver Post:* Colorado Senator Posts Financials on Proposed School Finance Formula**

Sen. Mike Johnston (D-Denver), who planned to formally introduce legislation to revamp Colorado's school-finance system Friday, has released [district-by-district projections](#) that he says make everyone a winner — at least for a while.

Even those projected to lose funding under his proposed formula will be held harmless for five years with an infusion of state money that will not only make them whole but put them in positive territory while they decide whether to pursue a mill-levy increase.

"Everyone is winning; there aren't any districts that aren't getting more investment," said Johnston, who has been circulating a draft of the bill for the past few weeks to solicit feedback and make some changes to the original.

The Denver Democrat's proposal — which seeks more equitable funding, especially in districts with high concentrations of at-risk students — would hinge on a statewide vote on a tax increase to help fund it. If the ballot measure failed, then the formula would not go into effect.

The 24 districts projected to require a mill-levy increase to maintain their total program funding would get a temporary state boost while they made a long-term decision on how to approach local funding.

Because of legal overlap of the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and the Gallagher Amendment, Johnston said, those districts have some of the highest assessed valuation rates but also the lowest mill levies in the state — resulting in a high percentage of state backfill.

"They're out of whack on all three of those metrics," he said.

Under Johnston's bill, they can choose to increase their local mills or choose not to and see an eventual decline in state support.

Among larger metro-area districts, Denver Public Schools would see a rise of \$1,299 per pupil; *Aurora Public Schools would gain \$1,386*; Jefferson County Public Schools would see a \$617 increase; and *Cherry Creek School District would get an additional \$447*.

But a district such as Durango, which would see a short-term gain of \$369 per pupil, would be looking at a scenario in which it eventually would have to triple its current mill levy to the state maximum to maintain that funding level, according to a district spokeswoman.

Senator Johnston's school finance legislation was introduced on Friday as Senate Bill 213.

Wright and Nordberg's Human Trafficking Bill Advances

On Tuesday, the House State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee passed House Bill 1195, sponsored by state Reps. Jared Wright (R-Fruita) and Dan Nordberg (R-Colorado Springs) which was drafted to create stricter punishments for those involved in human trafficking. Democrats on the committee amended the bill, however, to delay any action on the bill's provision and direct the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice to study human trafficking and make recommendations instead.

"While I'm disappointed we weren't able to accomplish the original goals of this bill and hold human traffickers more accountable for one of the most heinous crimes in modern society, I am pleased to see us move forward with this important call to action," Wright, a former police officer from Fruita, said.

As it was originally drafted, HB 1195 made the punishment for any criminal attempt, conspiracy or solicitation to commit trafficking as severe as the punishment handed down to active human traffickers. A Democrat amendment watered down the legislation to prevent any action until a report from the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice is completed. The report will include the number of cases prosecuted and the convictions declared and other information deemed as necessary.

"It leaves me feeling like we haven't done quite enough," Nordberg (R-Colorado Springs), said. "The victims of this industry can't afford to wait a year for more research."

Today, there are an estimated 20 to 30 million sex slaves in the world, more than there has ever been at any time in history. Every sixty seconds a victim is trafficked in the world and every 10 minutes a woman or a child is

trafficked in the United States. In Colorado, I-25 and I-70 are major corridors for human trafficking which help this illicit practice generate an estimated \$60 million annually.

The measure now moves to the House Floor for further consideration.

ASBM Chairman: Patient Safety Key to Creating Global Biosimilar Standards

Dr. Richard Dolinar, Chairman of the Alliance for Safe Biologic Medicines (ASBM) presented on March 5, 2013 at the Center for Business Intelligence 8th Annual Biosimilars Summit in Washington, D.C. Dr. Dolinar's presentation, "Assessing Global Standards for Biologic Medicines" stressed the need for a global regulatory environment for biosimilars that places patient safety above all else and delivers high quality standards regardless of where the biosimilar is manufactured.

"Creating global standards for biosimilars has to boil down to one thing - patient safety - no matter where in the world the biosimilars are approved," said Dr. Dolinar. "To safely bring biosimilars to patients, we should build on the science-based approach taken by the European Union (EU) and establish quality standards regarding the approval process, approach to naming and substitution policies."

"There is much to be learned from the great progress that has already begun in the EU, Canada and other countries. ASBM is committed to supporting the efforts of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in their mission to safely bring biosimilars to the U.S., and helping develop and endorse standards that will bring effective biologic and biosimilar treatments to patients across the world."

Biologics are used to treat cancer, diabetes, MS, rheumatoid arthritis and other debilitating diseases. On February 9, 2012, the FDA announced the publication of draft guidance documents relating to the developments of biosimilars, which are similar to, but not exact copies of biologics. The guidance documents were a significant step in establishing a biosimilars pathway and as the FDA moves forward, ASBM will continue to work to ensure patient safety remains the priority.

Colorado Creative Industries Awarded SIPA Grant for Public Art Database

Colorado Creative Industries (CCI), a division of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade on Thursday announced it has been awarded a \$4,000 micro-grant from the Statewide Internet Portal Authority (SIPA).

The SIPA award will be used to customize *Art App*, a new central online database of Colorado's public art collection. Currently the app is used for people interested in viewing the state's collection through search criteria such as location, artist, materials and installation date. Customization will include integration into CCI's new web platform, as well as development to include geographic information system mapping capability.

The State of Colorado is the owner of approximately 420 pieces of public art throughout the state, which is commissioned or purchased through Colorado's Percent for Art program. Over the past 35 years, the collection has been inventoried, checked for maintenance issues and photographed.

"The impact of this grant reflects CCI's obligation to provide oversight and stewardship of a public art collection that is truly accessible to the public," said Sheila Sears, CCI Arts Education Manager. "It is also an opportunity to lead the field nationally in providing online access to citizens and visitors."

Colorado Creative Industries combines state funds and federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts to promote, support and expand the creative industries to drive Colorado's economy, grow jobs and enhance our quality of life. For more information visit www.coloradocreativeindustries.org.

Rep. Gerou: Rural Broadband Key to Innovation

State Representative Cheri Gerou (R-Evergreen) on Wednesday sent a letter to her constituents explaining her reasons for sponsoring House Bill 1059 which would exempt from sales and use tax any equipment used by a telecommunications company to provide broadband services in rural areas. The bill is scheduled to be considered by the House Committee on Finance on Thursday, March 14. The text of the letter is below:

Rural Areas Need Broadband Access Too

Friends,

The technological advances brought to us by torchbearers of innovation vastly improved our standard of living and changed the way we live. Innovation, paired with a business friendly environment, is the recipe for success and new opportunity. One of the greatest innovations we take advantage of on a daily basis is broadband technology. Broadband has transformed the ways in which data can be transmitted, and the way the world does business. Although rising demand and increased access have brought a great deal of innovation to the telecommunications industry in general, population density has historically been central to keeping costs low. For this reason, many rural areas still lag behind other parts of the state when it comes to broadband access.

That is why I am sponsoring House Bill 1059, which will exempt from sales and use tax any equipment used by a telecommunications company to provide broadband services in rural areas. Nearly 30 other states have enacted this law, bringing opportunity to areas otherwise neglected.

Families without broadband are afforded fewer opportunities. It can be a serious impediment to a child succeeding if they cannot access the internet for simple things like school projects. Education, healthcare, small business and manufacturing all improve vastly when they are afforded broadband access. Rural areas without access often face a roadblock to e-commerce and exchanging services online. Expanding access to more people will help these communities thrive.

This bill affords our children in rural areas a greater chance at success, and a brighter future. The new opportunity that broadband provides will have a clear and visible positive impact on people's lives.

Thank you,
Rep. Cheri Gerou
R-Evergreen

Colorado Partners with the Salvation Army to Expand One Congregation - One Family

The State of Colorado announced on Thursday it will partner with the Salvation Army to expand the successful One Congregation - One Family (OCOF) model into additional communities. Beginning this summer, the Salvation Army will start the OCOF program in Glenwood Springs, Greeley, Pueblo and Vail and will work with Trinidad and Cortez by the end of the year.

The expansion of the OCOF program, outlined in Pathways Home Colorado, is part of Colorado's ongoing efforts to replicate best practice models, support regional priorities and become more strategic in preventing and ending homelessness. In 2005, the OCOF was developed by The Denver Rescue Mission to address the needs of homeless families and seniors in the Denver area. Since then, more than 2,600 individuals have been mentored by more than 350 congregations. Of these families, more than 87 percent maintained stable housing after the first year.

Last year, 99 mentor teams from 22 congregations were formed in Colorado Springs, Fort Collins and Grand Junction. Under the OCOF model, mentor teams meet with families and seniors over a seven-month period and provide a first month's rent and deposit as well as individual support and guidance. Additionally, service agencies provide case management, refer client families and secure background checks while local governments connect partners and encourage organizations to form mentor teams.

A Statewide Clergy Council, representing a diverse group of faith communities, was formed to help guide the OCOF program.

Mentor teams are formed from local businesses, non-profit organizations or any group of individuals interested in helping those in need. Anadarko Petroleum Corp. and State Farm provided support and valuable contributions to expand this program.

The Watercooler

Colorado Water Congress did not meet this week.

The Calculator

House Bills Introduced: 256

Senate Bills Introduced: 201

Number of Bills Pl'd: 95 (21%)