*“Being Irish, he had an abiding sense of tragedy, which sustained him through temporary periods of joy.” —William Butler Yeats*

Happy St. Patrick’s Day!

**HAPPY ST. PATRICK’S DAY!**

 ***Days until Sine Die:  51***

*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.*

**Colorado Senate Approves UberX and Lyft Ride-Sharing Bill**

*Denver Post*

A bill that would place ride-sharing companies such as UberX and Lyft under limited state regulation passed the Senate on Monday, though concerns remain about where drivers' private insurance ends and commercial coverage begins.  Regulators and Senate Bill 125 sponsors say UberX and Lyft, which connect riders and drivers via Smartphone apps, would be forced to shut down if a measure isn't passed to authorize their services in Colorado.  [Click here](http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_25312612/colorado-senate-approves-uberx-and-lyft-ride-sharing) to read ore.

**TABOR May Force CO to Refund Excess Marijuana Money to Taxpayers**

*KDVR, FOX 31*

Tax revenues from Colorado’s new recreational marijuana industry are pouring into state coffers – and that’s actually a bit of a problem for lawmakers.  Taxpayers, however, may stand to benefit if lawmakers decide to refund the tax revenue that comes in above last year’s $67 million first-year estimate.  According to a legal analysis conducted by the state, the marijuana revenues are subject to the state’s Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR), which will require lawmakers to take action if tax revenues from the marijuana industry exceed the estimated revenue anticipated in the 2013 Blue Book analysis of Proposition AA, the sales and excise tax rates approved by voters in November.  [Click here](http://kdvr.com/2014/03/12/tabor-may-force-colorado-to-refund-excess-marijuana-money-to-taxpayers/) to read more.

**U.S. Supreme Court Sides with Landowner in Fight over Public Trail**

*Wall Street Journal*

The Supreme Court ruled last week that the federal government has no claim to rights of way abandoned by the railroads, a victory for property owners that could undermine plans for a nationwide network of recreational trails.   In his majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that the court had settled the question in a 1942 opinion rejecting a railroad’s plan to drill for oil on its right of way in Montana.  At that time, he said, the government argued Congress granted and easement and nothing more.  Just as the court said then the easement included no right to the underlying oil and minerals, today it provides no right for continued use of the right of way for hikers and cyclists.  [Click here](http://blogs.wsj.com/law/2014/03/10/supreme-court-sides-with-landowner-in-rails-to-trails-case/) to read more.

**Front-Runners Already Being Picked in 2016 Presidential Race**

*Las Vegas Review –Journal*

The next presidential election might be more than two years away, but the potential candidates already are jockeying for position, and polls are picking early front-runners.

A national survey released last Friday by Public Polling took a look at the potential GOP field for 2026 and found New Jersey Governor Chris Christie in the middle of the pack.  Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee led at 18 percent, followed by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush at 15 percent, and Christie and U.S. Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky tied at 14 percent each.  U.S. Senator Ted Cruz of Texas came in at 11 percent, followed by U.S. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida at six percent, U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker tied at 5 percent, and Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal showing up last with four percent support.

On the Democratic side, it’s no contest.  Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton leads the pack with 66 percent to 11 percent for Vice President Joe Biden.  5 percent for U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, 3 percent each for U.S. Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, 2 percent for Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley, 1 percent each for U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and former Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer, and finally less than 1 percent for U.S. Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia.  [Click here](http://m.reviewjournal.com/news/front-runners-already-being-picked-2016-presidential-race) to read more.

**Understanding the March 31 Health Insurance Deadline**

*Connect for Health Colorado*

The deadline for uninsured Coloradans to enroll in commercial health insurance for 2014 is March 31.  After that, uninsured Coloradans cannot get commercial coverage until 2015 unless they have a special circumstance, such as losing a job that provided coverage or moving to the state.  The next open enrollment period will be November 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015.  Coloradans can apply for Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus at any point during the year.  [Click here](http://connectforhealthco.com/how-it-works/enrollment-deadlines/) for additional information.

**Law Regulating Edible Marijuana Packaging to be Signed by Governor**

Governor John Hickenlooper is scheduled to sign a bill today that intends to limit the incidence of children accidentally eating marijuana edibles.  HB 14-1122 requires marijuana edibles to be sold in child-resistant, opaque, resealable packages.  HB 14-1122 passed unanimously through the both the House and Senate.

**Colorado Bill Aims to Clean up Foreclosure Billing Practices**

*Denver Post*

Money from homeowners who paid to stop a foreclosure against them will not be handed over to the lawyers who filed the case until they submit a final bill of their actual costs, according to the latest version of a legislative bill.  The bill, HB 14- 1130, sponsored by Rep. Beth McCann (D-Denver), aims to clean up problems with the state's foreclosure process, specifically that attorneys representing banks and other lenders sometimes wrongly charged homeowners for the costs of filing phantom lawsuits.  [Click here](http://www.denverpost.com/business/ci_25336943/colorado-bill-aims-clean-up-foreclosure-billing-practices) to read more.

**Colorado Democrats' United Front Crumbles as Lawmakers Split on Fracking**

*The Colorado Observer*

For a decade, the Colorado Democratic Party has enjoyed incredible success by holding together its diverse constituencies and presenting a unified front, but now cracks are emerging.  The party's schism on the core issues of energy and the environment is becoming too obvious to cover up and increasingly difficult to manage as tension grows between advocates of oil-and-gas development and the environmental left.  [Click here](http://thecoloradoobserver.com/2014/03/colorado-democrats-united-front-crumbles-as-lawmakers-split-on-fracking/) to read more.

**HUD Provides Additional $199 Million for 2013 Flood Recovery**

*Office of the Governor*

U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan, joined Gov. John Hickenlooper and by U.S. Sens. Mark Udall and Michael Bennet, announced last week that Colorado will receive an additional $199.3 million to help communities recover from last September’s severe storms that produced devastating floods and mudslides.  The recovery funds are provided through HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program to support long-term disaster recovery efforts in areas with the greatest extent of “unmet need,” primarily in Boulder, Weld and Larimer counties.  Last December, HUD awarded $62.8 million to assist recovery efforts in Colorado. Today’s award brings HUD’s combined CDBG-Disaster Recovery investment to $262.1 million.

A minimum of 80 percent of the funds awarded today will be targeted in Boulder, Weld, and Larimer counties, where approximately 2,800 homes incurred major or severe damage. Although the majority of this funding is intended to address the remaining disaster recovery and resiliency needs from the September flooding, the state may target remaining funds to other especially hard-hit areas  from other major disasters in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Those disasters include the 2012 High Park and Waldo Canyon wildfires, and the 2013 Royal Gorge and Black Forest wildfires.

The Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, signed into law by President Barack Obama on Jan. 29, included $16 billion in CDBG-Disaster Recovery funding. The legislation specifies these funds are to be used “for necessary expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, and economic revitalization in the most impacted and distressed areas resulting from a major disaster.”

HUD’s CDBG-Disaster Recovery grants are intended to confront housing, business and infrastructure needs beyond those addressed by other forms of public and private assistance. Using a combination of data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Small Business Administration, HUD identified particular counties in Colorado with the greatest extent of damage to housing, businesses and infrastructure.

HUD will shortly publish a Notice that will regulate the use of the funds announced today. The state of Colorado will then finalize disaster “action plans” describing how it intends to expend these funds to support disaster recovery and HUD will quickly review them.

**Public Trust Ballot Initiative Introduced**

*Colorado Water Stewardship Project*
A proposed Public Trust Doctrine Ballot Initiative is progressing through the state’s review process. The proponents made changes to their initial version and re-submitted the amendment on February 25.  The Review and Comment Hearing was held March 11.  The current version of proposed Initiative 83 would amend the Colorado Constitution by adding a new section to Article XVI (the provisions of the constitution that govern mining and water rights). This amendment would, among other issues, establish an “inalienable right” of the people of Colorado to clean air, clean water (including groundwater), and the preservation of the environment and natural resources (called “Public Trust Resources”), as common property of all people including future generations.  Visit [www.cowaterstewardship.com](http://www.cowaterstewardship.com) for additional summary the proposed initiative.

**Inaugural Colorado Change Leader Institute Participants Announced**

*Office of Economic Development & International Trade – Colorado Creative Industries*

Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) last week announced the participants for the first Change Leader Institute, which will take place April 28-30, 2014.  The Institute will create a statewide network for creative professionals and community leaders, and supports CCI's goal of enabling cultural and community leaders to work through environmental and organizational change. Change Leaders who complete the institute will be more prepared for future challenges and will be better equipped to offer creative solutions in response to social and community needs.

The Change Leader Institute was modeled after Utah's highly successful program and was adapted to fit Colorado's unique cultural landscape. This biannual program, consisting of a three-day curriculum, will offer an opportunity for professional development and will teach communication skills to help leaders leverage and facilitate change in their communities. Change Leaders will learn how to navigate group dynamics, develop effective negotiation tactics, build a strong community and more.

The inaugural class includes statewide leaders from both non-profit and for-profit organizations:

·      David Dadone (Boulder), Executive Director/Chief Curator of Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art

·      Pam Denahy (La Junta), Director of Tourism & Events for the City of La Junta

·      Tom Dessain (Crestone), Director of the Crestone Music Festival and founder of the nonprofit Crestone Performances, Inc.

·      Gisela Flanigan (Grand Junction), classical pianist and board member of the Grand Junction Arts Commission and Crested Butte Music Festival

·      Pam Foster (Craig), owner of an interior design business and board member of Arts for Colorado and Rural Arts Now!

·      Chantalle Hanschu (Wheat Ridge), AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) at the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs

·      Delaney Keating (Gunnison), owner of creative marketing and strategic branding firm RoShamBo and co-founder of [GunnyLove.com](http://gunnylove.com/)

·      Charles Leslie (Durango), Director of the Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College

·      Marilyn Leuszler (Trinidad), member of the Creative District steering committee and artist/owner of Brushwork-Black Ink Studio

·      Tanya Mote (Parker), Associate Director of El Centro Su Teatro

·      Brandy Reitter (Buena Vista), Town Administrator of Buena Vista

·      Jay Seller (Denver), Executive Director of Think 360 Arts and former theatre instructor

Community leaders who are interested in attending future Change Leader Institutes can apply online at [www.coloradocreativeindustries.org](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Xz0k0Wu27Ng2kPxfSgy1j9YLOraqyxAjqPHy6t7cB1l6YYHvBOj91l1IU3FCEWLACTZgOEwncXgB5ZUh4jOKHWivDQx4XuKgwnfjH14oqww-VKs28R75WSuoJbmYOjzKoK6gWqap-8fMIr_0KJCm-i0cM-fLssWvPUCPn5YeOtqweYOgusac4WtlC5O1XBZo&c=&ch=). Each institute is limited to 12 participants, and candidates not selected for the fall 2014 program will be put on a waiting list for future spring or fall institutes.

**Advanced Industries Accelerator Program Awards almost $2 Million**

***Office of Economic Development & International Trade***

Gov. John Hickenlooper and the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) announced last week the Advanced Industry Accelerator Grant Program grantees.  The current grant funding cycle for the Advanced Industry Accelerator Programs awarded 15 grants with a total of $1,889,972.  The program received a total of 58 applications requesting $13.1 million in funding. Applications for the next grant cycle are due April 1. The 15 grants were awarded:

The Proof-of-Concept grants are open to Colorado research universities, federal labs located in Colorado, and other private, nonprofit and for-profit labs with valid technology transfer offices.  Proof-of-Concept grants are for pre-commercialization research and commercialization preparation.  The Proof-of-Concept grantees are:

·       University of Colorado - Boulder: Flexible thermal ground planes for Smartphones and tablets, $150,000

·       Colorado School of Mines: Rapid point-of-care LFCC detection of serum cancer biomarkers, $22,500

·       Colorado School of Mines: Polymer modified nanoparticles as contract agents for non-invasive measurement of pH in vivo, $22,500

·       Colorado School of Mines: Virus-mimicking polymer molecular brushes as a novel family of highly potent antimicrobial agents, $22,500

·       Colorado School of Mines: Development of pre-lithiated silicon nodes for next generation lithium ion batteries, $22,500

·       Colorado State University at Fort Collins - CSU Ventures: Smart membranes for highly energy efficient separation and recovery of bio-butanol, $65,000

·       Colorado State University at Fort Collins - CSU Ventures: Concept demonstration of electronic scan radar for severe weather applications, $65,000

·       Colorado State University at Fort Collins - CSU Ventures: Thermal management of lithium-ion batteries using passive electrolyte evaporation, $59,972

·       Colorado State University at Fort Collins - CSU Ventures: Measuring aqueous metal concentrations with the chemometer, $60,000

·       Colorado State University at Fort Collins - CSU Ventures: Advanced manufacturing systems for seed treatment and post treatment drying, $150,000

The Early Stage Capital and Retention Grants fund companies using technologies developed in proof-of-concept grants and other early stage start-ups that created viable products to meet a market need and can be created or manufactured in Colorado and exported globally.  These grants should enhance the commercialization of advanced industry products or services in Colorado.  The Early Stage Capital and Retention grantees are:

·       BASiC 3C - Boulder, $250,000

·       Biota Technology - Denver, $250,000

·       EcoVapor Recovery Systems - Greeley, $250,000

·       Fitbionic, Inc. - Idaho Springs, $250,000

·       Red Canyon Software -  Denver, $250,000

BASiC 3C is developing cost effective cubic Silicon Carbide (3C-SiC) wafers produced in Colorado for power device manufacturers.  The patented technology (HFCVD) delivers 3C-SiC substrates which enable price/performance leading devices operating at higher voltage, higher power, faster switching speeds and elevated temperatures.  The result is smaller, lighter, efficient electric vehicle power trains and more efficient components in the SmartGrid.

Biota Technology is a venture-backed spin out from the University of Colorado and Professor Rob Knight that provides novel information services to industrial markets.  The company leverages low cost DNA sequencing and cloud computing with their innovations in microbiome data analysis to extract actionable information for their customers.  Biota will use the grant towards pilots in the oil and gas market.

EcoVapor Recovery Systems (ERS) will use grant funds to build and deploy their proprietary vapor recovery module(s) on oil and gas sites in Colorado.  ERS captures gas otherwise burned off in flares and injects the recoverable hydrocarbon gas into a natural gas pipeline.  They will enable their oil and gas producer customer to meet or exceed emission regulations while increasing revenues.

Fitbionic Inc. will include customer-requested functionality in their flagship prosthetic foot product, develop a sample foot that allows user-adjustability, and complete a cloud-based dashboard that allows customers to monitor and report their patients' safety and activity levels.

Red Canyon Software will develop real time autonomous software that will enable future space vehicle missions beyond low-earth orbit that involve long flight-time delays.  Their proposed software uses a layered software architecture and incorporates an existing goal-based, planning solution as well as an advanced, real-time decision-making sequence engine that will increase the on-board autonomy of spacecraft activities, consumables management, and higher-level fault protection.

The Advanced Industry Accelerator Programs were created in 2013 to promote growth and sustainability in these industries by driving innovation, accelerating commercialization, encouraging public-private partnerships, increasing access to early stage capital and creating a strong infrastructure that increases the state's capacity to be globally competitive.  The programs encompass three distinct grant programs: Proof of Concept, Early Stage Company, and Commercialization Infrastructure.  [Click here](http://www.advancecolorado.com/funding-incentives/financing/advanced-industries-accelerator-programs/advanced-industries) for more information on the grants.

**The Calculator**

House Bills Introduced:  321

Senate Bills Introduced:  156

Number of Bills PI’d:  107