



# Legislative Newsletter



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

"If you want to succeed you should strike out on new paths, rather than travel the worn paths of accepted success."  
- John D. Rockefeller

## **Colorado lawmakers crafting massive spending overhaul in final days**

*Denver Post*

Colorado's top lawmakers are negotiating a far-reaching measure in the final days of the legislative session that is designed to save hospitals from major budget cuts, generate \$1.8 billion for road repairs and lower the state's spending cap.

Senate President Pro Tem Jerry Sonnenberg, R-Sterling, unveiled the details early Monday after days of closed-door negotiations with top Democratic lawmakers. But moments after he announced an agreement on the legislation, an aide passed him a note from Democrats that declared no deal.

## **Transportation tax hike proposal reaches end of the road in Colorado**

*Denver Post*

A bipartisan measure backed by Colorado's top lawmakers to seek a sales tax hike for transportation reached the end of the road last Tuesday.

A state Senate panel defeated the proposal to inject \$3.5 billion into improving the state's highways along party-lines with the three Republican members citing ideological opposition to increasing taxes.

The outcome became clear a week earlier when the Senate's bill sponsors hastily announced an impasse in the negotiations on the term's No. 1 priority, a major setback for legislative leaders and Gov. John Hickenlooper.

## **Construction defects homeowner consent bill breezes through Colorado House**

*Denver Post*

A measure requiring that a majority of homeowners in a condo complex first approve a construction defects action against a builder - rather than just the association board - passed the Colorado House last Monday and now moves on to the Senate.

House Bill 1279 is one of a handful of bills introduced this legislative session designed to deal with the state's long-running defects issue. Its prospects for success look good given the strong bipartisan backing it received, including a vigorous and public hoorah from Gov. John Hickenlooper last week.

### **Colorado breweries look to expand footprint under proposed bill**

*Denver Post*

Look for more Colorado breweries to open taprooms under a bill moving toward the governor's desk.

The state Senate approved a measure last Thursday to allow breweries to open two satellite tasting rooms to pour their beer and sell six-packs to go.

The 28-6 vote signals broad support despite opposition from bars and restaurants, who complain that the legislation allows breweries to open competing taprooms without the same cost and hurdles.

### **Mayor Hancock: Denver to review 4/20 event that left Civic Center in "disrespectful state"**

*Denver Post*

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock on Monday ordered a city review into rampant fence-hopping, public pot-smoking and slow trash cleanup that left Civic Center in a "disrespectful state" during and after last week's 4/20 celebration.

Delivering his most forceful critique of the annual event, Hancock said the city's inquiry could yield penalties for organizers and affect how the event unfolds in future years.

### **Hickenlooper vetoes bill to extend tax credit on some cigar sales**

*Colorado Statesman*

Gov. John Hickenlooper uncapped his veto pen for the first time this session to reject a bill that would extend a tax credit on cigars sold to out-of-state consumers, saying the credit hasn't generated enough economic activity to pay for even one job.

Senate Bill 139, would extend for three years a credit retailers have been able to claim since 2015 on the 40-percent excise tax paid on cigars and other non-cigarette tobacco products that are sold directly to customers outside Colorado. The Boulder-based Smoker Friendly company said it moved an online sales office from Nebraska to Colorado after the tax credit was established in 2015 and was supporting the extension.

### **Give us the news: Lynchpin hospital fee bill still under wraps**

*Colorado Statesman*

Senate Bill 267 is the most-closely-watched bill in what remains of the legislative session, the subject of intense up-and-down negotiations. The bill is legislators best hope to refill hundreds of millions of dollars that the state budget as it stands would slash from hospital budgets and to dedicate some significant funds to transportation upgrades after a major transportation bill failed to pass this week.

The bill was laid over last week in the Appropriations committee after sponsor Jerry Sonnenberg, a Republican from Sterling, threatened to kill the bill out of frustration with the House Democratic

leaders he was negotiating with. Hospitals in Sonnenberg's rural eastern plains district are underfunded as things stand, so the slated \$500 million cut to the the state's hospitals would likely be devastating to health care and to the local health care industry his constituents depend upon.

### **Colorado Republicans are resurrecting tax-free highway-bonding proposal**

*Denver Business Journal*

One day after killing a multi-billion-dollar transportation-funding plan built around a proposed sales-tax hike, legislative Republicans stood poised Wednesday to reintroduce a twice-killed measure that would fund a \$3.5 billion bonding program without seeking increased taxes from the public.

### **The final Colorado budget bill is a little less grim than expected**

*Denver Post*

Less than two weeks before the legislative term ends, Colorado budget writers reached a compromise last Thursday on a \$26.8 billion spending bill that is a little less bleak than initially expected.

The much-contested measure still cuts payments to hospitals by \$528 million when it takes effect July 1, but it restores \$50 million to schools and adds \$9.5 million in spending to connect rural areas to broadband internet service.

The General Assembly is expected to vote on the final budget Monday, weeks after discord about the hospital provider fee program stalled the bill and pushed it perilously close to the May 10 adjournment.

### **Open late: Denver OKs expanded hours for retail marijuana shops**

*Colorado Statesman*

Denver officials gave retail marijuana dispensaries the OK to operate for an extra three hours in the evening - a measure that would bring hours for city retail cannabis shop hours in line with neighboring communities.

The City Council approved the bill 11-2 during a regular meeting April 24, which allows medical and/or recreational marijuana dispensaries to stay open until 10 p.m. instead of 7 p.m. The change is effective May 1.

### **Gov. Hickenlooper Announces Boards and Commission Appointments**

*Office of the Governor*

Monday, April 24, 2017 - Gov. John Hickenlooper announced Boards and Commissions appointments to the Ground Water Commission.

The Ground Water Commission determines the boundaries of designated ground water basins by geographic description and considers well permit applications for persons desiring to appropriate designated ground water for beneficial use. The Commission is responsible for the development of policies and procedures for maximum economic development, as well as the protection of the vested rights of the designated ground water basins of the state.

For a term expiring May 1, 2021:

- Marc Christopher Arnusch of Keenesburg, to serve as a resident agriculturist from the Lost Creek Basin, reappointed;
- Gregory Larson of Haxtun, a resident agriculturist from the Northern High Plains Basin, reappointed;
- Scott W. Tietmeyer of Grover, a resident agriculturist from the Upper Big Sandy Basin, reappointed.

Wednesday, April 26, 2017 - Gov. John Hickenlooper announced Boards and Commissions appointments to the Hospital Provider Fee Oversight and Advisory Board, Colorado Human Trafficking Council and State Board of Stock Inspection Commissioners.

The Hospital Provider Fee Oversight and Advisory Board is responsible for working with the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing and the Medical Services Board to develop the hospital provider fee model, monitor the implementation of House Bill 09-1293, help with the preparation of annual reports on this program, and ensure that the Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) eligibility expansions are implemented as intended.

For a term expiring at the pleasure of the Governor:

- Shepard J. Nevel of Denver, to serve as the Chairman of the Hospital Provider Fee Oversight and Advisory Board, appointed;

For terms expiring May 15, 2021:

- Kathryn Jean Ashenfelter of Denver, to serve as an employee of a hospital in Colorado, reappointed;
- Lesley Clark Brooks, M.D. of Greeley, to serve as a member of the health care industry who does not represent a hospital or health insurance carrier, appointed;
- Matthew Steven Colussi of Aurora, to serve as an employee of the state department, appointed;
- Shepard J. Nevel of Denver, a representative of a business that purchases or otherwise provides health insurance for its employees, and who previously served as a representative of consumers, reappointed;
- Allison Anna Neswood of Denver, to serve as a representative of consumers, appointed;
- Christopher Daniel Rieber, MBA, CPA of Castle Rock, an employee of a safety-net hospital in Colorado, reappointed;
- Ryan Westrom of Aurora, a member of a statewide organization of hospitals, appointed.

The Colorado Human Trafficking Council brings together leadership from community-based and statewide anti-trafficking efforts to build and enhance collaboration among communities and counties within the state, to establish and improve comprehensive services for victims and survivors of human trafficking, to assist in the successful prosecution of human traffickers and to help prevent human trafficking in Colorado.

For terms expiring August 1, 2018:

- Nhu-Minh D. Le of Aurora, to serve as one of two representatives of an organization that provides direct services to victims of human trafficking, and occasioned by the resignation of Deborah Ann Grebenik, Ph.D. of Colorado Springs, appointed;
- Amber Raket McDonald LCSW, ABD of Westminster, to serve as a representative of a regional or city-wide human trafficking task force or coalition, and occasioned by the resignation of Sara Nadelman of Denver, appointed;
- Steven E. Ramirez of Littleton, to serve as a representative of a nonprofit organization that facilitates the treatment or housing of human trafficking victims, and occasioned by the resignation of Martin Joseph Zaffaroni of Parker, appointed.

The State Board of Stock Inspection Commissioners creates rules regarding brand inspection and livestock laws and regulates fees for stock inspections. The commission also sets service charges

and procedures, administers the Estray Fund, licenses public livestock markets, and secures bond and surety on butchers and slaughters.

For a term expiring May 1, 2021:

- Daniel Patrick McCarty of Rifle, to serve as a representative of the non-confinement cattle industry, reappointed.

DORA Executive Director Appoints State Bank Commissioner to Dual Role as Colorado Financial Services Commissioner

DENVER - Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) Executive Director Joe Neguse announced today that he has appointed State Bank Commissioner and Acting Financial Services Commissioner, Chris Myklebust, to officially serve as both the State Bank and Financial Services Commissioner.

In this dual role, Commissioner Myklebust will oversee two separate financial divisions at DORA - the Division of Banking and the Division of Financial Services.

The Division of Banking regulates the business of state chartered and/or licensed financial institutions, including state commercial banks, money transmitters and trust companies. The Division of Financial Services regulates state chartered credit unions and savings and loan associations, the administration and enforcement of the Savings and Loan Public Deposit Protection Act, and certain financial activities of state life care institutions.

"Chris understands the benefits that state-chartered banks and state-chartered credit unions bring to Colorado communities and our state's economy. He also brings exceptional vision, experience and commitment to his role as a Commissioner for these two financial divisions at DORA," said Neguse. "While these divisions will continue to be separate, the move to maximize Chris's experience by appointing him to the dual role creates more efficient oversight mechanisms for the needs of both divisions, eliminates administrative redundancies, and will save the state government and businesses significant costs as well."

Myklebust was appointed as Colorado's State Bank Commissioner in July 2015 after serving as the State Commissioner of Financial Services for nearly 10 years. He was re-appointed as Acting Commissioner of Financial Services in November 2016 after the current Commissioner, Patty Salazar, was appointed as DORA's Deputy Executive Director.

In this dual role, Myklebust has executive authority to ensure the safety of over \$9.7 billion in deposits by 1.5 million consumers in Colorado's credit unions, savings and loan associations and life care institutions, and \$50 billion in deposits in Colorado's commercial banks and trust companies.

As State Bank and Financial Services Commissioner, Myklebust negotiates solutions on complex policy and financial issues, as well as administers the enforcement of federal and Colorado laws, rules and regulations and compliance examinations for both divisions. He also manages relationships with a variety of stakeholders such as boards of directors, legislators, attorneys, federal regulatory agencies, consumers and industry associations.

"As both State Bank Commissioner and as the Acting Financial Services Commissioner, I have worked to build public trust through a sensible approach to regulation and by consistently pursuing excellence in our delivery of services to our stakeholders," noted Myklebust. "These two different divisions fulfill an important financial role in our state's economy, and as their director I'm very honored to serve the people of Colorado by maintaining this approach."

## **Calculator**

**Days Left to Sine Die: 9**

**House Bills Introduced: 368**

**Senate Bills Introduced: 304**

**Dead Bills: 175**

**Governor Signed: 167**