



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

SUPPORT

- [**HB15-1029 Health Care Delivery Via Telemedicine Statewide**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Perry Buck (R-Windsor) and Sen. John Kefalas (D-Fort Collins) (Support 2/9)

Summary: Current law precludes a health benefit plan provider from requiring in-person care when telemedicine is an appropriate alternative in areas with 150,000 or fewer residents. This bill removes the population restriction of 150,000 and precludes a health benefit plan from requiring in-person care delivery when telemedicine is appropriate, regardless of the geographic location of the health care provider and the recipient of care.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1029 because the bill improves access to patients, improves access through the use of technology to health care providers and may result in cost savings to business.

Outcome: House Concurrence (3/4)

- [**HB15-1038 Flexible Water Markets**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Jenise Arndt (D-Fort Collins) (Support 2/2)

Summary: Currently, water court proceedings governing an application to change the beneficial use of an irrigation water right require the applicant to designate a specific alternative beneficial use identified at the time of the application. This bill creates a more flexible change-in-use system by allowing an applicant who seeks a change in use to apply without designating the specific beneficial use to which the water will be applied.

The Chamber supports HB15–1038 because it gives additional flexibility in the use of water rights, while also saving money and time by avoiding water court.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Agriculture Committee (3/6)

- [**HB15-1057 The Statewide Initiative Process**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Lois Court (D-Denver) and Sen. Jerry Sonnenberg (R-Sterling) (Support 1/12)

Summary: The bill would require the Colorado Legislative Council’s director of research to prepare an initial fiscal impact statement for each initiative submitted to the title board and to further summarize the abstract into a two-sentence fiscal impact summary. The bill also requires the designated representatives of the initiative to appear at all review and comment meetings. If either designated representative fails to appear at a review and comment meeting, the initiative is considered withdrawn, but the proponents are permitted to resubmit the initiative for another review and comment meeting.

The Chamber supports HB15-1057 because we believe these requirements are important in ensuring ballot measures are thoughtful and that the voters know the fiscal impact the measures will have on the Colorado budget, our economy and ultimately on business.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/18)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [**HB15-1063 Prohibited Communication Concerning Patents**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver) and Sen. David Balmer (R- Centennial) (Support 1/12)

Summary: This bill requires the Colorado attorney general's office to prosecute anyone who threatens litigation for patent violations with bad-faith patent-infringement claims.

The Chamber supports HB15-1063 because it should help to reduce frivolous and intimidating claims against businesses that follow the correct to use or invest in intellectual property.

Outcome: House Concurrence (5/6)

- [**HB15-1065 Regulatory Reform Act of 2015**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Libby Szabo (R-Arvada) and Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton) (Support 1/20)

Summary: This bill would direct state regulatory authorities to issue a written warning rather than a fine to any small business (fewer than 100 employees) in violation of a new rule of the agency so long as the violation is not related to health or safety.

The Chamber supports HB15-1065 because it gives small businesses an opportunity to remedy violations of new, complicated rules before receiving fines without compromising health or safety.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/31)

- [**HB15-1096 Small Business Definition**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Kit Roupe (R-Colorado Springs) (Support 1/26)

Summary: The bill creates a general definition of the term "small business" for purposes of Colorado law to apply in situations where a more specific definition does not exist in the statutes. The definition of "small business" in the legislation is a firm with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$5 million in annual revenue.

The Chamber supports HB15-1096 because it provides a general definition for small business to apply when a specific definition is not specified in a particular statute, which adds clarity to statutes for small businesses.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Business Committee (2/5)

- [**HB15-1109 Additional SB09-228 Transfers to HUTF and Capital Construction**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) (Support 1/26)

Summary: This bill lengthens the five-year block of statutory transfers from the General Fund to the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) and the Capital Construction Fund (CCF), in the event that one or more years of transfers are reduced or not made because of a revenue surplus under the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR). For each year in which transfers are reduced or not made, an additional year of transfers is required, in which 2 percent of General Fund revenue must



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

be transferred to the HUTF and 1 percent of General Fund revenue must be transferred to the CCF. As in current law, transfers created in the bill may be reduced or not made because of the size of the TABOR surplus.

The Chamber supports HB15-1109 because it preserves five years of much-needed funding as originally established in SB09 – 228, even if there are some years in which a fund transfer does not occur. The funding outlined in SB09 – 228 is critical for infrastructure investment in Colorado, a key component of continuing to grow our economy and move workers and goods.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Appropriations Committee (5/1)

- [HB15-1119 Local Government Fracking Ban Liable Royalties](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Perry Buck (R-Windsor) (Support 1/26)

Summary: The bill specifies that a local government that bans hydraulic fracturing of an oil and gas well is liable to the royalty owner for the value of the lost royalties.

The Chamber supports HB15-1119 because it recognizes the private property rights of mineral owners and compensates owners for the financial loss if they are precluded from access to those minerals due to a fracking ban.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (2/26)

- [HB15-1139 Review State Rules to Reduce Burden on Small Business](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Terri Carver (R-Colorado Springs) (Support 2/9)

Summary: The bill requires a state agency to prepare an economic impact statement before adopting any rule that may adversely impact a small business. The bill also changes the definition of small business for the Colorado Administrative Procedures Act to be less than 500 employees or gross annual sales of less than \$6 million.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1139 because it reduces the administrative burden on small business by considering the impact of new regulations on these firms.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (2/10)

- [HB15-1157 Working Group for Economic Development In Distressed Regions](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Yeulin Willet (R-Grand Junction) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 2/9)

Summary: The bill creates an economic development working group for highly distressed rural and urban regions of the state.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1157 because economic development throughout the state strengthens our economy and quality of life.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Business Committee (4/23)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1158 Sales & Use Tax Refund For Data Centers](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) and Sen. Chris Holbert (R-Parker) (Support 2/2)

Summary: This bill provides a refund to the owner, operator or tenant of a facility that is a qualified data center for state sales or use tax paid on information technology equipment (IT equipment) that is used and maintained in the for at least one year. The refund also applies to replacement or upgraded IT equipment, as well as equipment that is relocated to the state. The bill includes the criteria for a facility to be a qualified data center.

The Chamber supports HB15–1158 because the bill promotes investment and re-investment in advanced technology by companies in Colorado and supports economic development in this key industry cluster.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (5/6)

- [HB15-1170 Increasing Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Tracy Kraft-Tharp (D-Arvada) and Sen. Owen Hill (R-Colorado Springs) (Support 2/9)

Summary: The bill adds postsecondary enrollment as a school district performance measure. The department must give each postsecondary enrollment option (including career and technical education program, community college or four-year institution of higher education in the school year immediately following graduation) equal weight in calculating performance. The bill additionally creates the position of postsecondary and workforce readiness statewide coordinator, who is responsible to the state workforce development council in the department of labor and employment.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1170 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement, encouraging all forms of postsecondary education.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/26)

- [HB15-1172 Repeal Punitive Damages Employment Discrimination](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) (Support 2/2)

Summary: Under federal law, employers with 15 or more employees found to have engaged in intentional discrimination are subject to compensatory and punitive damages. In HB 13-1136, the general assembly enacted legislation enabling plaintiffs in state employment discrimination cases to seek an award of compensatory and punitive damages and extended the applicability of the statute to all employers, regardless of size. The bill eliminates the ability of a plaintiff filing an employment discrimination claim under state law to obtain punitive damages.

The Chamber supports HB15–1178 because this puts Colorado on a level playing field with neighboring states, thereby removing a competitive disadvantage for small business owners.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Judiciary Committee (2/20)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [**HB15-1173 Winter Driving I-70 Tread Depth & Tire Chains**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Diane Mitsch Bush (D-Steamboat Springs) and Rep. Bob Rankin (R-Carbondale) (Support 2/2)

Summary: The bill requires all motor vehicles driving on Interstate 70 between Morrison and Dotsero during the snowy season to comply with the current commercial vehicle requirements for tires and chains. The department of transportation is instructed to erect signs at appropriate places, notifying the public of this requirement.

The Chamber supports HB15–1173 because the bill addresses one of the causes of accidents and congestion on the I–70 mountain corridor, especially during peak periods in winter conditions.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/13)

- [**HB15-1177 Rural Economic Development Initiative Grant Program**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Yeulin Willet (R-Grand Junction) and Sen. Kerry Donovan (D-Vail) (Support 2/9)

Summary: The bill creates the rural economic development initiative grant program for the purpose of creating resiliency in and growing the economies of highly distressed rural counties.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1177 because it because it supports economic development for areas around the state that may not have benefited from the improved economy.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Business Committee (5/4)

- [**HB15-1180 Sales & Use Tax Refund Med & Clean Technology**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Tracy Kraft-Tharp (D-Arvada) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 2/2)

Summary: The bill recreates and reenacts, with amendments, a refund for state sales and use tax paid by a qualified medical technology or clean technology taxpayer (qualified taxpayer). From 2015 through 2019, a qualified taxpayer may claim a refund for state sales and use tax paid on tangible personal property used in Colorado directly and predominately in research and development of medical technology or clean technology. For this purpose, the definition for "clean technology" is expanded.

The Chamber supports HB15–1180 because it provides tax incentives for investments in a key industry cluster and brings clean technology incentives in line with other industries in Colorado.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/26)

- [**HB15-1190 Assistance to Public Schools For Career Pathways**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Joann Windholz (R-Commerce City) (Support 2/9)

Summary: Expands the duties of the state workforce development council in the department of labor and employment and the department of education to provide additional assistance to public schools and provide technical assistance regarding federal and state programs relating to career and workforce opportunities.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1190 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement and would expand the pool of skilled workers available to fill current and future jobs.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs (3/5)

- [HB15-1205 Creation Of Tax Expenditure Evaluation Committee](#)
Sponsored by Rep. K.C. Becker (D-Boulder) (Support 3/16)

Summary: The bill creates a joint committee of the Senate and House of Representatives, known as the Tax Expenditure Evaluation committee. The committee is responsible for reviewing evaluations of the state's tax expenditures made by the state auditor or an evaluation contractor hired by the state auditor and may make recommendations to improve tax expenditure administration to the Colorado Department of Revenue, the Office of State Planning and Budgeting, the Colorado Office of Economic Development, or any other appropriate state agency.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1205 because it increases transparency in government and assesses the effectiveness of tax credits, which helps ensure prudent use of government funds.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Appropriations Committee (4/28)

- [HB15-1206 Sales & Use Tax Refund for Recycling Equipment](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Jonathan Singer (D-Longmont) (Support 2/9)

Summary: For each of the calendar years 2015 through 2019, the bill allows a taxpayer to apply for a refund of any state sales tax or use tax paid for machinery or equipment used directly and primarily in the recycling or reprocessing of waste products. The bill specifies the types of machinery or equipment to which the refund applies and specifies procedures for applying to the department of revenue to receive the refund.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1206 because the bill brings the manufacturing incentives for recycling equipment in line with other manufacturing industries in Colorado.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Finance Committee (3/19)

- [HB15-1219 EZ Investment Tax Credit For Renewable Energy](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Beth McCann (D-Denver) and Sen. Mary Hodge (D-Brighton) (Support 2/23)

Summary: The bill gives renewable energy companies an option to monetize Enterprise Zone Investment Tax Credits (EZ ITCs) associated with new investment made after Jan. 1. Companies that choose credit monetization would forego 20 percent of the credit value. The company would receive 80 percent of the credit value up to an annual cap of \$750,000.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1219 because it helps to continue to attract renewable energy investment in Colorado and keeps Colorado competitive with surrounding states. The bill provides an option for investment in



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

renewable energy projects allowing investors to more quickly obtain the tax incentive benefits in up-front cash available for re-investment.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (6/5)

- [**HB15-1227 Tax Credit for Employers that Pay Student Loans**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. KC Becker (D-Boulder) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 3/2)

Summary: The bill creates an income tax credit for employers who hire and retain new employees for a 12-month period and make payments directly to a lender for the new employee's student loan incurred while earning an approved degree. The bill requires the degree to be an associate or bachelor's degree in science, technology, engineering or mathematics, or a vocational certificate related to industry, manufacturing or information technology from a Colorado institution of higher education.

The Chamber supports HB15-1227 because it reinforces our ongoing desire to attract and retain a highly qualified and skilled workforce and ensures we are continuing to encourage creating a local workforce pipeline through education and workforce development programs.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Appropriations Committee (4/10)

- [**HB15-1230 Innovative Industry Workforce Development Program**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Pete Lee (D-Colorado Springs) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 3/2)

Summary: The bill creates the innovative industries workforce development program in the department of labor and employment to be jointly administered by the state workforce development council and the division of employment and training. The purpose of the program is to reimburse a business for one-half of its expenses related to a qualifying internship. A business may be reimbursed for up to five interns per location and up to 10 interns total. The maximum amount that a business may be reimbursed for each internship is \$5,000. At least one-half of the reimbursement must be paid to the intern.

The Chamber supports HB15-1230 because it supports workforce development by increasing opportunity for interns in innovative industries and building the applicant pool for jobs in these key industries, which include advanced manufacturing, aerospace, bioscience, construction, electronics, energy and natural resources, engineering, and information technology industries, and any other innovative industry as determined by the department. The bill incents companies to provide internships by offsetting some of the costs associated with hosting an intern.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/26)

- [**HB15-1231 Enhanced Unemployment Compensation Benefits**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Daneya Esgar (D-Pueblo) and Rep. Tracy Kraft Tharp (D-Arvada) (Support 3/2)

Summary: The bill reenacts the enhanced unemployment insurance compensation benefits for eligible unemployment insurance claimants that expired in 2014. Enhanced unemployment insurance compensation benefits



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

are available to claimants who are enrolled and making satisfactory progress in an approved program that will train them for a high-demand occupation, a more stable occupation or a long-term occupation. An approved training program includes vocational training, a registered apprenticeship or an entrepreneurial training program. The availability of the enhanced unemployment insurance compensation benefits will expire on July 1, 2018.

The Chamber supports HB15-1231. While unemployment is declining overall in Colorado, this will help communities in Colorado with higher unemployment percentages that are more challenged to move workers into available jobs. The Chamber also supports that the bill is funded via General Fund dollars, rather than the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (4/28)

- [HB15-1236 Tax Credit For Improving Energy Efficiency](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Faith Winter (D-Westminster) (Support 3/16)

Summary: This bill provides a nonrefundable income tax credit for construction, remodeling and improvement of multifamily residential and commercial buildings and affordable housing projects that attain certain standards of energy efficiency. The credit is available for those projects that are certified at a level of silver or higher by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, or at a level of two Green Globes or higher by the Green Building Initiative; with energy savings of at least 20 percent. The credit is available for tax years 2016 through 2020.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1236 because it will stimulate energy efficiency upgrades that will reduce energy costs for multifamily residential buildings, affordable housing projects and commercial buildings, while also supporting energy efficient providers.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Finance Committee (5/1)

- [HB15-1246 Crowdfund Intrastate Securities Online](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Pete Lee (D-Colorado Springs) and Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver) (Support 3/2)

Summary: The bill enacts the "Colorado Crowdfunding Act" to facilitate crowdfunding for small businesses by authorizing online intermediaries to match a Colorado investor with a Colorado business that wishes to sell securities pursuant to a simplified regulatory regime. Crowdfunding cannot begin until the securities commissioner adopts rules to implement the Act.

The Chamber supports HB15-1246 because it provides an additional means for small businesses to raise capital, which is beneficial to the economic development and growth of Colorado.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (4/13)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1251 PERA and Denver Pub Schools Five-Year True-up](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Lois Court (D-Denver) (Support 4/6)

Summary: In 2009, the general assembly enacted legislation to merge the Denver Public Schools (DPS) retirement system into PERA (Colorado's Public Employees' Retirement Association). The merger legislation created a new DPS division within PERA, set the employer and member contribution rates for that division and required PERA to calculate a true-up employer contribution rate beginning Jan. 1, 2015. The employer contribution rate must be adjusted to equalize the DPS division's ratio of unfunded liability over payroll to the PERA school division's ratio by 2040. The PERA board is required to recommend that the general assembly adjust the DPS total employer rate to assure the equalization of the two divisions.

This bill reduces the total employer contribution rate for the DPS division from 13.75 percent to 10.15 percent, which is the same as the contribution rate of other PERA contributors from school districts across the state.

The Chamber supports HB15-1251 because it upholds an agreement made with DPS in 2009. The Chamber supported SB09-282, which merged the DPS Retirement System with PERA and the true-up provisions of that agreement. This bill is consistent with those true-up provisions. That said, the Chamber remains committed to finding long-term solutions to PERA's liabilities.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (4/29)

- [HB15-1270 Pathways In Technology Early College High Schools](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Crisanta Duran (D-Pueblo) and Sen. Nancy Todd (D-Aurora) (Support 3/16)

Summary: The bill authorizes the operation of a limited number of pathways in technology early college high schools (p-tech schools) in the state. To operate a p-tech school, a school district, board of cooperative services or charter school must enter into an agreement with a community college, as defined in the bill, and one or more employers. A p-tech school is subject to the same accountability requirements as other public schools and a p-tech school's performance rating takes into account the employability of students who graduate from the p-tech school. A p-tech school is funded through the school finance formula.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1270 because it provides strong coordination between education and workforce needs and would expand the pool of skilled workers available to fill current and future jobs.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/18)

- [HB15-1271 Mobile Learning Labs Workforce Development](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Susan Lontine (D-Denver) and Sen. Vicki Marble (R-Littleton) (Support 3/16)

Summary: The bill allows funds in the Colorado existing industry training program to be used to fund mobile learning labs, which provide employers with a flexible delivery option for onsite training.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1271 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement and encourages further development of a local workforce pipeline through education and workforce development programs.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/13)

- **[HB15-1274 Creation Of Career Pathways For Students](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Alec Garnett (D-Denver) and Sen. Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood) (Support 3/16)

Summary: Based upon the model developed for creating the manufacturing career pathway, the bill directs the state workforce development council to coordinate multiple agencies and industries in the design of industry-driven career pathways for critical occupations in growing industries. The state council will work with partners through the talent pipeline work group to define critical occupations and growing industries to determine which career pathways to design and in what order. The bill includes the initial time frame for the development of career pathways and specifies that the first three career pathways will be in construction and related skilled trades, information technology and health care. The career pathways must include provisions that allow students to learn industry-related skills and obtain employment in the industry sector, including internship and apprenticeship opportunities, when relevant and available, as well as advance to higher levels of employment or education.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1274 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement and would expand the pool of skilled workers available to fill current and future jobs, helping to close workforce gaps.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/18)

- **[HB15-1275 Career & Tech Ed In Concurrent Enrollment](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Faith Winter (D-Westminster) and Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 3/16)

Summary: The bill clarifies that a local education provider may include course work and credits related to apprenticeship and internship programs in existing concurrent enrollment curriculum. The bill directs the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to create a tuition assistance program for students who meet the income eligibility requirements for a Pell Grant but do not qualify for the grant because the career and technical education certificate program in which they are enrolled does not meet the Pell Grant's minimum credit hour requirements.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1275 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement and would expand the pool of skilled workers available to fill current and future jobs.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/22)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1276 Skilled Worker Training Program](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver), Rep. Angela Williams (D-Denver) and Sen. John Cooke (R-Greeley), Sen. Rollie Heath (D-Boulder) (Support 3/16)

Summary: The bill creates the Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment and Key Training Act, also referred to as the WORK Act, which establishes a matching grant program in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment to award matching grants to entities and organizations that offer skilled worker training programs to assist in their outreach, recruiting and training efforts. An 11-member grant review committee reviews and makes recommendations to the executive directors of the Departments of Labor and Employment and Higher Education and the director of the Office of Economic Development, who jointly determine the recipients and amounts of the grant awards. The program is created for three years, and the Colorado General Assembly is to appropriate a total of \$10 million for the program.

The Chamber supports HB15 – 1276 because it provides closer coordination between workforce needs and education achievement and would expand the pool of skilled workers available to fill current and future jobs.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/26)

- [HB15-1306 Business Opportunity Study](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Angela Williams (D-Denver), Rep. Joe Salazar (D-Thornton) and Sen. Larry Crowder (R-Alamosa), Sen. Lucia Guzman (D-Denver) (Support 3/30)

Summary: This legislation directs the Department of Personnel to commission a study to determine whether disparities exist in the state procurement system between the participation of historically underutilized businesses and other businesses. "Historically underutilized business" is defined as businesses owned by racial or ethnic minorities, women, veterans or persons with disabilities. The final report and recommendations must be provided the general assembly and the executive director of the department of personnel no later than January 1, 2017.

The Chamber supports HB15-1306 because the analysis outlined in the bill will provide information to determine if the state procurement system provides an equitable bidding process. Additionally, the Chamber supports efforts to attract and develop talent in all areas of business and supports efforts to develop small businesses of all kinds. We think it is important for the state to know whether its procurement processes are reflective of the diversity of available contractors in our state.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (5/1)

- [HB15 – 1317 Concerning Pay for Success Contracts](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Garnett (D-Denver), Rep. Rankin (R-Carbondale), and Sen. Johnston (D-Denver), Sen. Martinez Humenik (R-Wheat Ridge) (Support 3/30)

Summary: This legislation will allow the state to enter into pay for success contracts, which increase access to evidence-based prevention programs and ultimately save taxpayers money. In a pay for success contracts, philanthropic or private investors provide the initial funding for a promising intervention that could save public dollars if implemented. Only if the intervention program reaches a threshold of success that saves money within the contractual period are



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

initial costs paid back. Without authorizing legislation, state cost savings would not be able to be used in a pay for success contract.

The Chamber supports HB15-1317 because it gives the state to opportunity to bring the discipline, the financial rigor and the risk of the market to bear on social issues that are extremely challenging to impact. The bill invites innovation and allows the market to assess and invest in innovations to address social issues, while also allowing us to bring the best public, non-profit and private sector thinking together to address some of the social challenges we still face in Colorado.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/20)

- [HB15-1323 Changes to Assessments in Public Schools](#)
Sponsored by Rep. John Buckner (D-Aurora) (Support 4/6)

Summary: This bill is a bipartisan effort to implement recommended changes in assessment tests in Colorado schools. The bill implements many of the recommendations from the 1202 Standards and Assessments Task Force, including:

- Eliminating all state-mandated tests in 12th grade.
- Eliminating state-mandated tests in 11th grade, except for the ACT college entrance exam.
- Administering ELA and math assessments in 10th grade.
- Adjusting the schedule for kindergarten students taking READ Act assessments.
- Providing a paper-and-pencil option for all tests.
- Providing more information directly to parents to reduce student opt-outs.
- Holding all schools and districts harmless from penalties under the school and district performance accountability standards through the 2015-2016 school year.
- Streamlining school readiness assessments and reducing the number of required assessments to one per year, instead of three.
- Excusing non-English-proficient students who have been in a Colorado school less than one year from the state-mandated ELA assessments. Such students would take the ELA test in their second year, but their performance would not be included in accountability measures until the third year.

The Chamber supports HB15-1323. HB 1323 implements the testing reform recommendations of the 1202 Task Force, which we support. The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce has a long history of supporting reforms in our education system in Colorado. Our interest is helping ensure our children are effectively prepared for the workforce demands we see in the future to sustain our economic growth. This bill holds on to the reforms we've made to date that have made us a national leader in accountability while reducing the amount of time kids spend testing and aligns with the [principles we support](#) for assessing our kids. In order to prepare our students to succeed in the economy of today and tomorrow, we must retain high standards; assessments that allow us to compare students' progress locally, nationally and internationally; and the ability for local school districts to manage their own curriculum. With strong statewide assessments comes data that can inform school choices for parents and students; the opportunity to identify weaknesses and intervene when a student needs remediation, ultimately saving parents, students and schools money; enhanced transparency through diverse local input from educators, parents and business and community leaders on standards and assessments; and understanding the outcomes of our education system. We believe that if we follow



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

these principles, of which HB 1323 aligns, our children will be prepared to lead our workforce and economy in the future.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/20)

- [**HB15-1354 Selection of Candidates by Primary Elections**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City) *(Support 4/20)*

Summary: The bill permits an unaffiliated elector to vote in the primary election of a major political party without affiliating with that political party. It requires that all political parties that participate in the primary election have their candidates placed on a single combined ballot to be used by unaffiliated voters. The bill clarifies that an unaffiliated eligible elector may declare a political party affiliation when the elector desires to vote at a primary election. To vote in a political party's primary without declaring an affiliation with the political party, the eligible unaffiliated elector is required to declare to the election judges the name of the political party in whose primary election the elector wishes to vote.

The Chamber supports HB15-1354. Of Colorado voters, 35 percent—or 1 million people—are unaffiliated, which means although their tax dollars help fund primary elections, they are not allowed to participate in them. This bill provides a simplified means for this group of voters to participate in the primary process, which would lead to more engagement, voter participation and collaboration in finding solutions on the many tough issues we face in Colorado.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (4/28)

- [**HB15-1366 Expand Job Growth Tax Credit for Higher Education Project**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver) and Sen. David Balmer (R-Centennial) *(Support 4/27)*

Summary: The bill allows a taxpayer to receive an income tax credit through the existing job growth incentive tax credit starting on or after Jan. 1, 2015 if the project will be a qualified partnership between the taxpayer and a state institution of higher education, is located on or within one mile of the campus of or on other property owned by the state institution of higher education and brings a net job growth of at least five new jobs to the state with an average yearly wage of at least 100 percent of the statewide average yearly wage.

Additionally, the bill specifies that if the project is a qualified partnership and the taxpayer is a business that has operated for five or fewer years in the state and did not relocate to the state from another state, then the credit is refundable.

The Denver Metro Chamber supports HB15-1366. This bill extends the very successful job-creation tax credit to jobs that are located nearby a Colorado higher education institution and relaxes some of the conditions previously imposed on companies seeking the credit, which should increase new company formations associated with Colorado's research-focused higher education institutions.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (6/5)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- **[HB15-1388 SCORE Act for PERA Pension Obligation Bonds](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver), Rep. Bob Rankin (R-Carbondale) and Sen. Chris Holbert (R-Parker), Sen. Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood) (Support 4/29)

Summary: Under the bill, current employer and employee contributions into PERA (the Public Employees' Retirement Association) would be used to pay for bonds issued at a lower fixed interest rate than that currently being charged for the unfunded liability. All income and the contributions above the amount needed to repay the bonds would flow to PERA trust funds to be applied to continue shrinking the unfunded portion of pension liabilities at no new cost to taxpayers, the state, employers, employees or retirees.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce supports HB15-1388 because it will improve PERA's funded status, reduce the payback period on unfunded liabilities and create potential long-term future savings for employers (taxpayers) and employees. Without the approval of these bonds it is estimated taxpayers would have to pay an additional 2 to 3 percent more in contributions in order to reduce the payback period. This bill saves taxpayers as much as \$4 to 5 billion.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Finance Committee (5/5)

- **[HB15 – 1389 Create New Hospital Provider Fee Enterprise](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Dickey Lee Hullinghorst (D-Gunbarrel), Rep. Lois Court (D-Denver) and Sen. Pat Steadman (D-Denver) (Support 4/30)

Summary: The bill creates the health care affordability enterprise as an agency and government-owned business within the department of health care policy and financing. The enterprise would charge and collect a new Hospital Provider Fee that replaces the existing hospital provider fee and would implement and administer the state Hospital Provider Fee program. The bill would ultimately remove the Hospital Provider Fee from the revenues for evaluating TABOR and Ref C cap levels, which would free up SB 228 funding for transportation infrastructure and education.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce supports HB15 – 1389 because we think that shifting the Hospital Provider Fee into an enterprise fund is the right move for Colorado. It not only brings the TABOR formula into closer alignment with what voters approved, but it frees up funds to invest in the areas we need them most – education and our roads and bridges. There's no doubt that our economy is growing, but today's TABOR cap includes more than \$500 million in revenue that is not from economic growth, but from the Hospital Provider Fee. If we don't do something to better reflect economic growth vs. new revenue as this bill does, we risk losing hundreds of millions of dollars our state needs.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (5/5)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1391 PERA & Denver Public Schools Five-Year True-up](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Lois Court (D-Denver) and Rep. Jim Wilson (R-Chaffee County) (Support 5/1)

Summary: In 2009, the general assembly enacted legislation to merge the Denver Public Schools (DPS) retirement system into the Public Employees' Retirement Association (PERA), effective Jan. 1, 2010. The merger legislation created a new DPS division within PERA and set the employer and member contribution rates for that division. The merger legislation also required PERA to calculate a true-up beginning Jan. 1, 2015, and every fifth year thereafter, to determine whether the DPS employer contribution rate must be adjusted to assure the equalization of the DPS division's ratio of unfunded actuarial accrued liability over payroll to the PERA school division's ratio of unfunded actuarial accrued liability over payroll at the end of the 30-year period that began on Jan. 1, 2010. If necessary, the PERA board is required to recommend that the general assembly adjust the DPS total employer rate to assure the equalization of the two divisions. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2015, the bill reduces the total employer contribution rate for the DPS division from 13.75 percent to 10.15 percent to begin the true-up.

The Chamber supports HB15-1391 because it upholds an agreement made with DPS in 2009. The Chamber supported SB09-282, which merged the DPS Retirement System with PERA and the true-up provisions of that agreement. This bill is consistent with those true-up provisions. That said, the Chamber remains committed to finding long-term solutions to PERA's liabilities.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (6/3)

- [SB15-046 Renewable Energy Standard Adjust REAs](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Kevin Grantham (R-Canon City) (Support 1/26)

Summary: Under Colorado's renewable energy standard, by the year 2020, cooperative electric associations and municipally owned electric utilities will be required to obtain at least 10 percent and, in the case of a large cooperative serving 100,000 or more customers, 20 percent of the electricity they sell at retail from renewable sources. The bill allows these utilities to count each kilowatt-hour of electricity obtained through retail-distributed generation, such as solar panels, as three kilowatt-hours for purposes of meeting the 2020 standard. In addition, the bill allows cooperative electric associations to use purchases from community solar gardens to meet the standard.

The Chamber supports SB15-046 because it provides additional tools for rural cooperatives to meet Colorado's renewable energy standard and allows community solar to be one of those tools.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/1)

- [SB15-064 Application of State Water Law to Federal Agencies](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Jerry Sonnenberg (R-Sterling) (Support 1/20)

Summary: The bill states basic tenets of Colorado water law concerning water as a transferable property right, acknowledges that the federal government has maintained deference to state law with respect to water rights and prohibits the United States Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Land Management from placing conditions on special use permits for, or rights-of-way on, federal land.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

The Chamber supports SB15-064 because it allows our state's water laws to be governed locally, resulting in water law that meets the unique needs and challenges of our region. The Chamber has supported similar bills in the past and supports this bill as it preserves Colorado's authority over its own water.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/17)

- [**SB15-069 Repeal Job Protection Civil Rights Enforcement Act**](#)
Sen. Laura Woods (R-Arvada) and Rep. Libby Szabo (R-Arvada) (*Support 1/26*)

Summary: In 2013, the general assembly enacted HB13-1136, the "Job Protection and Civil Rights Enforcement Act of 2013," which established compensatory and punitive damage remedies as well as front pay, for a person who proves that an employer engaged in a discriminatory or unfair employment practice under state law. These remedies were created in addition to equitable relief, such as back pay, reinstatement or hiring, which is already available to employment discrimination victims. SB15 - 069 repeals all components of that act and restores the equitable relief remedies that were available to employment discrimination victims making claims under state law prior to the passage of the act.

The Chamber supports SB15-069 because it would repeal HB13 – 1136, which makes Colorado less attractive to small business owners and entrepreneurs. HB13 -1136 exposed all Colorado employers, regardless of size, to the possibility of compensatory or punitive damages in discrimination or unfair labor practice claims, as well as the expense of defending a jury trial. This expansion of liability to small employers who employ less than 15 employees is not conducive to encouraging entrepreneurship and to fostering a thriving innovative business environment. Accordingly, the Chamber supports the repeal of HB13 - 1136 via SB15 - 069.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (4/21)

- [**SB15-078 Business Fiscal Impacts Leg Measure and Exec Rules**](#)
Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton) and Rep. Patrick Neville (R-Castle Rock) (*Support 1/26*)

Summary: The bill directs the staff of the legislative council (staff) to designate a five-day period following the introduction of new legislation or the notice of proposed rule-making during which any person may submit comments regarding the potential business fiscal impacts of new legislation or a new rule. Upon the expiration of that period, staff is required to compile the comments into a notice of reported business fiscal impact and to post each notice on its official web site. Staff is also required to provide the appropriate department with the notice regarding a proposed rule.

The Chamber supports SB15-078 because it gives the business community a greater voice via the opportunity to provide input on the financial impact on businesses of legislative measures and gives the legislature visibility to the financial impact legislation can have to the business community.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (4/2)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [SB15-093 Compensate Owners Mineral Interests Restricted by Extraction Regulations](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Jerry Sonnenberg (R-Sterling) (Support 1/20)

Summary: The bill specifies that whenever a local government adopts or implements an ordinance, resolution, rule, regulation or other form of official policy concerning mineral extraction operations that has the effect of reducing the fair market value of the owner's mineral interest by at least 60 percent, the owner's interest will be deemed to have been taken for a public use. The bill allows the owner to obtain compensation from the local government for the full diminution in the fair market value of the owner's interest caused by the regulatory impairment of the local government.

The Chamber supports SB15-093 because it recognizes the private property rights of mineral owners and compensates owners for the negative financial impact of regulatory changes.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/17)

- [SB15-101 Electronic Wage Payment](#)
Sponsored by Sen. David Balmer (R-Centennial) and Rep. Dan Pabon (D-Denver) (Support 2/2)

Summary: The bill allows employers, at their discretion, to pay wages by electronic credit transfer to an employee's account in a financial institution or to deposit wages on a paycard.

The Chamber supports SB15-101 because the bill adds an efficient option for employers to pay their employees.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/19)

- [SB15-135 Public Bodies & Urban Renewal](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Beth Martinez Humenik (R-Wheat Ridge) (Support 2/2)

Summary: The bill makes modifications to the "Urban Renewal Law," including increasing the maximum number of allowable commissioners on an urban renewal authority from 11 to 13. The bill also requires all money remaining in the fund that has not previously been rebated be repaid proportionally to each taxing body, other than the municipality. Additionally, the bill allows a commissioner of the authority to be appointed by the board of county commissioners where the governing body of the municipality is the authority.

The Chamber supports SB15-135 because it makes changes and incorporates provisions the governor included in his veto statement on HB14-1375 last year by providing a voice for counties in the urban renewal process. The Chamber sees the strong value of urban renewal and tax-increment financing as tools for revitalizing, reenergizing and redeveloping our communities and economic development.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Finance Committee (5/5)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [**SB15-137 PACE Program Flexibility For Business Entity**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. David Balmer (R-Centennial) and Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) (Support 2/2)

Summary: Under current law, only nonprofit organizations are authorized to offer the program of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE program). If permitted by federal law, this bill authorizes public, private and for-profit entities, in addition to nonprofit entities, to provide the PACE program.

The Chamber supports SB15–137 because it would expand consumer options and be more focused on outcomes instead of corporate structure.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/8)

- [**SB15-141 Income Tax Credit For Prop Taxes Paid Eligibility**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Mark Scheffel (R-Parker) and Rep. Dan Thurlow (R-Grand Junction) (Support 2/2)

Summary: For five income tax years beginning in 2015, there is an income tax credit to reimburse qualifying taxpayers for personal property taxes paid in Colorado. This bill increases the property cap for 2015 from \$15,000 to \$25,000, and the property cap for the next four income tax years will grow by inflation from this amount.

The Chamber supports SB15–141 because the bill reduces the tax burden on small business from personal property tax and reduces emphasis of this tax as a revenue source.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Finance Committee (5/1)

- [**SB15-177 HOA Construction Defect Lawsuit Approval Timelines**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Mark Scheffel (R-Parker) and Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) (Support 2/17)

Summary: The bill preserves dispute resolution provisions, such as mediation or arbitration, for construction defect claims contained in a project’s original governing documents, requires all owners in a building be informed about the impacts and costs associated with a defect claim and requires that a majority of owners agree to filing a claim.

The Chamber supports SB15 – 177 because it would be a step toward encouraging builders to construct more affordable housing and it supports the growth of our state’s economy by providing diverse housing options in our communities. The Chamber has been working on this bill with a broad coalition concerned with the lack of entry-level condominium construction in Colorado compared to other parts of the country. The Chamber supports a process that allows for a quick resolution of construction issues that is fair to homeowners who need repairs, while protecting the rights of all owners in a community.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (4/28)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [**SB15-180 Regulatory Reform Act 2015**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton) and Rep. Patrick Neville (R-Castle Rock) (Support 2/23)

Summary: The bill enacts the "Regulatory Reform Act of 2015," which acknowledges the difficulty businesses with less than 100 employees (small businesses) have in knowing about and complying with new administrative rules and regulations. The bill allows for a small business to receive a written warning rather than a fine for a first minor violation and would engage the small business in educational outreach to enable compliance with the new rule.

The Chamber supports SB15 – 180 because compliance with new rules and regulations can be challenging to small businesses, which typically don't have the capacity to employ full time regulatory or compliance staff members. This legislation allows employers the opportunity to remedy violations without penalty, saving money for businesses while continuing to protect health and safety.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/31)

- [**SB15-183 Quantify Water Rights Historical Consumptive Use**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Mary Hodge (D-Brighton) (Support 3/2)

Summary: When a water judge decrees a change of water right, the bill requires that a quantification of the actual historical consumptive use of the water right be based on a representative study period that includes wet years, dry years and average years; does not include years of undecreed use of the water right; and need not include every year of the entire history of use of the water or periods of nonuse of the water right. The bill prohibits reconsideration or re-quantification of the historical consumptive use if the historical consumptive use has already been quantified in a previous change decree.

The Chamber supports SB15-183 as it preserves the value of water rights obtained through a change of ownership case, which may change over time as the owner's needs change. This is beneficial to water suppliers in obtaining water rights to hold for future use and helps business by assuring water availability purchased by the water providers, preserving supplies in planning for future business and residential needs.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/4)

- [**SB15-215 Changes To Assessments In Public Schools**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Owen Hill (R-Colorado Springs), Sen. Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood) and Rep. John Buckner (D-Aurora), Rep. Jim Wilson (R-Salida) (Support 3/16)

Summary: This bill proposes in statute the changes to assessments recommended by the 1202 task force. Including: prohibiting the Department of Education from requiring a school district, board of cooperative services, or charter school (local education provider) to administer any state assessments in eleventh or twelfth grade but allowing a local education provider to administer a state assessment to eleventh- or twelfth-grade students. Under existing law, each local education provider must administer a school readiness assessment to students in kindergarten and prepare an individual school readiness plan for each student. The bill clarifies that the local education provider must administer the assessment during the fall semester. If a kindergarten student demonstrates a significant reading deficiency, the



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

"Reading to Ensure Academic Development" (READ) plan that the local education provider creates for the student would be a component of the student's individual school readiness plan. The bill extends the standards and assessments task force for an additional year with new appointments and directs the governor, rather than the chairman of the state Board of Education, to make some of the appointments.

The Chamber supports SB15 – 215 because the bill implements the recommendations of the standards and assessments task force, which the Chamber supports. It ensures we continue to hold our students and teachers to high statewide standards, that we have the ability to assess how our kids are performing relative to those standards and compare how we are doing on a local, statewide, national and even international level, which ultimately allows us to course correct weaknesses and replicate best practices, resulting in a stronger and more effective education system.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Education Committee (5/4)

- **[SB15-258 Coordinated Review of CO2 Emissions Reduction Measures](#)**
Sponsored by Sen. John Cooke (R-Greeley) (Support 4/13)

Summary: The bill requires that before the Colorado air quality control commission adopts a state plan for the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by Colorado electric utilities, in accordance with federal regulations, the proposed plan be reviewed by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to determine the likely impact on the rates paid for electricity by consumers. Additionally, the PUC evaluates a report summarizing the effects of the plan on rates, reliability, Colorado's economy and need to be adopted by both houses of the general assembly in a joint resolution approved by a majority vote.

The Chamber supports SB15-258 because it provides more opportunity for input, giving voice to stakeholders, which we believe supports collaboration, pragmatism and ultimately creates the best outcomes for Colorado.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (5/4)

- **[SB15-279 Surety Requirement for Appealing Tax Bills Claimed Due](#)**
Sponsored by Rep. Tracy Kraft-Tharp (D-Arvada), Rep. Jon Keyser (R-Morrison) and Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton), Sen. Cheri Jahn (D-Wheat Ridge) (Support 4/27)

Summary: This bill changes the deposit or bond requirements for a taxpayer appealing a final determination of a state or local tax ruling.

Current law requires a taxpayer wishing to appeal a final determination of the executive director of the Department of Revenue or of a local government, within a specified time after filing a notice of appeal, to:

- Set aside twice the amount of the taxes, interest and other charges stated in the final determination by filing a surety bond with the district court;
- Set aside twice the amount of the taxes, interest and other charges stated in the final determination by establishing a savings account, deposit account or certificate of deposit for such amount at a state or national bank or a state or federal savings and loan association doing business in this state; or
- Deposit the disputed amount with the executive director of the Department of Revenue.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Current law also requires home-rule jurisdictions and statutory local governments to follow the same requirements for appeals related to the sales and use taxes they impose.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce supports SB15-279 because it reduces the financial commitment necessary when appealing a tax decision and defers any deposit of cash or bond until after the ruling of a district court. This will remove this financial barrier to challenging a tax ruling to the courts, which should reduce the tax appeal risk for businesses wanting to challenge a tax ruling.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Appropriations Committee (4/30)

- **[SB15-282 - Jump-start Program Economic Development in Distressed Counties](#)**

Sponsored by Sen. Ray Scott (R-Grand Junction), Sen. Mike Johnston (D-Denver) and Rep. Crisanta Duran (D-Denver), Rep. Yeulin Willett (R-Grand Junction) (Support 4/28)

Summary: The bill creates the "Tax-friendly Zone Act" and requires the Colorado Economic Development Commission to manage and oversee the program. The bill allows tax-friendly zones to be created in up to 30 of the state's highly distressed counties. If a new business establishes a relationship with a state institution of higher education in the tax-friendly zone and then locates in the zone, the new business is entitled to tax-friendly zone program benefits, including income, sales and use and property tax credits as determined by the commission.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce supports SB15-282 because it provides targeted support in rural distressed communities for job creation and business attraction. This supports overall economic development for the state.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/13)

- **[SCR15-002 Ballot Procedure Citizen Initiated Amendments](#)**

Sponsored by Sen. Ellen Roberts (R-Durango) and Sen. Pat Steadman (D-Denver) (Support 4/13)

Summary: The resolution establishes a new two-tier election process for an initiative petition to amend the state constitution. It creates the following three-step process:

- Constitutional measures would be placed on an even-year general election ballot after title setting and signature requirements are met. This vote would authorize the measure for further review and a final vote at the following odd-year election.
- If authorized by voters, legislative council would conduct at least one public hearing in each congressional district on the policy, fiscal and administrative impacts of the proposed amendment.
- Lastly, a vote on the next general election ballot in the odd year would be held for final approval by Colorado voters.

The Chamber supports SCR15-002. The Chamber values the right for Coloradans to petition state government; it's a founding principle of our state. However, over the past 20 years special interests have used the ballot initiative process



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

to bring forward their own agendas for amending the Constitution. This resolution would place before the voters a proposal that affirms the value and importance of the Colorado Constitution by establishing a thorough review and education process to amend our state's most important governing document. This change would not apply to initiatives to remove provisions already existing in the constitution, nor does it impact the process for citizen initiatives that impact statutes.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (5/5)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

OPPOSE

- [**HB15-1066 Repeal of the Health Benefit Exchange**](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Janak Joshi (R-Colorado Springs) and Sen. Kevin Lundberg (R-Berthoud) (Oppose 1/20)

Summary: The bill would repeal the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange, which was created in 2011 by SB11-200. The bill requires the state treasurer to transfer any unencumbered moneys that remain in the exchange to the general fund.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1066 because it would repeal the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange, which is supported by the Chamber. The Chamber acknowledges the value of having a state run exchange rather than participating in the federal exchange. Additionally, the Chamber recognizes the significant investment that health insurance providers have made to align with the state exchange and understands that repeal of the exchange would result in significant cost and uncertainty for these businesses.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Health Committee (1/30)

- [**HB15-1077 Modify Vehicle Late Registration Fee**](#)
Rep. Jim Wilson (R-Chaffee County) (Oppose 1/26)

Summary: Under current law, if the owner of a motor vehicle fails to register the vehicle when required, the owner must, upon registering the vehicle and subject to a \$100 cap, pay a late fee of \$25 for each month or portion of a month for which the registration was late. Fee revenue is credited \$10 to the county government registering a vehicle; remaining revenue is deposited into the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF). This bill caps the late vehicle registration fee at \$10 and credits the fee to the county government registering the vehicle. The bill applies to late fees assessed on or after July 1, 2015.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1077 because it strips funding for transportation that was allocated by FASTER legislation. The Chamber supported the original FASTER legislation (SB09 – 108), which currently generates about \$200 million every year for critical state transportation projects across CO. The revenue is generated from vehicle registration fees and fines established or increased by FASTER. By capping the late registration fee at \$10 and designating it to the county, rather than going to the highway users tax fund, HB15 – 1077, will ultimately erode revenue generated by FASTER fees and penalties and reduce the revenue available for key highway and bridge projects identified by the FASTER legislation.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (1/29)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1083 Patient Contribution to Rehabilitation Services](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Dianne Primavera (D-Broomfield) and Sen. Larry Crowder (R-Alamosa) (Oppose 1/20)

Summary: The bill prohibits an insurance carrier from classifying an office visit for physical rehabilitation services provided by a physical therapist, occupational therapist or chiropractor as a specialty service. The bill limits the copayment that may be charged for physical rehabilitation services to 50 percent of what the provider is paid for the visit by the carrier.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1083 because it is a mandate that will raise health care costs for businesses in the state and interferes with private insurance contracts.

Outcome: Signed by Governor (6/5/15)

- [HB15-1093 Exemption of Efficient Plumbing Fixture Requirements](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Tim Dore (R-Elizabeth) (Oppose 1/20)

Summary: The bill repeals a prohibition that would go into effect on Sept. 1, 2016, that disallows the sale of certain plumbing fixtures unless they are water-efficient plumbing fixtures.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1093 because it repeals bipartisan legislation from 2014 that was not only supported by the utilities, but also by manufacturers. The Chamber is committed to water conservation and efficiency initiatives, and recognizes low-flow fixtures as a cost-effective strategy for conserving water.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (2/5)

- [HB15-1105 Revising CO Ed Accountability Measures](#)

Rep. Justin Everett (R-Littleton) and Sen. Vicki Marble (R-Littleton) (Oppose 1/26)

Summary: The bill repeals the existing academic standards for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies and requires the state board to adopt new academic standards in these subjects as recommended by the preschool through elementary and secondary education academic standards steering committee, created in the bill. Existing law directs the state board to adopt a system of statewide assessments. The bill clarifies that the state board must adopt state assessments in English language arts, mathematics and science. The bill repeals the provision that directs the state board to participate with a consortium of states in developing assessments and repeals the requirement that the state board adopt postsecondary and workforce planning and preparation assessments.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1105. The Chamber has long supported the development of the Colorado Academic Standards and the use of smart assessments in our schools. Colorado is now in the process of implementing the standards and assessments that the Chamber believes will equip our students with the skills needed to succeed in a 21st century workplace. Repeal of the Colorado standards and assessments will add significant unnecessary cost and delay implementation of the high standards we need for our students.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Education Committee (4/21)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1123 Fed Test Requirements Option for Local Ed Providers](#)

Rep. Jack Tate (R-Centennial) (Oppose 1/26)

Summary: The bill allows the governing board of a school district, a board of cooperative services that operates a public school or a charter school to adopt a resolution to administer the statewide assessments in English language arts, mathematics, and science only to the extent required by federal law. A governing board that adopts the resolution would not be required to administer the ACT to students in 11th grade.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1123 because the bill repeals existing academic standards and assessments of which the Chamber is in support. Education is a key issue for the Chamber because and it creates the foundation for our workforce. Standards and assessments should include statewide learning standards, outcome-oriented testing, national and international benchmarks, curricula that prepares students with the skills needed in our workforce for the 21st century and freedom for local districts to determine the best course for their students to find success.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Education Committee (4/21)

- [HB15-1125 Co State Academic Standards and Flexible Assessments](#)

Rep. Paul Lundeen (R-Monument) and Sen. Chris Holbert (R-Parker) (Oppose 1/26)

Summary: The bill requires the state board, beginning no later than the 2015-16 school year, to annually revise the state academic standards in two instructional areas and repeals the existing statute that governs statewide testing. The bill expresses the general assembly's intent to allow local education providers to implement their assessment plans and to require the department to use the results of local assessments in accrediting local education providers after the federal department of education grants the waiver. The bill restricts testing in several areas and subjects including English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies and repeals the existing statute that governs statewide testing.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1125 because the bill repeals existing academic standards and assessments of which the Chamber is in support. Education is a key issue for the Chamber because and it creates the foundation for our workforce. Standards and assessments should include statewide learning standards, outcome-oriented testing, national and international benchmarks, curricula that prepares students with the skills needed in our workforce for the 21st century, and freedom for local districts to determine the best course for their students to find success.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Education Committee (4/21)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [**HB15-1141 Hospital Provider Fee Patient Billing Statements**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Janak Joshi (R-Colorado Springs) and Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton) (Oppose 2/2)

Summary: The bill removes the statutory prohibition on hospitals from including the amount of the hospital provider fee on patient billing statements and requires hospitals to include the amount of the fee.

The Chamber opposes HB15–1141 because inclusion of this information is misleading to patients, making it appear that the hospital provider fee is being passed onto the consumer, when in fact it is not. In addition, this bill will increase administrative costs to hospitals and insurance providers for billing system changes.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Health Committee (2/13)

- [**HB15-1154 No Credit Card Fee On Tax Portion Of Sale**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Jon Becker (R-Fort Morgan) and Sen. Owen Hill (R-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 2/9)

Summary: The bill prohibits the collection of an interchange fee, defined as a fee established by a payment card network for the purpose of compensating the issuer of a credit or debit card for its involvement in an electronic payment transaction on the portion of the total price that represents taxes imposed by the state or a local government.

The Chamber opposes HB15 – 1154 because it creates an additional layer of conflict with federal regulations and imposes additional burdens and cost for anyone doing business in Colorado, which would put Colorado at a competitive disadvantage.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Finance Committee (3/5)

- [**HB15-1161 Public Accommodation First Amendment Rights**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Gordon Klingenschmitt (R-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 3/2)

Summary: The bill specifies that neither the civil rights division, the civil rights commission nor a court with jurisdiction to hear civil actions brought under the public accommodations laws may compel involuntary speech, acts of involuntary artistic expression or involuntary religious expression by a person when such speech or acts of artistic or religious expression would lead to that person directly or indirectly participating in, directly or indirectly supporting or endorsing or impliedly endorsing an ideology, ceremony, creed, behavior or practice with which the person does not agree.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1161. The Chamber’s focus is attracting and retaining the top talent. We are committed to opposing legislation that hampers our ability to do so. If passed, these bills would send a message that conflicts with the inclusive and collaborative culture here in Colorado that would put our ability to attract top companies and workers at risk. Colorado is open for business to everyone and we want to keep it that way.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/10)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1163 Contingent Repeal Health Insurance Laws Aligning With ACA](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Gordon Klingenschmitt (R-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 2/9)

Summary: In 2013, the general assembly enacted House Bill 13-1266 to align state health insurance laws with the requirements of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The bill establishes an automatic repeal of those state health insurance laws if the federal law requirements under the ACA are repealed by congress and approved by the president.

The Chamber opposes HB15 – 1163 because we recognize the significant investment that health insurance providers have made to align with the state exchange and believe that repeal of the exchange would result in significant cost and uncertainty for these businesses and the business community at large. Likewise, a provision that would trigger automatically precludes consideration of impacts and conditions that could exist in the future.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Health Committee (2/20)

- [HB15-1171 State Freedom of Conscience Protection Act](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Neville (R-Castle Rock) and Rep. Stephen Humphrey (R-Severance) and Sen. Tim Neville (R-Littleton) (Oppose 3/2)

Summary: The bill specifies that no state action may burden a person's exercise of religion, even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability, unless it is demonstrated that applying the burden to a person's exercise of religion is essential to further a compelling governmental interest and the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest; provides a claim or defense to a person whose exercise of religion is burdened by state action; and specifies that nothing in the bill creates any rights by an employee against an employer unless the employer is a government employer.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1171. The Chamber's focus is attracting and retaining the top talent. We are committed to opposing legislation that hampers our ability to do so. If passed, these bills would send a message that conflicts with the inclusive and collaborative culture here in Colorado that would put our ability to attract top companies and workers at risk. Colorado is open for business to everyone and we want to keep it that way.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/10)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1208 Repeal of Common Core Education Standards](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Gordon Klingenschmitt (R-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 2/9)

Summary: The bill repeals the existing academic standards for English language arts and mathematics and requires the state board to adopt new academic standards in these subjects.

The Chamber opposes HB15 – 1208. The Chamber has long supported the development of the Colorado Academic Standards and the use of smart assessments in our schools. Repeal of the Colorado standards and assessments will add significant unnecessary cost and delay implementation of the high standards we need for our students. The Colorado Academic Standards were developed by Coloradans, as would any subsequent new academic standards, so the work would be duplicative.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Education Committee (4/21)

- [HB15-1221 Employee Leave Attend Child's Academic Activities](#)
Sponsored by Rep. John Buckner (D-Aurora) and Sen. Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood) (Opposed 2/23)

Summary: The "Parental Involvement in K-12 Education Act," currently in effect requires an employer that employs at least 50 employees to provide its employees up to six hours per month, and up to 18 hours per academic year, of leave from work to attend a child's academic activities. This bill expands the types of eligible academic activities and includes preschool children in addition to kindergarten through 12th grade. The act is scheduled to sunset Sept. 15; this bill extends the act indefinitely.

The Chamber opposes HB15 – 1221. While the Chamber strongly supports parental involvement in education, businesses should be allowed to determine for themselves a personnel policy that works best for their employees and the needs of their business.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (3/26)

- [HB15-1258 FMLI Insurance Program Wage Replacement](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Faith Winter (D- Westminster) and Sen. Jessie Ulibarri (D- Commerce City) (Oppose 3/9)

Summary: The bill creates the family and medical leave insurance (FMLI) program in the newly created Division of Family and Medical Leave Insurance in the Department of Labor and Employment. The division would provide partial wage replacement benefits to eligible individuals who take leave from work to care for a new child or a family member with a serious health condition or who are unable to work due to their own serious health condition. Prior to implementing the program, the department is to conduct an actuarial analysis to determine the appropriate level of premiums and solvency surcharges to ensure the soundness of the program. The bill expands employer coverage to employers with one or more employee as compared to the 50 employee threshold under the FMLA.

The Chamber opposes HB15 – 1258 because if the bill passed it would significantly expand the Federal FMLA eligibility and removes the 50 employee limit. As such it would be costly and burdensome for all employers to



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

implement an additional employee payroll deduction, as well as impose significant administrative and operational costs for all employers.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (4/30)

- [**HB15-1264 Homeless Persons' Bill Of Rights**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Joe Salazar (D-Thornton) and Sen. John Kefalas (D-Fort Collins) (Oppose 3/23)

Summary: The bill creates the "Colorado Right to Rest Act," which establishes basic rights for persons experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, the right to move freely and rest in public spaces, the right to privacy on their property and the right to sue for damages if they are discriminated against.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1264. This bill would establish a set of rights based on housing status, which cannot be determined by a business. This bill also duplicates rights already afforded to all people, regardless of housing status, in the U.S. Constitution.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (4/28)

- [**HB15-1300 Local Government Minimum Wage**](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City) and Sen. Michael Merrifield (D-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 3/23)

Summary: The bill would allow municipalities, counties and other local jurisdictions to establish a local minimum wage. Currently, minimum wage is set statewide as determined by the Colorado Constitution.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1300 because conflicts with the Constitution, it is bad for business and it isn't fair to workers. Since 2006, minimum wage has been included in Colorado's Constitution, which requires increases be determined by inflation. Because the Constitution drives increases that are automatic and unpredictable, significant changes to the minimum wage base could be extremely hard to manage. Because both the base and increases are cemented in our Constitution, HB1300 conflicts with the Constitution and could be unlawful. Furthermore, we believe minimum wage is of statewide concern because in Colorado many businesses have operations that span multiple cities and counties. This bill would create wage variability for those businesses and ultimately result in a less predictable business environment, which makes Colorado less attractive to business owners. Our workforce often lives in one community and works in another; to create wage disparities based on business location for people who live in communities with similar cost of living and have similar professional duties isn't fair either.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (4/16)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

- [HB15-1330 Social Cost of Carbon in Certain Fiscal Notes](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Mike Foote (D-Lafayette) (Oppose 4/6)

Summary: The bill requires development of the “social cost of carbon” to be included in the fiscal note for an electricity generation bill or concurrent resolution that is expected to cause a significant increase or decrease in the generation of electricity from any source. The bill defines the “social cost of carbon” as consisting of:

- an estimate of the increase or decrease in carbon emissions that results from the measure; and
- a monetization of the change in carbon emissions, which may be expressed with a range.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1330 because the measurement of the “social cost of carbon” is ambiguous and subjective. Furthermore, it singles out specific industries for extraordinary state intervention —in this case specific modification to the development of fiscal notes for bills affecting electric generation. This bill also creates a significant change to the process by which we develop fiscal notes.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Joint Legislative Council (4/27)

- [HB15-1331 Colorado Overtime Fairness For Employees Act](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Max Tyler (D-Lakewood) and Sen. Michael Merrifield (D-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 4/13)

Summary: The bill limits the discretion of the director of the division of labor in creating an exemption to Colorado's regulatory overtime requirements for employees that are administrative, executive, supervisor or professional. The bill sets a minimum salary requirement for the director of the division of labor to apply the exemption equaling three times the Colorado minimum wage. Because the Colorado state minimum wage automatically adjusts for inflation under the Colorado Constitution, by linking the minimum salary for the exemption to apply to minimum wage, that salary will also adjust with inflation.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1331 because the bill interferes with employer discretion in managing personnel matters. Additionally, the bill deals with a complex issue and was introduced without stakeholder engagement.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (5/7)

- [HB15-1342 Personnel File Right of Inspection](#)

Sponsored by Rep. Joe Salazar (D-Thornton) (Oppose 4/13)

Summary: The bill allows an employee or former employee to inspect or request copies of his or her personnel file within 30 days of a written request. The bill authorizes an employee or former employee to provide written rebuttal information to the employer, requires information to be added to the employee's personnel file and for the rebuttal information to accompany any transmittal or disclosure from the file made to a third party. The bill provides remedies to an employee or former employee if an employer or former employer fails to comply with the requirements of the bill.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1342. While the Chamber supports transparency, we believe this bill limits those documents that you can add to an employee's personnel file, which ultimately interferes with an employer's discretion in managing personnel matters.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Outcome: Deemed Lost (5/7)

- [HB15-1346 Taxation of Corporate Income Sheltered in Tax Haven](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Mike Foote (D-Lafayette) and Sen. Matt Jones (D-Louisville) (Oppose 4/20)

Summary: This bill would subject C corporations to taxation of their foreign-source income if the affiliate is incorporated in a “tax haven” overseas with low income tax rates. Companies would be required to disclose income that was reported to each tax haven for the year and their liability to the tax haven. Additionally, the bill requires the secretary of state to submit a ballot question, to be treated as a proposition, at the statewide election in November 2015 on whether the state may retain the additional tax revenue.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1346 because it makes a significant change to long standing Colorado tax policy and penalizes companies that do business or have affiliates that do business in certain foreign countries. This change will make Colorado less attractive to businesses operating here already or considering relocating to Colorado.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (5/1)

- [HB15 – 1348 Urban Redevelopment Fairness Act](#)
Sponsored by Rep. Hulinghorst, Rep. Lawrence and Sen. Heath, Sen. Balmer (Oppose 4/13)

Summary: This bill makes a number of changes to the urban renewal authority (URA) law. The bill requires one representative from the affected counties, one representative from affected special districts and one representative from affected school districts be included on the URA board of the municipal governing body. Each board of county commissioners and each public body are required to meet and attempt to negotiate an agreement governing the types and limits of tax revenues of each taxing entity to be allocated to the urban renewal plan.

In the absence of an agreement between the municipality and any taxing entity, the bill prohibits the percentage of property tax increment revenues of any public body that may be allocated to the URA from exceeding the percentage of municipal sales tax increment revenues allocated to the URA under the provisions of the urban renewal plan.

The Chamber opposes HB15-1348. While we support the inclusion of affected taxing jurisdictions to the governing board, we oppose the establishment of a fixed allocation between property and sales tax increments in statute, as this will have a chilling effect on the negotiations among the affected tax entities and the prospect for negotiating future tax increment financing arrangements.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Outcome: Signed by Governor (5/29)

- **[HCR15-1001 Colorado Constitution Minimum Wage](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Jovan Melton (D-Aurora) and Rep. Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City) (Oppose 3/23)

Summary: This resolution would ask voters in the November 2016 general election to amend the Colorado Constitution, raising the state minimum wage, currently \$8.23 per hour, incrementally to \$12.50 per hour by 2020 after which it would be annually adjusted for inflation.

The Chamber opposes HCR15-1001 because it continues to hold prescriptive minimum wage levels in our Constitution, making it difficult to respond to market changes.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (3/31)

- **[SB15-003 Educator Evaluations Fifty Percent Academic Growth](#)**

Sponsored by Sen. Michael Merrifield (D-Colorado Springs) (Oppose 1/12)

Summary: [Senate Bill 10-191](#), which addresses educator effectiveness, included a requirement that at least 50 percent of a teacher's or principal's performance evaluation be determined by the academic growth of the teacher's students or the students in the principal's school. This bill eliminates that requirement.

The Chamber opposes this bill because it would remove a key provision of SB10-191, which created an evaluation system to develop greater accountability for educators and principals. The Chamber has long supported education as one of the pillars for a healthy and thriving economy. We also support a high-performing education system and quality instruction. Because of that, Chamber continues to be supportive of SB10-191 in its entirety.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Education Committee (4/16)

- **[SB15-018 Concerning the Repeal of the Late Vehicle Registration Fee](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Patrick Neville (R – Castle Rock) and Sen. Tim Neville (R – Littleton) (Oppose 1/26)

Summary: Under current law, if the owner of a motor vehicle fails to register the vehicle when required, the owner must, upon registering the vehicle and subject to a \$100 cap, pay a late fee of \$25 for each month or portion of a month for which the registration was late. The bill repeals the late fee.

The Chamber opposes SB15-018 because it strips funding for transportation that was allocated by the passage of FASTER legislation. The Chamber supported the original FASTER legislation (SB09 – 108), which generates about \$200 million every year for critical state transportation projects across CO, with additional revenue generated from several vehicle registration fees and fines established or increased by FASTER. SB15 – 018 repeals the late fees, which ultimately will erode revenue generated by FASTER and reduce the revenue available for key highway and bridge projects identified by the FASTER legislation.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (3/19)

- [**SB15-034 Reduce Finance Charges Limit for Credit Cards**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Jessie Ulibarri (D-Commerce City) and Rep. Steve Lebsack (D-Thornton) (Oppose 1/20)

Summary: This bill limits the finance charge allowed on a credit card issued by a Colorado lender to 12.5 percent in the Colorado Uniform Consumer Credit Code (UCCC).

The Chamber opposes SB15-034 because it arbitrarily puts an interest rate in statute, governs a regulation currently effectively managed at the federal level and puts the local lenders at a disadvantage.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Business Committee (1/27)

- [**SB15-059 Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Linda Newell (D-Aurora) (Oppose 1/20)

Summary: The bill clarifies, restricts and adds limits to the types of equipment law enforcement can use. The bill also creates parameters for individual, recreational, civil and industrial use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

The Chamber opposes SB15-059 due to industry concerns that privacy rights are already addressed through existing statutes. Additionally, we are concerned that the bill is not aligned with existing Federal Aviation Administration regulations and puts unrealistic restrictions on potential law enforcement use.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Judiciary Committee (2/26)

- [**SB15-123 Patient Choose Pharmacy To Fill Prescriptions**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Larry Crowder (R-Alamosa) and Rep. Dianne Primavera (D-Broomfield) (Oppose 2/2)

Summary: Pharmacy benefit management firms (PBM) that administer prescription drug benefits and carriers may currently require a person who is eligible for prescription drug benefits to fill a prescription through either a mail-order pharmacy or another pharmacy specifically designated by the PBM or carrier. This bill would allow a covered person to fill the prescription at a pharmacy of his or her choice if the PBM or carrier is properly notified.

The Chamber opposes SB15-123 because prescription drugs are a large health care cost driver and the Chamber supports contracts and prescription networks to control the rate of growth of health care costs.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Outcome: Deemed Lost (2/20)

- [**SB15-172 High-performance Transportation Enterprise Accountability**](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Matt Jones (D-Louisville) and Rep. Mike Foote (D-Lafayette) (*Oppose 2/9*)

Summary: This bill amends current statutes authorizing public private partnerships (P3s) for transportation projects to include transparency and public engagement practices that CDOT has already adopted and imposes restrictions on contracting for P3s. A similar bill was run in 2014, SB14 – 197, which the Chamber also opposed and was ultimately vetoed by the governor.

The Chamber opposes SB15 – 172 because it goes beyond transparency and instead creates a burdensome environment in which Colorado becomes unattractive to partners and investors of public-private partnerships (P3s). This will make Colorado less competitive, which translates into fewer bids received or higher bids, making it challenging to use innovative funding solutions to finance our much-needed infrastructure projects.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate Transportation Committee (2/20)

- [**SB15-223 Remove Penalty When Parent Ops Child Out of Test**](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Chris Holbert (R-Parker) and Rep. Steve Lebsack (D-Thornton) (*Oppose 3/30*)

Summary: The bill requires a school district, a board of cooperative services that operates a school, or a charter school to allow a parent to excuse his or her child from participating in a standardized assessment that is required by the state or by the local education provider. Each local education provider must adopt a written policy that a parent may follow to excuse his or her student from taking the standardized assessment. The department of education and the local education provider cannot penalize the student, the student's teacher and principal, or the public school that the student attends, and the department cannot penalize the local education provider that enrolls the student, if the parent excuses the student from taking the standardized assessment.

The Chamber opposes SB15 – 223. While we agree that time spent testing needs to be reduced, we can't make that change at the cost of teacher, student and school accountability. We have to hold on to the reforms we've made to date that have made us a national leader in accountability. In order to prepare our students to succeed in the economy of today and tomorrow, we must retain high **standards**; assessments that allow us to **compare** students' progress locally, nationally and internationally; and the ability for local school districts to **manage their own curriculum**. With strong statewide assessments comes data that can inform school choices for parents and students; the opportunity to identify weaknesses and intervene when a student needs **remediation**, ultimately saving parents, students and schools money; enhanced **transparency** through diverse local input from educators, parents and business and community leaders on standards and assessments; and understanding the **outcomes** of our education system. We believe that if we follow these principles, our children will be prepared to lead our workforce and economy in the future.

SB223 is contrary to these principles.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Education Committee (5/1)

- [**SB15-233 Revising Co Ed Accountability Measures**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Vicki Marble (R-Littleton) and Rep. Justin Everett (R-Littleton) (Oppose 3/30)

Summary: This bill repeals the current statewide Colorado Academic Standards for English language arts and math, science and social studies and requires the State board to develop new academic standards in these subjects as recommended by a new academic steering committee created in this bill. The bill reduces statewide testing to the federal minimums. The bill would prohibit the state board from entering into any consortium for developing standardized tests. Another provision in this bill would reduce the percentage of teacher evaluation based on student growth from 50 percent to 15 percent.

The Chamber opposes SB15 – 233. While we agree that time spent testing needs to be reduced, we can't make that change at the cost of teacher, student and school accountability. We have to hold on to the reforms we've made to date that have made us a national leader in accountability. In order to prepare our students to succeed in the economy of today and tomorrow, we must retain high **standards**; assessments that allow us to **compare** students' progress locally, nationally and internationally; and the ability for local school districts to **manage their own curriculum**. With strong statewide assessments comes data that can inform school choices for parents and students; the opportunity to identify weaknesses and intervene when a student needs **remediation**, ultimately saving parents, students and schools money; enhanced **transparency** through diverse local input from educators, parents and business and community leaders on standards and assessments; and understanding the **outcomes** of our education system. We believe that if we follow these principles, our children will be prepared to lead our workforce and economy in the future.

SB233 is contrary to these principles.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Legislative Council (4/27)

- [**SB15-257 Education Standards and Assessments and Flexibility Pilot Program**](#)

Sponsored by Sen. Owen Hill (R-Colorado Springs) and Rep. Jon Becker (R-Fort Morgan) (Oppose 4/6)

Summary: The bill repeals the existing statute that governs state assessments and requires the state board to review and revise the standards on or before July 1, 2016, and then every six years. It restricts statewide testing to English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, testing annually in grades three through eight and once in grades 10 through 12. For science, testing annually in one elementary school grade, one middle school grade and one high school grade. The bill continues to require students enrolled in 11th grade to take the curriculum-based achievement exam adopted by the state board.

The bill also allows a local districts to design and implement a pilot alternative accountability and assessment system, so long as the pilot system complies with federal requirements. If the pilot system meets federal requirements, the state board must waive any conflicting state statutory or regulatory requirements for the participating local education providers.



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Under current law, each school district must ensure that at least 50 percent of the performance evaluation of teachers is based on student growth. For the 2014-15 school year, a school district may decide what percentage, if any, to give to student academic growth in deciding a teacher's effectiveness rating. The bill extends this ability to decide the percentage of performance evaluations tied to student academic growth for three additional school years.

The Chamber opposes SB15-257. While we agree that time spent testing needs to be reduced, we can't make that change at the cost of teacher, student and school accountability as this bill does. We have to hold on to the reforms we've made to date that have made us a national leader in accountability. In order to prepare our students to succeed in the economy of today and tomorrow, we must retain high standards; assessments that allow us to compare students' progress locally, nationally and internationally; and the ability for local school districts to manage their own curriculum. With strong statewide assessments comes data that can inform school choices for parents and students; the opportunity to identify weaknesses and intervene when a student needs remediation, ultimately saving parents, students and schools money; enhanced transparency through diverse local input from educators, parents and business and community leaders on standards and assessments; and understanding the outcomes of our education system. We believe that if we follow these principles, our children will be prepared to lead our workforce and economy in the future.

SB257 is contrary to these principles and conflicts with the recommendations of the 1202 Task Force.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (5/7)

- [SB15-269 Independent Contractor Unemployment Insurance](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Ellen Roberts (R-Durango) (Oppose 4/20)

Summary: Currently, the Colorado Employment Security Act (unemployment insurance) lists factors to be considered in determining whether an individual is an employee or an independent contractor. The bill establishes a bright-line test to make this determination, including:

- Repealing the test of whether the individual is customarily engaged in an independent trade;
- Setting a numerical standard of six factors out of 11 to show an independent contractor relationship;
- Adding a factor of whether the individual has executed a contract that says the individual is an independent contractor;
- Adding a factor of whether the individual is required to perform the services at a place of business;
- Clarifying the relationship between the factors and compliance with state or federal law; and
- Repealing the rebuttable presumption that an independent contractor relationship exists if the parties have executed a contract with certain disclosures.

The Chamber opposes SB15-269. While we are open to a conversation clarifying the definition on when an individual is an employee versus an independent contractor, we believe we don't have the stakeholder engagement needed or the time (given the stage of session this is being introduced) to understand the full implications of these changes due to their complexity.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House Local Government Committee (5/5)

- [SB15-272 Authorize New Transportation Revenue Anticipation Notes](#)



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

Sponsored by Sen. Randy Baumgardner (R-Cowdrey) and Rep. Brian DelGrosso (R-Loveland) (Oppose 4/27)

Summary: The bill is a referred measure and only takes effect if the voters of the state approve it at the 2015 statewide election. Subject to that voter approval, the bill authorizes the executive director of the Department of Transportation to issue additional transportation revenue anticipation notes (TRANS) in a maximum principal amount of \$3.5 billion and with a maximum repayment cost of \$5.5 billion.

Under current law, the state treasurer must transfer a percentage of the total general fund revenues to the capital construction fund and the highway users' tax fund once a trigger based on economic growth occurs (required transfers). The required transfers will be made for each state fiscal year in a five-year period, but the amount of the transfers for a state fiscal year may be reduced or eliminated if the state has to refund excess state revenues under TABOR (the Taxpayers Bill of Rights). In general, if the refund is greater than 1.5 percent but less than 3 percent of the total general fund revenues, then the required transfers are halved, and if it is greater than 3 percent, then the required transfers are eliminated altogether.

For each state fiscal year that the required transfers are reduced or eliminated, the bill adds on another year of transfers to the capital construction fund and the highway users tax fund. Therefore, there will be five fiscal years with the full statutory transfers to the funds, regardless of the number of fiscal years that it takes to do so.

Lastly, the bill specifies that if the voters of the state authorize the issuance of additional TRANS, money transferred to the state highway fund pursuant to statutory provisions enacted as part of Senate Bill 09-228 may be used for general highway operations and maintenance.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce opposes SB15-272. Although we support finding a long-term solution to addressing the needs of our roads and bridges, this bill isn't meaningful unless we pair it with significant revenue. We feel there is a funding solution that is better than relying on declining gas tax, as this bill does. If the legislature moves the Hospital Provider Fee to an enterprise fund, as [we've urged](#), we could unlock addition \$205 million in transportation funding from the general fund, allowing more opportunity for investment in infrastructure that is critical to our economic success.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in House State Affairs Committee (5/4)

- **[SB15-275 Protections Information Provided General Assembly](#)**

Sponsored by Rep. Dickey Lee Hullinghorst (D-Gunbarrel), Rep. Dave Young (D-Grreley) and Sen. Kent Lambert (R-Colorado Springs), Sen. Morgan Carroll (D-Aurora) (Oppose 4/27)

Summary: The bill recognizes that members of the general assembly may need to receive confidential information during the course of their official duties in making decisions and voting on legislation with respect to all areas of state government. The bill encourages members of the general assembly to use this confidential information when it is necessary for carrying out official duties. Because of the general assembly's oversight over the health care system in Colorado, the bill specifically directs the governor and state agencies to consider the general assembly and its members a health oversight agency under federal law when any member of the general assembly receives individually identifiable health information. The bill requires members of the general assembly that receive confidential information, including



Policy Positions- 2015 Legislative Session

Updated July 28, 2015

individually identifiable health information, to keep the information confidential and only use it as necessary for the consideration of official actions of the general assembly.

The bill changes the Colorado whistleblower protection law to protect state employees from retaliatory disciplinary action when they give company confidential information to members of the general assembly. The bill specifies that if a state employee gives confidential information to a member of the general assembly, the member of the general assembly shall keep that information confidential and not make it available for public inspection.

The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce opposes SB15-275 because this bill would allow members of the general assembly access to confidential and individually identifiable health information and erodes the protection of sensitive and confidential information of individuals, which is currently protected in statute and federal law. Access to such information is not necessary for the reasonable oversight of the Colorado Health Exchange.

Outcome: Deemed Lost (5/1)

- [SCR15-003 Colorado Constitution Minimum Wage](#)
Sponsored by Sen. Michael Merrifield (D-Colorado Springs) (*Oppose 4/20*)

Summary: This resolution would ask voters in the November 2016 general election to amend the Colorado Constitution, raising the state minimum wage, currently \$8.23 per hour, incrementally to \$12.50 per hour by 2020, after which it would be annually adjusted for inflation.

The Chamber opposes SCR15-003 because it would continue to place prescriptive minimum wage levels in our constitution, making it difficult to respond to market changes.

Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely in Senate State Affairs Committee (4/28)