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FEBRUARY 2015



POLICY PERSPECTIVES

LOCAL NEWS



- The [draft master plan](#) for the National Western Center was issued at the end of 2014. The reimagined and reconstructed National Western Center will be a year-round event, entertainment and education destination for residents and tourists. An application for state-based Regional Tourism Act (RTA) financing will be submitted in February with a decision at the end of 2015. In addition, this year's National Western Stock Show set a new single day attendance record and had the [2nd best overall attendance](#) in its 109-year history.
- [Home sharing](#), as part of the broader sharing economy, continues to garner attention from city leaders and the community. VISIT DENVER, with CHLA and our partners, is closely monitoring this policy development and advocating for the collection of lodger's tax and visitor safety measures. A draft ordinance is under development in Denver and expected to soon be released.
- The Denver and Colorado Tourism Hall of Fame will [induct four new members](#) and honor tourism stars at the [16th annual dinner on March 18th](#). The event benefits the VISIT DENVER Foundation which supports undergraduate students pursuing degrees in the hospitality and tourism industry as well as [Denver's Road Home](#), the city's homeless initiative.
- Denver municipal elections will be held on May 5, 2015. The Mayor, Auditor and Clerk & Recorder will be elected and six of the 13 City Council seats are open (no incumbent). VISIT DENVER is reaching out to [potential candidates](#) to inform them about the economic benefits of tourism. As of the end of January, 54 candidates have filed.

STATE NEWS



- In December, city and state leaders celebrated the [inaugural non stop flight](#) from Denver

International Airport to Panama City, Panama. The newest direct, international flight connects Denver and Colorado to more than 40 destinations in Central and South America and is estimated to generate \$70 million annually from tourism and trade impacts.

- To celebrate National Travel and Tourism Week and kick off the summer tourism season in Colorado, the [Colorado Tourism Office](#) (CTO) is hosting the [2015 Discover Colorado Rally](#) on Wednesday, May 6, on the west steps of the State Capitol. Please join the CTO team, elected officials and industry leaders at this annual event that highlights travel's significant contributions to the Colorado and national economy.
- Governor Hickenlooper's FY15-16 [Department Budget Requests](#) seeks an additional \$3M for the Colorado Tourism Office, bringing total state tourism funding to \$20M. As the next budget is being compiled, there is also the possibility that increasing state revenues will trigger [TABOR refunds](#).

FEDERAL NEWS



- Richard Scharf, CEO & President, and Carrie Atiyeh, Director, Government & Community Affairs, will be participating in the U.S. Travel Association's [Destination Capitol Hill](#) legislative fly-in to Washington, D.C. in March. The event brings travel leaders from across the country to the nation's capitol to educate policymakers about the power of travel.
- VISIT DENVER joined more than [300 industry partners](#) to call on Congress to reauthorize Brand USA, the non-profit [public-private partnership](#) dedicated to attracting more international visitors to the U.S. The program was [successfully reauthorized](#) through 2020 as part of the Congressional omnibus package passed in December.
- U.S. Travel Association released a new and [expanded Interactive Travel Analytics website](#). This interactive tool for travel professionals enables users to easily visualize and analyze domestic and international U.S. travel statistics at the national, state, county and Congressional district levels.
- According to PriceWaterhouseCoopers, United States [hotel room occupancy will reach a 30-year high](#) in 2015. Occupancy is expected to be 64.9% nationally, revenue per available room (RevPAR) is projected to rise by 7.4%, and average daily rate (ADR) is forecast to increase by 6.2%.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVES



- The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) has filed a motion for preliminary injunction in the U.S. District Court to stop the City of Los Angeles from implementing the hotel-only wage ordinance before the Court rules on our initial complaint. This is yet another, critical step in delaying and ultimately stopping the discriminatory and [short-sighted wage ordinance](#) passed by the Los Angeles City Council and signed by Mayor Garcetti in October of last year. [Click here](#) for more information on AH&LA's efforts to overturn the Los Angeles minimum wage ordinance.

- CHLA is [currently tracking 25 bills](#) of interest/concern to the hotel and lodging industry. In addition, CHLA is working with broad-based coalitions on two proactive bills that will be introduced in the coming weeks. Representative Diane Mitsch-Bush will introduce a bill concerning winter weather travel on I-70 and Representative Angela Williams will introduce a bill to modify the current HOA (Homeowners Association) Manager Licensure Act.
- The Metro Denver Hotel Association (MDHA) is in the process of dissolving as a formal organization and has become a Council of CHLA. The Metro Denver Lodging Council (MDLC) will continue to retain CRL Associates as our local lobbyists and we'll continue to host six networking/policy luncheons each year.

Should you have questions or need further information on anything that CHLA is working on, please don't hesitate to contact Amie Mayhew, President & CEO, at 303-297-8335 or amayhew@chla.com.



Below is a list of some of the principal bills that the Colorado Restaurant Association (CRA) is currently tracking.

POWDERED ALCOHOL

House Bill 1031 by Rep Windholz (R-Commerce City) would make the purchase, sale, transfer, possession and manufacturing of powdered alcohol in Colorado a class 2 misdemeanor until the federal government (Alcohol Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau) approves the sale of powdered alcohol. If the federal government approves powdered alcohol the State of Colorado would have to develop rules and regulations to regulate it before it could be sold or manufactured in Colorado. The Colorado Restaurant Association supports this legislation because of the potential liability risks that restaurants face if powdered alcohol were legal.

BALLOT INITIATIVE REFORM

House Bill 1057 by Rep Court (D-Denver) and Rep DelGrosso (R-Loveland) would require the designated representatives of the ballot initiative proponents to appear at all review and comment meetings. If either designated representative fails to appear at the review and comment meeting, the initiative is considered withdrawn. The bill would also require a fiscal impact statement, prepared by legislative council for the general assembly, to be on every signature collection page.

COTTAGE FOODS

Senate Bill 85 by Sen Humenik (R-Thornton) would allow cottage food producers to sell their product to "small businesses" which the bill defines as businesses with less than 100 employees. The bill would also increase the amount of each product a cottage food producer could sell from \$5,000 per product to \$20,000 per product. The Colorado Restaurant Association opposes this legislation because of the potential liability risks that restaurants face if contaminated products are sold to restaurants and because of general public safety issues. Cottage Foods producers are not subject to state or federal licensure or inspection.

House Bill 1102 by Rep Hamner (D-Dillon) would expand what producers of cottage foods are allowed to make to include fruit empanadas, tortillas, and pickled vegetables that have an equilibrium pH value of 4.6 or lower. The bill would also require a producer to display a sign at the point of sale identifying the products were made in a home kitchen and potential allergens. CRA opposes this legislation for similar reasons to the above.

MINIMUM WAGE

Like CHLA – we too are closely watching the minimum wage issue across the country. We anticipate legislation to be introduced this year in Colorado.

LEGISLATION STILL TO BE INTRODUCED

There are a number of liquor-related bills that we expect to be introduced this year that will impact the industry. For a complete list of all of the bills that we are monitoring, click [here](#).

Please contact Nick Hoover, Government Affairs Coordinator or Sonia Riggs, President & CEO, at 303-830-2972, should you have questions or need further information on anything that CRA is working on.

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