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**To:** Scott Downes

**Subject:** CCLP's Policy Matters

December 2007

# CCLP's Policy Matters

Colorado Center on Law and Policy/Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute

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## Year End Giving

- As the holidays approach and the legislative session nears, please consider making a donation to support all the important work being done at CCLP. Thank you for your continued support.

### Health Care Reform Commission Approves Recommendations

*Group's work strives to reduce number of uninsured, lower costs*

On November 15, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Reform, including CCLP Health Care Program Director, Elisabeth Arenales, approved final recommendations for comprehensive health care reform. The recommendations, which will be compiled into a final report and submitted to the legislature in January, closely follow the "fifth proposal" created by the 27-member commission, but is still distinct.

"These recommendations are a comprehensive, integrated whole," said Commission Chair Bill Lindsay. "We are not simply offering a laundry list of suggestions - the recommendations hang together and cascade from each other."

The recommendations include individual mandates requiring all Coloradans to have health insurance, expanding public health programs aimed at low-income families, and several other measures to reduce the number of uninsured and decrease health care costs.

The Denver Post covered the recommendations [here](#).

The Rocky Mountain News writes about the draft report [here](#).

**Click here for more details about the commission and its work.**

## Budget Works 2008

- Friday, January 4th, at the Colorado History Museum from 8:00am to 12:00pm.
- [Click here to register.](#)

**Join our mailing list!**

### **COFPI, Coalition Go to Work on EITC**

*Groups push for permanent state Earned Income Tax Credit*

Nearly forty advocacy groups, nonprofits, and other organizations, including COFPI, are joining together to urge legislators to restore the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to 10% of the federal level and make it a permanent part of Colorado tax law.

Currently, Colorado has a 10 percent EITC but it is only available in years when there is a TABOR surplus. In other words, it is not a permanent part of our state tax laws. There has not been a TABOR surplus available to fund the state EITC since tax year 2001.

The EITC is a proven tool to help lift people out of poverty. About 250,000 working families in Colorado receive the federal EITC which they use to pay for important things like rent, health care bills, meals, or car repairs. The federal EITC lifts more than four million people-about half of whom are children-out of poverty.

Here in Colorado, past studies have shown that the combined federal and state EITCs lifted 12% of TANF recipients out of poverty. Restoring the state EITC could mean an additional \$450 for working families, as well as encouraging work and helping families move toward self-sufficiency. A permanent state EITC would also empower families to stay off public assistance and help ease the "cliff effect" that can occur when moving off public benefits.

It's time to give credit where credit is due: to Colorado's working families.

For more information or to find out how you can help support the fight for a permanent EITC, please contact: Adela Flores-Brennan at [afbrennan@cclponline.org](mailto:afbrennan@cclponline.org).

### **CCLP Leads Charge Against Restricting Medical Access**

*Advocates oppose pending hospital sale*

CCLP is leading a coalition of advocacy groups and individuals objecting to the pending sale of two Denver-area hospitals to the Catholic health care group, Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health Systems. The sale would significantly divert charitable assets away from health care in the community and severely limit access to critical medical procedures in Jefferson and Boulder Counties, specifically related to reproductive and end-of-life issues.

The coalition, led by CCLP Special Counsel Ed Kahn, submitted a letter to the Attorney General's office on December 3 outlining the

objections.

Rocky Mountain News coverage on the issue can be seen [here](#) and [here](#).

The full text of the letter can be viewed [here](#).

### **Federal Budget Update**

*Congress pushes toward end of year on budget, SCHIP, Farm Bill, and AMT*

Congress is still in session and as the holidays and end of the congressional calendar rapidly approach, things are literally changing by the minute. Check the link below to find out what is happening on issues of importance to CCLP and its partners and coalition members, as of Friday morning, December 14, 2007.

[Federal Budget Update](#)

## **Promotions**

### **Budget Works 2008**

Budget Works 2008 will be held on Friday, January 4, 2008 at the Colorado History Museum from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Presentations and discussion will include a look at Colorado's fiscal landscape, a look at what the fiscal future holds after Referendum C, and what policymakers can do to strengthen and improve state fiscal policy.

[Click here to register or find out more information.](#)

### Grant Announcements

CCLP received word from the Rose Community Foundation this month that we were awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Rose Community Foundation to support its Health Care Program.

The Women's Foundation of Colorado also recently awarded CCLP a two-year, \$100,000 grant to support its Self-Sufficiency Program.

The entire CCLP team is deeply appreciative and thanks of these tremendous organizations for their continued support!

### Staff Announcements

As the New Year is right around the corner, CCLP and COFPI welcome some new members to our team.

Tracey Stewart has joined CCLP as the Self- Sufficiency Project Coordinator, and Marty Esquibel recently came aboard as COFPI's new Fiscal Analyst. Also, Adela Flores-Brennan, who has previously served as the Federal Budget Advocate and other roles, will become the new Health Care Attorney at CCLP next month.

CCLP welcomes and congratulates all three staffers on their new positions.

### Annual Report

CCLP's 2006 Annual Report is now available online at [www.cclponline.org](http://www.cclponline.org). Check out the terrific work CCLP and COFPI are doing on health care, self-sufficiency, fiscal policy, and more. Also included are reflections from Board President, Jean Dubofsky, and Executive Director, Maureen Farrell-Stevenson, as well as a special tribute to Ed Kahn.

Colorado Center on Law and Policy

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