



COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

Newsletter

Vol. 46, No. 5, February 28, 2020

Introducing the Colorado Health Insurance Option

By Colorado Lt. Gov. Dianne Primavera

As policymakers, we should be proud of the progress we have made over the past decade to expand access to health care. By expanding Medicaid and setting up a health exchange – also known as the individual market – we have been able to cut Colorado’s uninsured rate from 16% to 6.5%. But Coloradans still struggle to afford care. One in five Coloradans forgo needed health care due to cost, and one in three are unable to afford their prescription drugs. As a four-time cancer survivor, I was lucky to beat cancer without going broke in the process. But it should not come down to luck. Everyone should be able to afford the care they need. That is why our administration is laser-focused on reducing costs in the health care system.

Through our reinsurance program, which has cut premiums on the individual market by an average of 20%, ending network surprise billing, increasing hospital transparency, and tackling the high cost of prescription drugs,

we have already made significant progress. But health care costs will not continue to go down on their own. We need to keep working at it.

That is why we are working with the legislature to develop a Colorado Health Insurance Option to help reduce costs even more. This proposal will offer a more affordable plan by reducing insurance company administrative costs, passing

pharmacy rebates on to consumers through premium savings, and bringing some sanity to out-of-control prices at mega hospital systems while protecting independent, rural, and critical access hospitals.

We estimate that this proposal – which will be offered on the state’s individual market and eventually also on the small-group market – will save Coloradans an estimated 7%–19% on their premiums.



Lt. Gov. Dianne Primavera (second from left) speaks at the CML Executive Board meeting. With Secretary/Treasurer Kathi Meyer, President Liz Hensley and Vice President Bob Widner.

Department of Revenue developing Sales and Use Tax Software system

By Laurel A. Witt, CML associate counsel

In 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the seminal case *South Dakota v. Wayfair*. The case held that that states may charge tax on purchases made from out-of-state sellers, even if the seller does not have a physical presence in the taxing state, as long as the taxing system is not over-burdensome on the sellers. In 2019, the Colorado State Legislature responded to this decision by passing SB 19-006, a bill that provided for the development of a Sales and Use Tax Software (SUTS) system which is a single web portal for the collection and remittance of sales and use tax. This bill required the SUTS be

available on a voluntary basis for home rule municipalities.

The Colorado Department of Revenue (DOR) along with the Governor’s Office of Information Technology reached out to statutory and state-administered municipalities, self-collecting home rule municipalities, special districts, and businesses to form a consortium to jointly develop a software system to provide a web portal interface that provides for registration, remittance and payment of sales tax for participating jurisdictions. In addition, the SUTS system will also provide for an address location service and a taxability matrix.

Most recently, DOR selected two vendors to work with on creating the software system and taxability matrix: MUNIRevs and TTR. These entities will be contacting your municipality in the next few months to gather and confirm required data to incorporate your jurisdiction into the SUTS system and taxability matrix. DOR will also be reaching out to home rule municipalities to discuss how they can participate. DOR is working to get the SUTS launched this summer. CML continues to work on tax issues on behalf of its member municipalities. If issues arise during this process, contact Laurel Witt, associate counsel, at lwitt@cml.org.

Save the date

Colorado Municipal League Annual Conference

The 98th CML Annual Conference is **June 23–26** in Westminster. Visit cml.org/conference for more information or to register.

Effective Governance workshops

CML and CIRSA are bringing Effective Governance workshops to Coloradans across Colorado in late **April** through early **May**. Locations include Glenwood Springs, Lamar, Montrose, Brush, and the CML office. Registration and more information will be coming soon!

Spring Outreach meetings

CML's annual Spring Outreach meetings will take place in mid-to-late May. These meetings are opportunities for attendees to learn about CML's legislative priorities on issues. Stay tuned for more information.

Cities and the Census: A call to action

Clarence Anthony, CEO and executive director of the National League of Cities. Content originally appeared on CitiesSpeak.org. Reprinted here with permission of the National League of Cities.

"I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts."

– Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in *Sherlock Holmes*
Data is objective. Data is nonpartisan. Data can prevent us from acting insensibly. When we look at data through the frame of fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, we can see why data should be the basis of shared theories, decision-making, and truth.

It is especially appropriate to think about data from this vantage point as we near Census Day 2020. As required by the U.S. Constitution, residents from coast to coast will partake in the once-a-decade collection of information about people in our communities. It is one of the most important expressions of our democracy and its

importance to the future of cities and towns cannot be understated.

First and foremost, census figures determine political representation — electoral lines for all levels of government, allocation of seats for the U.S. House of Representatives, and the number of Electoral College votes that each state receives. In a presidential election year, this point is particularly poignant.

For local leaders, even more consequential is that census data determines how more than \$1.5 trillion of federal funding is allocated across state and local governments. There are 316 federal programs that rely on census-derived figures, and without accurate data, local governments and the residents they serve can miss out on millions of dollars in federal support — from low-income housing loans and rural hospital grants to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits and Community Development Block Grant dollars.

The information above is an excerpt. For the full article, visit bit.ly/2SIMALW.

Education benefits case study

By Herb Miller, Ed.M., Working Scholars Program

Creating the right education benefit offers a lot of pros to both employees and local governments. For example, a 2018 LinkedIn Learning report (bit.ly/2SGQVPj) found that "94% of employees would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career."

The case studies below share insight into how two local governments in California have reimagined their education benefits to something that is helping them recruit, retain, and grow their workforces.

Santa Clara Working Scholars

The City of Santa Clara launched Santa Clara Working Scholars in April 2019 to provide city employees a flexible, low-cost path to earning a college degree. The program started with about 20 participants who were from a variety of city departments.

During a 2019 city council meeting, City Manager Deanna Santana described Working Scholars as "a great way of supporting internal development and opportunity while also recruiting others from the organization."

Gary Ferraros, a member of building maintenance with Santa Clara's Department of Public Works, was one of the program's participants. He had always dreamed of earning his college degree, but previous attempts to do so did not work out because of scheduling issues or the associated costs. Ferraros said it is a wonderful program that sends an important message.

"It did send a message to me and a lot of my coworkers that ... the city really does believe that they are hiring the best of the best out here, and promoting within is always a great way to retain the knowledge of what's going on in the city," Ferraros said. "The fact that the city is willing to invest in me and say that we believe in you enough that we are going to invest in you to further your career is just a wonderful thing."

Additionally, Ferraros said that he is now motivated even more in his job. He said, "It has really given me a new energy for work at this point." To find out more, watch a two-minute video about Santa Clara's story from employees and leadership at bit.ly/2P9irTo.

Continued on page 6.



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Get this newsletter by email. The CML Newsletter is available by email three days before it arrives in the mail! Sign up at bit.ly/CMLNewsletter.

Course notebook

Conservation Easement Transaction Costs Grants

Great Outdoors Colorado is offering Conservation Easement Transaction Costs Grants for up to \$50,000 per property. This program helps facilitate donated conservation easement projects that would not otherwise be successful in the face of prohibitive transaction costs for the landowner. Applications are due **March 5**. For more information, visit bit.ly/31z0ORS.

Denver Right-of-Way Asset Mapping Exchange

Cities and towns across the country continue to face challenges managing their infrastructure while utilizing it to become a "Smart City." At this event, experts in digital mapping, broadband planning, and life-cycle asset management present tools, tips, and case studies relevant for municipal professionals. Attendance at the Denver Right-of-Way Asset Mapping Exchange on **March 17** at the Arvada Convention Center is free of charge for government and public sector personnel. CML members can use the code "CML50" to take \$50 off the non-public sector registration fee. For more information and to register, visit bit.ly/2T2oKcF.

Western Slope Financing Mechanism Tour

CML and Downtown Colorado Inc. are pleased to announce their first annual Western Slope Financing Mechanism Tour on **March 19–20**. We will visit projects and partners in Grand Junction, with representatives from Montrose and Durango, to encourage an interactive experience to showcase what these tools can do, how they work with others, and what the plan is for the future. For more information, visit bit.ly/2020WestSlope.

Colorado Capital Conference

Sens. Cory Gardner and Michael Bennet, along with Colorado Mesa University, the University of Colorado, and Colorado State University, invite you to join them in Washington, D.C., to interact with our nation's leaders and gain an enhanced understanding of the federal legislative process. One hundred Colorado residents will be selected to attend this unique, bipartisan conference in our nation's capital through a competitive selection process. Registration closes on **March 20**. For more information, visit bit.ly/3bpPts3.

Community Resource Center

The Community Resource Center is offering a workshop about finding funding on the web (webinar on **March 24**). For more information, visit bit.ly/39fo8Xu.

Regional Economic Development Forum

Register for the Regional Economic Development Forum nearest you! The Economic Development Council of Colorado is hosting events in Hugo (**March 12**), Silverthorne (**May 7**), and Pueblo (**June 27**). For more information, visit bit.ly/2UjdAba.

Northwest Colorado Workforce

Join Northwest Colorado Workforce Centers on **April 2** in Silverthorne for a community conversation on attracting and retaining a workforce in Colorado's mountain and resort communities. For more information, visit bit.ly/2utRZMX.

SOCO Tourism Summit

The SOCO Tourism Summit will travel to Cañon City, Florence, and Westcliffe **April 8–10** to hear what others are doing to attract visitors to their destinations and find opportunities to collaborate. For more information, visit bit.ly/2SplarC.

Colorado Byways 2020 Symposium

Colorado Byways 2020 Symposium takes place **May 6–7** in Ouray. For more information, visit bit.ly/2H3aZVI.

Creative Industries Summit

Save the dates of **May 14–15** for the Creative Industries Summit taking place in Steamboat Springs. For more information, visit bit.ly/388Mokl.

Northeast 2020 Rural Philanthropy Days

Northeast 2020 Rural Philanthropy Days, **June 9–11** in Limon and Hugo, is bringing increased access to resources to support sustainable rural nonprofits, increase engagement funders in rural communities, and encourage effective collaboration on a regional scale. For more information, visit bit.ly/2S6a0dq.

Creative Counties Placemaking

The Creative Counties Placemaking Challenge invites counties with populations of less than

150,000 to form multidisciplinary teams to compete in a challenge competition to identify and strengthen ways to integrate arts into solutions to local challenges. Teams that submit winning applications by **March 13** will attend an in-person, one-day training and peer exchange workshop on **July 16**. For more information, visit bit.ly/31xwkQj.

Marijuana update in Pueblo

Join the Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division and City of Pueblo in a collaborative forum to discuss current marijuana policies, laws and regulations, frequent concerns, and processes related to Colorado's marijuana industry.

Representatives from a number of state agencies will be in attendance. This is an opportunity to meet with local licensing authorities and county and municipal officials to strengthen our partnership, communication, and understanding. The update is at the City Council Chambers on **March 6** from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. To reserve your place, email Shannon Gray at shannon.gray@state.co.us. Reservations are not required but are preferred.

IN THE GAME annual conference

Registration is open for Downtown Colorado Inc.'s 2020 IN THE GAME annual conference. Downtown Colorado Inc.'s annual conference is a three-day interactive educational experience happening **April 14–17** in Colorado Springs. The conference will focus on harnessing national, state, and local resources to expand the way downtown champions think and provide real problem-solving opportunities. The conference will feature nationally-recognized keynotes and Colorado-based speakers, geared toward inspiring participants to action.

For more information, visit bit.ly/2T4PYiS or contact Stephanie Owens at communications@downtowncoloradoinc.org or 303-282-0625.



In memory



Lee Leavenworth when serving as CML Executive Board president in 2004–2005

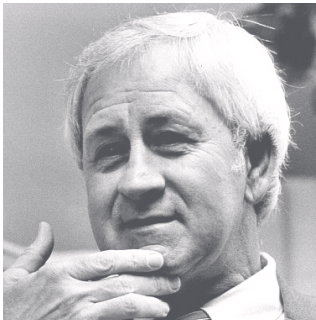
Loyal E. (Lee) Leavenworth passed away on Feb. 14. He served on the CML Executive Board from 1999 to 2006, serving as board president from 2004 to 2005. Lee represented many municipalities and special districts over the years, including Rifle, New Castle, and Basalt.

"I first met Lee when I started my legal career in the Roaring Fork Valley in the early 1980s. I always looked up to Lee and his partners at the firm of Leavenworth Patrick & Lochhead, each of whom were just a few years older than me but were already staking out a solid reputation, particularly in the areas of real estate, water, and environmental law," said David Broadwell, CML general Counsel. "In later years, as Lee increasingly began to represent municipal clients, I was impressed that he aspired to a leadership role with CML. Especially during Lee's years of service with

CML, I benefited immensely from his intellect and good humor."

"Lee was new to the Board when I started in 1999, and he passed along a lot of knowledge and wisdom from his many years serving local governments. I was lucky enough to spend time with Lee on outreach trips and to a National League of Cities' conference when he was CML president," said Kevin Bommer, CML executive director.

"Lee was one of the single smartest municipal lawyers I have been honored to know and work with. Lee was indeed a character and always fun to be around. Lee loved the Western Slope and the towns and cities he served over his long career. Who else would call me and tell me that he picked up a new member for CML, the Town of Carbonate? He was a great CML president, and my friend," added Sam Mamet, retired CML executive director.



*Don Allard.
Photo credit: City of Arvada*

On Feb. 12, Arvada lost a champion and a friend. **Don Allard** passed away after a battle with cancer. The sadness felt by members of the City Council and current and former members of the city team is surpassed only by our appreciation for Allard's years of dedicated public service to our community.

Allard served on the Arvada City Council for 24 years, from 1993 to 2017. Prior to that, Allard served on the North Jeffco Park and Recreation District Board from 1987 to 1993. He was Arvada's deputy city manager from 1974 to 1983 and city manager from 1983 to 1986. Prior to joining the Arvada community, Allard served as city manager of Columbia, Missouri, from 1962 to 1974.

Allard also served on the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority, the Arvada City Charter Review Committee, the Metro Water

Reclamation District Board, CML, and the Colorado Association of Special Districts. Allard earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas.

When Allard retired in 2017, he was honored at a reception where present and former Arvada leaders and many others praised him for his integrity as a public servant. Allard ended his speech that day with a variation of a quote made famous by Chief Joseph: "I will do good government no more forever."

CML Executive Director Kevin Bommer said, "Don was one of the first elected officials I met when I started at CML in 1999. He remains a shining example of dedicated public service, statesmanship, and good governance — all with that trademark wry smile. He will be missed."



*Minette Doss.
Facebook image.*

Minette Doss passed away on Feb 4. Doss's passing occurred in Denver, but her heart will always remain in Alma, where she had resided for the last 12 years and became known as the Pie Queen of Alma. She served on the Alma Town Council and participated

in CML for the last 10 years. Doss voluntarily ran the Alma Library for many years.

"Minette served with distinction on the Alma Town Council for 10 years, was active in CML, and was a fixture in the community. She was a truly pleasant person," said Kevin Bommer, CML executive director.

DOLA grants \$7M for affordable housing and forms working group

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Division of Housing (DOH) awarded \$7 million in February for new construction and renovation projects supporting low-income seniors and working Coloradans in rural and front-range cities.

The Strategic Housing Working Group is an outreach effort in collaboration with Housing Colorado and the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority based on the recently published *Stakeholder Engagement Final Report*. The report, released in early February, reached over 860 Coloradans from 54 counties to inform on the strategies and plan for newly appropriated funds, while maintaining a focus on regional and local needs across the state.

DOH awarded Housing Solutions of the Southwest \$1.4 million for the construction of the Espero Apartments in Durango. The supportive housing development will have 40 one-bedroom apartments to serve people who are experiencing homelessness, are at risk of homelessness, or have disabilities or behavioral health disorders. Espero is located near the Manna Soup Kitchen and the Durango Transit Center and will provide supportive services for residents.

DOH granted Aspen/Pitkin Employee Housing Inc. \$650,000 for the construction of the 30-unit Red Hill Lofts in Carbondale, which will consist of studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments for households earning 30% to 50% of the area median income (AMI). Garfield County Housing Authority will support 12 units with housing vouchers to attain deep affordability.

DOH approved a \$720,000 loan to Zimmerman Properties LLC to assist with the new construction of Villas at Mesa Ridge, a 60-unit senior living project in Fountain. The three-story development will consist of one- and two-bedroom apartments for people earning 30% to 80% of the AMI. The building will include a fitness room, computers, and a stocked game area.

DOH awarded the Longmont Housing Authority a \$600,000 loan to assist with the renovation of the 50-unit Aspen Meadows Apartments in Longmont, a senior living project for families with a head of household who is 62 or older. The renovations will include roofs, windows, siding, flooring, elevators, fixtures, and more. Rents vary based on income for seniors between 30% and 50% of the AMI.

DOH granted Greccio Housing \$1 million to assist with the construction of Atrium at Austin Bluffs in North Colorado Springs, a 54-unit senior housing project that will serve people who earn between 30% and 60% of the AMI. The Atrium received an allocation of 4% of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). The project accentuates social connectivity with large common areas and a library.

Finally, DOH approved a \$2.6 million loan to Delwest Development Corp. for the construction of Greyhound Park Apartments, a 223-unit, development in Commerce City receiving an allocation of 4% of the LIHTC. The building will include a two-story community service space, and the property will have two playgrounds. For complete information on the DOH grant approvals, visit bit.ly/37KECFQ.

CML scrapbook: CML Annual Legislative Workshop



Kevin Bommer, CML executive director



Colorado Gov. Jared Polis



Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock



Attendees of the CML Annual Legislative Workshop



CML advocacy team: from left to right Morgan Cullen, Heather Stauffer, and Brandy DeLange, pictured with Meghan Dollar, CML legislative advocacy manager



Senate Minority Leader Chris Holbert and Speaker of the House KC Becker.



Meghan Dollar, CML legislative advocacy manager and David Broadwell, CML general counsel

Not your typical council retreat

By Diana M. Wilson, Northglenn director of communications

New Northglenn Mayor Meredith Leighty was looking for a way to bring the Northglenn City Council together as a team, and the typical "bring in a facilitator and work through a number of sessions sitting around tables" was not hitting the mark. As she came back to the core goal of team building, she focused on the idea of "team," and an idea emerged.

Working with City Manager Heather Geyer, the two came up with a plan to surprise, engage, inspire, and (hopefully) bring the group together.

The gathering started around some tables at 8 a.m. in the community room of the Northglenn Justice Center.

The morning session consisted of activities to help the new councilmembers get to know one another on a deeper level and exercises leading to the development of norms for collaboration and communication.

"Creating an atmosphere of trust depends upon effective communication," explained Leighty. "We have three new councilmembers, and the rest of us have shared some highs and lows over the last two years. We have the opportunity to do some great things together, and I want us to start out on the right foot."

Late morning transitioned to watching and discussing an inspirational TED Talk during lunch, and then the real fun began. Councilmembers split into two groups for a friendly "Amazing Race" style competition. Stepping out into the unknown, each



Northglenn Mayor Meredith Leighty (center, with pied face) surrounded by her hardworking and dedicated Northglenn coworkers.

group took off with its clues to find the first destination.

"We have very creative staff members that helped design challenges for the council that led them to all four wards of our city," explained Geyer. "I was happy to see our council not only be good sports, but really embrace the activities with enthusiasm."

Each team drove to a city park, completed an activity to earn a prize, and then followed a clue to the next spot. A quick exercise session, Ping-Pong game, and math quiz later, the teams worked their way back to "put on the Viking helmets without using your hands" at Northglenn High School (Home of the Norse!). Each completed activity

earned the groups food items, and they had the opportunity for bonus food items if they wanted to throw a pie at the mayor. Everyone participated.

The teams collected all the food and filled the shelves of the food pantry located at the high school. They wrapped up the day with a quick tour of the services that the Food for Hope offered at the school.

"I was thrilled to hear all the positive feedback and see the interaction on our teams," said Leighty. "I am confident this nontraditional retreat will pay off in many ways, most importantly helping us work together productively in the years to come to the benefit of Northglenn residents."

"... case study" continued from page 2

Perris Working Scholars

Perris Working Scholars has proved to be so successful and popular that the program recently launched its third cohort. This southern California city has a median annual household income of \$54,476, while the nation's median annual income is \$60,336 (bit.ly/2SXyZPp). Of the Perris residents who are 25 or older, only 10% have earned a bachelor's degree. Through the Working Scholars program, Perris is looking to upskill

its community and help its residents unlock economic opportunities.

"There were jobs I wanted to apply for that I knew I was qualified for. But not having a degree, they would not even give my application a second look. It was stopping me from moving up in my current role," said Katie McClendon, parent educator at Riverside County Black Chamber of Commerce. "It was amazing to study on my own time and take my courses at my own

pace. Being able to take them from my phone or my laptop was like having education in the palm of my hand."

To find out more, watch a two-minute video about Perris's story from employees and leadership at bit.ly/32a6sKm.

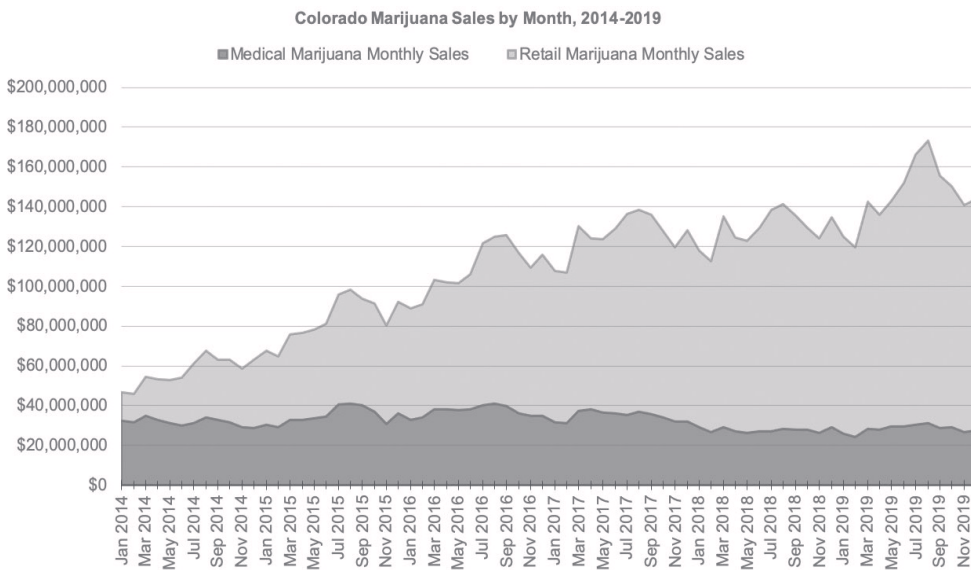
If you have questions or comments or would like to know how to get more out of your education benefit, contact Herb Miller, Ed.M., Working Scholars program, at hmill@workingscholars.com.

Research corner: Colorado marijuana sales and tax revenue 2014–2019

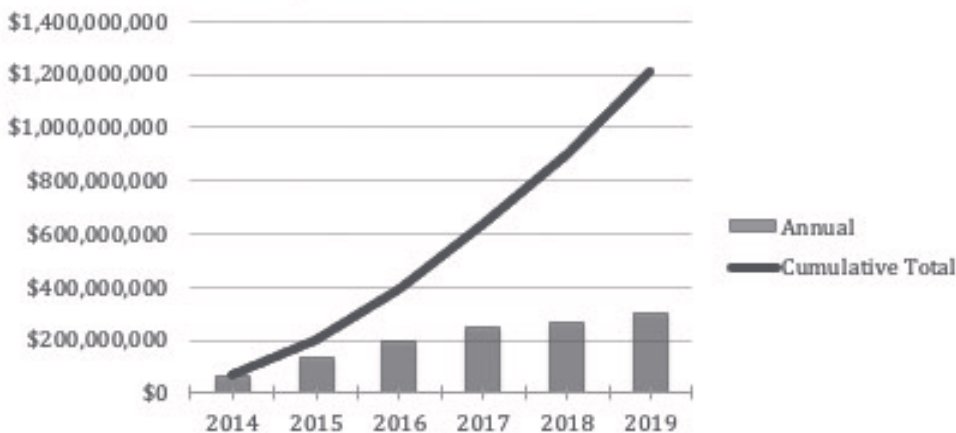
As of December 2019, Colorado has crossed the billion-dollar mark in taxes and fees collected on the sales of marijuana since 2014, according to the DOR. In that time, the state collected over \$1.2 billion in sales and excise taxes, licenses, and fees, a number that does not include local taxes and fees.

There have been almost \$7.79 billion in sales of retail and medical marijuana in the six years since the state started allowing the former. Although sales of medical marijuana were allowed before 2014, DOR did not systematically track those sales until January 2014.

To further explore the numbers, for sales statistics visit bit.ly/390Urxw and for tax data bit.ly/2uSNzje.



Colorado State Taxes and Fees Collected on Marijuana Sales, 2014-2019



Source: Colorado Department of Revenue, Office of Research and Analysis

Cullens at the Capitol



Intern Will Kotowski (left), CML Legislative and Policy Advocate Morgan Cullen (center), and Moira Cullen Kotowski (right).

Morgan Cullen, CML legislative and policy advocate pictured with his nephew, Will Kotowski, a high school junior and intern at the capitol for Rep. James Coleman. Also featured in the photo is Kotowski's mother, Moira Cullen Kotowski, who lobbies on education and health care issues.

Classified corner

For Sale

The Town of Vilas is selling the following vehicles. These vehicles are offered where-is and as-is, with no warranty and no title.

- **1976 Ford F750 Luverne (Gasoline) Pumper** \$2,500, VIN C75FVC13811
- **1980 GMC (Diesel) Pumper**, \$1,500, VIN T17DFAV614760
- **1966 Jeep Kaiser (Diesel/Multifuel) 6x6**, \$1,500, VIN 013210701SHD5

Interested? Leave your contact information at 719-523-4044, or send an email to townofvilascolorado@gmail.com.



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