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Welcome to VISIT DENVER's quarterly *Policy Perspectives* newsletter highlighting local, state and federal issues impacting the tourism and hospitality industry.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Carrie Atiyeh, Director of Government & Community Affairs, at catiyeh@visitdenver.com or (303) 571-9466.



QUARTERLY POLICY PERSPECTIVES

LOCAL NEWS



- November 7, 2017 election results
 - Denver hotels overwhelmingly passed the [Denver Tourism Improvement District \(TID\)](#) with 96% support. An additional 1% tax will be added to the guest folio at Denver hotels with 50 or more rooms beginning January 1, 2018. The TID will support the Colorado Convention Center expansion and generate new business, creating meeting and leisure visitor demand through increased sales and marketing efforts. VISIT DENVER greatly appreciated collaborating on this effort with the Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association and the City to create the first TID in Colorado. Many thanks to our hotel partners for your support!
 - Denver voters passed all seven of the [General Obligation \(GO\) Bond](#) measures by wide margins. The total package of \$937 million will fund transportation and mobility, parks and recreation, and cultural projects that will benefit residents and visitors alike.
 - Denver voters also passed the [Denver Green Roofs Initiative](#) which will mandate vegetation and solar installations on all new buildings in Denver of more than 25,000 sq. ft. and roof replacements on existing buildings beginning January 1, 2018. The City is forming a stakeholder group to assess the impacts of the initiative and may make recommendations to City Council for modifications. Read more in [CHLA's partner section](#) below.
- Significant progress has been made on the Denver Tourism Roadmap in the first year implementing the 10-year plan guiding Denver's sustainable tourism growth. Watch a [new video](#) highlighting projects, events, marketing efforts, and more.
- The Breathe Easy campaign to [prohibit smoking along the 16th Street Mall](#) went into effect on December 1st. Signs have been installed along the Mall to inform people of the new regulations which aim to create a clean, safe and healthy downtown environment.
- An exploratory committee has been formed to determine Denver's feasibility to pursue a [Winter Olympics bid](#). The committee will assess financing, fiscal stewardship, environmental sustainability and other factors.
- Compliance with Denver's short-term rental (STR) regulations continues to be high, achieving a 66% compliance rate and collection of [\\$1.8 million in lodger's tax](#) through the end of November.
- Copa Airlines launched its new non-stop flight between [Panama City, Panama and DEN](#) in December. The flight is expected to create 250 new jobs and generate more than \$26 million in annual economic

impact. DEN will offer [26 non-stop international routes in 2018](#) including new flights to London, Paris and Zurich. These routes will add to the \$26 billion annual economic impact the region already experiences as a result of our world-class airport.

- [IPW](#), the travel industry's premier international marketplace and the largest generator of travel to the U.S., will take place in Denver May 19-23. Denver can expect to welcome more than 1 million international visitors who will spend more than \$1 billion in the three years following IPW.
- [Civic Center station](#) re-opened in December following a \$31 million renovation that will welcome 15,000 passengers each day.

STATE NEWS



- The Tourism Industry Association of Colorado's (TIAC) annual legislative reception will be held at the Brown Palace on Monday, January 22nd from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This is a great event that highlights our industry and draws many of our state legislators. To RSVP and purchase tickets, please contact Janie McCullough at janiemc@comcast.net.
- Winter snow sports add \$12.2 billion annually to the U.S. economy. But low snowfall could have a significant impact, particularly here in Colorado where low snow levels could result in 8% fewer skier visits totaling a [loss of \\$154 million annually in revenue](#) for Colorado mountain towns.

FEDERAL NEWS



- The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Trump Administration's latest version of [travel restrictions](#) on individuals from Chad, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Somalia and Yemen can go into effect while legal challenges continue.
- VISIT DENVER joined nearly 150 industry partners on letters to Congressional leaders supporting an increase to the [Passenger Facility Charge](#) (PFC). The PFC supports airport investments in infrastructure that benefit the passenger experience and facilitate growth in air travel.
- [International visitors to the U.S.](#) in the first half of 2017 were nearly 4 percent lower than the prior year according to the Department of Commerce National Travel and Tourism Office. Several factors could impact this decline including policies of the new Administration as well as the strength of the U.S. dollar.
- The U.S. Travel Association commended the Trump Administration for upholding [Open Skies Agreements](#) regarding U.S. routes to Qatar and the UAE though informal discussions will continue.
- The Department of Homeland Security announced that it is implementing security [enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program](#), facilitating efficient and safe travel between the U.S. and 38 countries. Reforms include information sharing arrangements, improving screening practices at airports and reducing overstay numbers.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVES



Security Guard Licensure Ordinance

Late last year, the Denver City Council passed an [ordinance](#) to update their Security Guard licensure requirements. As the existing ordinance does, the new ordinance requires that all security guards, both in-house and third-party be licensed and also requires 16 hours of training and an FBI fingerprint background check to be completed.

Excise and License has convened a stakeholder group that will work on rules to implement the new ordinance. MDLC will participate in the stakeholder group and once the rules have been established will provide information on the requirements to ensure that all impacted business are in compliance.

Green Roofs Initiative

Last November Denver voters approved the [Green Roofs initiative](#), which beginning January 1, 2018, requires buildings over 25,000 square feet to dedicate a percentage of the building's roof to green, vegetative space. This requirement applies to public and private buildings, both existing and new construction.

The MDLC, along with many other real estate and building ownership organizations, have serious concerns about the implications and costs of this initiative. CHLA President, Amie Mayhew has been appointed by Mayor Hancock to serve on the Green Roofs Review Task Force and MDLC will continue to work with the Mayor and Council on this issue.

[Click here](#) to read Councilwoman Kendra Black's recent op-ed expressing concerns about this initiative.

J-1 Visas Under Threat of Elimination

President Trump's "Buy American and Hire American" executive order, issued in April of last year, calls for a review of U.S. immigration rules, which many worry could lead to the elimination of the J-1 visa program. CHLA has joined the Americans for Cultural Exchange coalition which is advocating for strong and continued J-1 visa cultural exchange. The coalition was established to ensure J-1 exchange programs continue to thrive and to support America's diplomatic, national security, and economic interests. [Click here](#) to learn more and to join the coalition today.

NLRB Join Employer Ruling

In mid-December, The National Labor Relations Board reversed its 2015 *Browning-Ferris* decision, which had significantly expanded joint employer liability under federal law. In the *Hy-Brand* case, the Board ruled that to be classified a "joint employer," a business must have a direct and immediate connection to the employees in question.

Room Attendant 'Panic Button' and Workforce Mandates Expected to Surface throughout the country in 2018

Following the enactment of a narrowly tailored [Chicago panic button ordinance](#) earlier this year, which AHLA and state partner IHLA supported, and the defeat of more onerous workforce legislation in Long Beach, 2018 is expected to bring similar union-backed efforts in other jurisdictions. Recent reporting and intelligence suggests some form of panic button or workforce mandate could be considered in [Miami Beach](#), Florida as well as [California jurisdictions](#) beyond Long Beach. AHLA will continue to work with state partners and other resources to ensure such policy debates remain focused on hotel employee and guest safety, rather than other unrelated labor provisions.

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.



COLORADO RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

The 2018 Legislative Session begins on January 10th. This year, the CRA expects there to be a lot of legislation on alcohol issues in Colorado. With this being the last legislative session before major provisions of Senate Bill 16-197 go into effect (allowing full strength beer to be sold in all grocery and convenience stores on January 1, 2019) many groups in the liquor industry will be trying to pass legislation to make changes. Most of the legislation that we are aware of will not have an impact on the restaurant industry, but we will be monitoring those bills to make sure there are no unintended impacts on our industry.

Transfer of alcohol upon closing:

We are moving forward with our legislation to allow the sale of alcohol to another liquor licensed establishment on the closing of a liquor license. This legislation would allow a liquor licensee, with multiple on-premise liquor licenses, to sell their remaining alcohol to another of their licenses when they surrender a liquor license. We have secured sponsors in the House of Representatives and the Senate.

ADA right to cure:

We are working with the Colorado Wyoming Petroleum Marketers Association on legislation to create a “right to cure” in Colorado law for disabled accommodation violations. This is similar to legislation recently passed in Arizona, ran by the Arizona Restaurant Association. This bill is important because if the federal right to cure gets through Congress, there would still be no right to cure under Colorado law. Even though current lawsuits are being filed in federal court, which will not be affected by this legislation, we feel it is important to take the time to establish this “right to cure” in state law.

Tip sharing signage:

We are working with Representative McLachlan (D-Durango) to make changes to the requirement that restaurants or bars post a sign if they share tips with their back of house employees. The legislation has not been finalized as of yet, but we are looking at several options that include removing the requirement for the sign all together, changing where the sign must be posted (like on the menu or on a receipt), or changing the required language on the sign. The final bill will probably be a combination of these options.



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