

2015 Legislative Accomplishments

During the 2015 legislative session, Colorado Technology Association engaged directly at the state capitol closely monitoring over 30 bills and actively supporting key pieces of legislation related to technology in Colorado.

STEM & Workforce Development

HB 1170 Increasing Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (Sponsored by Reps. Kraft-Tharp & Wilson | Sens. Hill & Heath)

Requires the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to calculate high school postsecondary and workforce ready (PWR) by including the percent of high school graduates who enroll in a postsecondary education program in the school year immediately following graduation. The bill modifies the composition of school and district level accountability committees to include representation from business and industry. The bill creates the position of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Statewide Coordinator (PWR coordinator) to work under the State Work Force Development Council in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). - **Signed**

HB 1227 Tax Credit for Employers That Pay Student Loans (Sponsored by Rep. Becker K. | Sen. Heath)

Would have created a state income tax credit for employers that helped qualified employees repay their student loans. - **Postponed Indefinitely**

HB 1230 Innovative Industry Workforce Development Program (Sponsored by Reps. Lee & Foote | Sen. Heath)

Creates the Innovative Industries Workforce Development Program in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). The program reimburses employers with high-level internships and apprenticeships in an innovative industry for up to \$5,000 in expenses per intern. - **Signed**

HB 1271 Mobile Learning Labs Workforce Development (Sponsored by Reps. Lontine & Hamner | Sens. Marble & Donovan)

Mobile learning labs are trailers or stand-alone vehicles equipped to provide training on the site of an educational facility, employer, or other remote location. For example, Pueblo Community College currently maintains a mobile learning lab with hands-on learning modules for machine automation, mechanical and electrical systems, and welding. - **Signed**

HB 1274 Creation of Career Pathways for Students (Sponsored by Reps. Garnett & Melton | Sens. Kerr & Woods)

Requires the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) design integrated career pathways within identified growth industries having critical occupations, and where no clearly articulated career pathways are available. The January 2014 Talent Pipeline Report identifies construction and related skilled trades, information technology, and health care as the three growing industries for which a career pathway will be designed. The bill requires partnerships with industry and trade associations to review each career pathway annually to ensure the pathway remains relevant to the industry and to provide input for ongoing adjustments to the pathway to meet work force needs. - [Signed](#)

HB 1275 Career & Tech Ed in Concurrent Enrollment (Sponsored by Rep. Winter | Sens. Heath & Marble)

Clarifies that career and technical course work related to apprenticeship programs and internship programs may be used for concurrent enrollment, and directs the Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board to collaborate with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), the Colorado Workforce Development Council, area vocational schools, and two-year institutions of higher education to create recommendations to assist local education providers to create cooperative agreements that include apprenticeship programs and internship programs in concurrent enrollment programs. - [Signed](#)

Crowd Funding

HB 1246 Crowdfund Intrastate Securities Online (Sponsored by Reps. Pabon & Lee | Sens. Scheffel & Hill)

Creates the Colorado Crowdfunding Act, which allows Colorado residents to invest in Colorado companies through online intermediaries under a simplified regulatory regime. The bill establishes regulatory requirements for on-line intermediaries, including how they will be compensated. A priority for CTA, this bill is key innovative tool for technology start-ups in Colorado. - [Signed](#)

Data Centers

HB 1158 Sales & Use Tax Refund for Data Centers (Sponsored by Reps. DelGrosso & Pabon | Sen. Holbert)

Would have required the Joint Technology Committee (JTC) to study data centers during the 2015 interim. The committee was required to make recommendations on: the economic benefits of data centers; if data centers can create a long-term investment in a community; if data centers can provide new revenue; whether Colorado would benefit from state-implemented tax incentives; if Colorado data centers have lost business because of a lack of tax incentives; and whether providing state tax incentives to data centers will encourage new data center investment in Colorado. - [Failed on Third Reading in Senate](#)

Telecom

SB 222 Sales & Use Tax Refund for Rural Broadband Limit (Sponsored by Sen. Scheffel | Rep. Williams)

Under current law, broadband internet providers can claim state sales and use tax refund for equipment used to provide broadband service to areas of the state with a population of less than 30,000; the total refund that can be claimed by all taxpayers is limited to \$1 million per year. The refund would have been claimed between January 1 and April 1 in the year after the taxes are paid. If more than \$1.0 million is claimed, the department prorated the refund claims so the total refunds issued do not exceed \$1.0 million. This bill increased the limit to \$2.5 million for investment made in 2015, \$4.0 million in 2016, and \$5.0 million in 2017 and future years. The increased cap applied for refunds claimed beginning in January of the year following when the investments were made. - [Postponed Indefinitely](#)