

OFFICE OF GOV. BILL RITTER, JR.
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**GOV. RITTER PRAISES FEDERAL APPROVAL OF COLORADO'S
LANDMARK HEALTH CARE ACT**

Gov. Bill Ritter today praised the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for providing final approval to Colorado Medicaid's proposal to collect a hospital provider fee. Gov. Ritter's office and the Colorado Hospital Association developed the Colorado hospital provider fee proposal that would insure an additional 100,000 Coloradans.

"This is a great day for Colorado. We have made significant progress on the road to thoughtful reform by providing coverage for 100,000 mothers, children, people with disabilities, and other Colorado residents," said Gov. Ritter. "This will pay off in both fiscal and personal health for our state and its residents and will be accomplished without additional costs to the General Fund."

Gov. Ritter signed House Bill 1293 on April 21, 2009, to authorize the department to collect a hospital provider fee. Provider fees are a funding source eligible for federal matching funds when used to reimburse Medicaid covered services.

When fully implemented, this sustainable source of funding will provide health care coverage through the [Colorado Health Care Affordability Act](#) for over 100,000 Coloradans and increase reimbursement for hospitals. An expected \$600 million in hospital fees will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the federal government for a total of \$1.2 billion.

"With the implementation of the hospital provider fee moving forward, the state of Colorado leads the nation in bringing true benefits to its citizens. More uninsured Coloradans will have access to health coverage as early as May 1 thanks to the diligent efforts of the state in working with hospitals and health systems throughout Colorado," said Steven J. Summer, president and CEO of the Colorado Hospital Association. "The provider fee also helps reduce unreimbursed healthcare costs, which in turn benefits all Colorado citizens and businesses by reducing the shifting of costs to the private sector."

"The department, the governor's office and the Colorado Hospital Association have worked on this proposal for over a year," says Joan Henneberry, executive director. "The Hospital Provider Fee Oversight and Advisory Board comprised of representatives from urban and rural hospitals, the Colorado Hospital Association and private physicians

worked diligently since June 2009, to provide informed guidance to the department to meet the goals of the Affordability Act.”

May 1, 2010, marks the implementation of the first phase of the Act. For a family of four with a household income of \$55,125 per year, children and pregnant women will be eligible for Child Health Plan Plus. Parents in a family of four who have children on Medicaid can make up to \$22,000 per year.

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