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**GOV. RITTER UNVEILS NEW WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

Gov. Bill Ritter today launched new initiatives to better align job training, workforce development, education and economic growth efforts in Colorado through a recharged and re-focused Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) that will emphasize flexibility, innovation and closer ties with local communities and private businesses.

“Today is only the beginning,” Gov. Ritter said as he signed an executive order outlining the new workforce development push during an event in Palmer Lake. “Over the next year, the steps we take now will help ensure that Colorado’s workforce continues to be one of our strongest assets, which ultimately will help us come out of this downturn stronger and healthier than before.”

In addition to increased business representation, the executive order calls for closer alignment of education and workforce development programs in close collaboration with economic development. The order also calls for several Cabinet members to serve on the Colorado Workforce Development Council.

In 2008, Gov. Ritter convened a Jobs Cabinet to review and recommend improvements to the state’s workforce development system. “The Jobs Cabinet worked hard to create a roadmap that would help the state break down silos between education systems, workforce development programs and our business development initiatives,” Gov. Ritter said.

The Jobs Cabinet’s final report, issued in August 2009, called for the 19 existing Workforce Investment Boards across Colorado to focus on industry growth strategies, nurturing talent and building a job training infrastructure in Colorado.

Another key recommendation was to modernize the Colorado Workforce Development Council, a body that oversees and supports those Workforce Investment Boards’ efforts statewide. With Gov. Ritter’s signature on today’s

executive order, that Council will be re-launched with a renewed focus on flexibility, innovation and closer ties with each community.

New members of the Colorado Workforce Development Council were nominated by the regions of Colorado that represented workforce, education and economic development. Thanks to that locally-driven and transparent nomination process, the Colorado Workforce Development Council now has a balanced mix of people representing the business, education, workforce and economic development communities across Colorado. The complete membership list is attached to this news release.

“The core idea is simple,” Gov. Ritter said. “We need a workforce system that can meet the demands of business. It is this idea that became the core of our efforts to revitalize the Colorado Workforce Development Council. We have worked closely with local communities ensure that the Colorado Workforce Development Council would provide a voice to each region of the state.”

History of Colorado’s Workforce Development System

Colorado’s employment and training programs date back more than 75 years to the 1930s when the Wagner-Peyser Act was signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt, establishing the nation’s employment security system and a network of state-run employment offices called Job Service Centers.

Efforts continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s, as adult and vocational education programs were put in place. Finally, by the 1970s, the Job Training Partnership Act and myriad other programs were implemented. The problem, however, was that when those last pieces were put in place, no cohesive picture finally emerged.

Instead, what appeared were three separate “pictures,” each with its own delivery system, responsibilities and constituencies. Programs interacted as necessary and in recent years good faith efforts were made to bring people together in hopes of facilitating greater interaction, but the merging of major initiatives never happened across the board. Now, with the signing of Executive Order 2010 012, a breakdown of those silos is set to begin.

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Colorado Workforce Development Council Members

Council Chair	Taryn Edwards
Green Jobs Advisory Council	Christine Shapard
Adams	Ruth Marks
Arapahoe/Douglas	Susan Rogers
Boulder	James Ralph Mills
Broomfield	Toya Speckman
Denver	Debbie Welle-Powell
Eastern	Kari Linker
Jefferson	Glenn Morris
Larimer	Jay Hardy
Mesa	Phyllis Norris
Northwest	Trish Sullivan
Pikes Peak	David Csintyan
Pueblo	John Vukich
Rural Resort	Jack Saunders
South Central	Todd Oberheu
Southeast	Janet Berg
Southwest	Aaron Fernandes
Upper Arkansas	Darlene Hoag
Weld	Larry Burkhardt
Western	Dan McClendon
Open	Tim Connors
Open	Ryan Keiffer
Open	Alex Sammoury
Open	Harry "Bruce" Talbott
Open	Don McClure
Open	David Bradford
Youth representative	Matthew Smith
Existing Board Members Terms Expire 2011	
Existing Term Expires 2011	Jane Barnes
Existing Term Expires 2011	Kenneth DeBey
Existing Term Expires 2011	Raymond Gonzales
Existing Term Expires 2011	Barbara Ihde
Existing Term Expires 2011	David Mitchem
Existing Term Expires 2011	James Neubecker
Existing Term Expires 2011	Jessie Ruiz

Existing Term Expires 2011	Faye Tate
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Other voting members:	
	Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.
	Representative Nancy Todd
	Representative John Soper
	Senator Joyce Foster
	Senator Linda Newell
	Commissioner Dennis Hisey
Non-voting, ex-officio members:	
Colorado Dept. of Labor and Employment	Donald J. Mares
Colorado Office of Economic Development	Don Marostica
Colorado Department of Higher Education	Rico Munn
Colorado Department of Education	Dwight D. Jones
Colorado Department of Local Affairs	Susan Kirkpatrick
Colorado Department of Human Services	Karen Beye
Colorado Community College System	Nancy McCallin
Colorado Department of Agriculture	John Stulp
Colorado Department of Corrections	Ari Zavaras
Rocky Mountain Workforce Development Association	Joe Barela