

Economic Development

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SB 14-166 (Enacted)
*Create By Colorado App to Promote
Businesses in Colorado*

HB 14-1011 (Enacted)
*Advanced Industry Economic
Development Funding*

HB 14-1013 (Postponed Indefinitely)
*Advanced Industries Workforce
Development Program*

HB 14-1071 (Postponed Indefinitely)
*Voter Approval for State Branding
Program*

HB 14-1231 (Postponed Indefinitely)
State Talent and Market Intelligence

The General Assembly considered several bills related to economic development during the 2014 session. Bills relating to workforce development, a statewide brand marketing plan, and a study of Colorado's employee talent base were all postponed indefinitely. A bill creating an app for Colorado businesses passed along with a bill making changes to funding of existing advanced industry economic development programs.

Senate Bill 14-166 requires the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) to contract for the creation of the By Colorado App, mobile application software that allows a user to search for goods and services offered by businesses that are located, owned, or headquartered in, or conduct manufacturing in the state. The OEDIT may develop and protect the By Colorado App brand by registering a trademark with appropriate state or federal officials. The Local Business Application Software Fund is created for the purposes of the bill, subject to annual appropriation. The OEDIT is authorized to seek and expend donations for information technology costs, but implementation of the bill does not depend upon receipt of donations. The By Colorado App must be operational by January 1, 2015.

In the 2013 legislative session, the General Assembly created two advanced industry economic development programs. The Advanced Industry Export Acceleration Program (House Bill 13-1193) provides \$300,000 from the General Fund to the Advanced Industry Export Acceleration Cash Fund (AEIA fund) each fiscal year through FY 2017-18 for the reimbursement of international export development expenses by private industry, as well as export training and a referral system for trade consulting administered by the OEDIT. For the next four fiscal years, **House Bill 14-1011** adjusts these transfers to the AIEA fund from January 1, to the beginning of each fiscal year, six months earlier, on July 1. The Advanced Industry Acceleration Grant Program (House Bill 13-1001) consolidated and expanded existing advanced industries funding sources and created the Advanced Industries Acceleration Cash Fund (AI cash fund). The AI cash fund is continuously appropriated and used by the OEDIT to fund three types of grants: proof of concept, early stage capital and retention, and infrastructure funding. House Bill 14-1011 requires a \$5 million transfer from the General Fund to the AI cash fund on July 1, 2015, and again on July 1, 2016. The bill authorizes the OEDIT to expend gifts, grants, and donations received by the AEIA fund and the AI cash fund.

House Bill 14-1013, which was postponed indefinitely, would have created the Advanced Industries Workforce Development Program within the Division of Employment and Training in the Department of Labor and Employment. The program would have reimbursed employers offering high-level internships and apprenticeships in the advanced industries for up to \$5,000 in expenses associated with the internship or apprenticeship. Reimbursements would have been limited to no more than 10 interns or apprentices per company, with no more than \$2,500 of the reimbursement to cover the cost of a stipend to the intern or apprentice.

Economic Development (Cont.)

House Bill 14-1071, which was postponed indefinitely, concerned voter approval of a proposed brand marketing plan for the state. The bill would have suspended the BrandCOLORADO Initiative in the OEDIT, including the use of the new state logo developed as part of the initiative. A ballot question on whether to continue the initiative would have been referred to the voters, and, if approved, would have allowed the initiative and use of the logo to resume.

House Bill 14-1231, which was postponed indefinitely, would have required the OEDIT to purchase access to a talent data analytics tool in order to conduct a comprehensive study of the state's employee talent base. By November 1, 2014, the OEDIT would have entered into a contract with a talent analytics tool provider. The bill specified the research questions the study was to answer. The OEDIT would then have included findings in their annual report submitted to the General Assembly by November 1, 2015.