

## COLORADO

### I. Political Environment<sup>1</sup>

**A. GOVERNOR:** Bill Ritter (**D**); 1<sup>st</sup> Term/57% - Re-election year: 2010

**Leadership/interest in health care reform:** The Governor's budget did not include any health reform proposals. However, the Governor has supported the "208 Commission" to develop a health care reform proposal and establish a health plan to offer affordable coverage to all by 2010.

### B. LEGISLATURE

**House/Assembly:** 39D/24R

**Senate:** 20D/15R

Speaker: Andrew Romanoff (**D**)

President of the Senate: Peter C Groff (**D**)

### II. State Health Insurance Coverage<sup>2</sup>

#### A. State Health Insurance Coverage of the Non-elderly, 2005-2006

	CO		US
	#	%	%
ESI	2,648,838	62%	61%
Medicaid	351,374	8%	13%
Individual Insurance	331,859	8%	5%
Other Public	125,467	3%	2%
Uninsured	791,782	19%	18%
Uninsured < 200% FPL	499,565	64%	65%

**B. Federal Matching Rate (FMAP) FY2008: 50%**

#### C. Medicaid Eligibility by FPL

Children	200%
Non-Working Parents	60%

### III. History of state health reform

In May 2007, Governor Ritter signed legislation that aims to provide coverage to all low-income children by 2010. The law would implement presumptive eligibility and 12-month continuous eligibility for children, provide medical homes and make system improvements to attempt to enroll the 40,000 uninsured Colorado children who are eligible but not enrolled in the Children's Basic Health Plan, CHIP+. Eligibility for CHIP+ was also expanded to 205% FPL.

Also in 2007, a new law repealed two of the rating factors that are used by insurance carriers for medical underwriting in the individual market: pre-existing conditions and claims experience. Carriers will no longer be able to use these factors to rate premiums.

<sup>1</sup> State Yellow Book: A Leadership Directory, Winter 2008

<sup>2</sup> State Medicaid Fact Sheet – The Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. Link: <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/mfs.jsp?rgn=7&rgn=1&x=10&y=13>

Colorado's "208 Commission," spent a year reviewing and modeling comprehensive health reform proposals. In December, the Commission unveiled a draft report with recommendations for comprehensive reform. Their recommendations include requiring all Coloradans to purchase a minimum level of health insurance, allowing reduced premiums for individuals with healthy lifestyles, and creating a centralized place (like a website) for individuals to find information on health plan premiums and benefits. The Commission intends to present their final report to the Legislature by the end of January 2008. The process has helped raise awareness about health reform, and started conversations among stakeholders about what is to be done to cover the uninsured.

In the recent past, Colorado has raised the tobacco tax, in part to fund Medicaid and SCHIP. (CO advocates, SCI)

#### **IV. Current fiscal condition**

**State and Local Tax Revenue as a Percentage of Personal Income, 2005<sup>3</sup>: 8.96%**  
**US Average, 2005: 10.73%**

**State tobacco tax per pack<sup>4</sup>: \$.84      National tobacco tax ranking: 25<sup>th</sup>**

**At this time, Colorado is not projecting a total budget shortfall in 2009<sup>5</sup>.**

\*Other things being equal, a state in a healthy fiscal situation is in better position to enact significant health reform.

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<sup>3</sup> Tax policy Center (June, 2007), "State and Local Tax Revenue as a Percentage of Personal Income, Selected Years 1997-2005". Link: <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/displayafact.cfm?Docid=511>

<sup>4</sup> Tax policy Center (April, 2007), "State Cigarette Taxes, 2007"; Link: [http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/Content/PDF/cigarette\\_rates.pdf](http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/Content/PDF/cigarette_rates.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (January 2008), "17 States Faces Total Budget Shortfall of At Least \$31 Billion in 2009; 11 Others Expect Budget Problems." Link: <http://www.cbpp.org/1-15-08sfp.htm>