Exchange salaries high

GRINS WITH THE GUY

Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper joined self-advocates and the Global Down Syndrome Foundation to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day on the west steps of the state Capitol on Monday. The governor had his photo taken with, from left, Yadira Carrillo, Gertie Meshedlind, 6, and Michelle Sie Whittington, right, co-founder and executive director of the foundation. World Down Syndrome Day is March 21 — 3/21 represents the three copies of chromosome 21 that are present in those with the syndrome. Cyrin Hagen, The Denver Post

State health exchange workers are paid more than similar positions in three other states.

By Arthur Kane
Special to The Denver Post

One-fifth of the employees of Colorado's health care exchange made more than $60,000 a year in salary and bonuses — with the exchange directors pay exceeding $120,000 in 2012.

And nearly half of the 75 exchange employees made more than $60,000 a year.

The exchange also provides a lucrative retirement package, contributing as much as 10 percent of an employee's salary for retirement.

The salaries and retirement benefits for Colorado's exchange employees are modeled relatively close to those held by health care exchange directors in three other states.

Affordable Care Act representatives say the state has created an unnecessary bureaucracy that is paying excessive salaries.

"This is a bunch of people specifically responsible for nothing other than getting government programs sold," Linda Germain, who studies labor exchange policy for the Independence Institute, a free-market think tank.

PAY: $4A

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

Shops balance privacy, promotions, security

By Tylee Kendrick The Denver Post

Jack enchanced guards his privacy, especially when he gets shopping at a place selling MYwedding and Tax Guys Allen.

The apparel store is one of four that he's using the Red Med recreational pot store in Denver — as is a new interest in security.

"I had all these guards but I've been going to another store that I can't go to the shop and live a life of normalcy. I really don't have any record of it."

If a sales clerk tries to even his own inventory from him and changes for picking a medical program that would set him free at a time, he said he would respectfully decline.

"I have no time for a time of privacy. I have two sons already," he said.

By Mark Jaffe The Denver Post

Vince Garza, right, takes care of customers at Red Med Health Center in Denver in February. Colorado pot shops are balancing privacy, security and promoting in how they handle collecting information on their customers.

The report on the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission staff on "sensitivities from the September floods that engulfed the Front Range rescinds new oil and gas regulatory requirements."

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PROTECTING WATERWAYS

Report: Tighter controls needed to flood-proof state's oil and gas wells

A report by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission staff on "sensitivities from the September floods that engulfed the Front Range rescinds new oil and gas regulatory requirements."

"Many oil and gas facilities located near flooded areas were damaged," the report said. "Oil and gas officials have repeatedly expressed concern that increased regulation will cause significant cost with a potential impact on energy production."