

# Colorado Daily

## Coming through for CU

### RITTER SIGNS BIOTECH BILL, WILL SIGN BUDGET MONDAY

By RICHARD VALENTY, Colorado Daily Staff Writer  
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FYI

For more information about CU's Technology Transfer Office, visit the Web site <http://www.cu.edu/techtransfer>. To read House Bill 1001 or any other piece of state legislation, visit the Web site [www.leg.state.co.us](http://www.leg.state.co.us).

A financial shot in the arm might assist in the development of companies that make beneficial drugs for actual shots in the arm, thanks to the State of Colorado.

Gov. Bill Ritter signed into law last Thursday House Bill (HB) 1001, a bill that will provide \$26.5 million over the course of five years to help expand Colorado's bioscience industry.

State Rep. Jim Riesberg, D-Greeley and Sen. Bob Bacon, D-Ft. Collins, were the primary HB 1001 sponsors. Also, almost-local legislators Sen. Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, and Rep. Dianne Primavera, D-Broomfield, signed on as co-sponsors.

The bill directly benefits CU and several other state research institutions, since the money will go to technology transfer offices (TTO), as well as to start-up companies or partnerships with connections to the research institutions.

But David Allen, Associate Vice President for CU's Technology Transfer Office, said last Friday that the money will also help the state's entrepreneurs create or grow companies that could attract significant amounts of external capital.

Not every company will wind up huge, but Allen said for illustration that a drug company might initially attract "several million dollars" of capital, which could balloon to billions over the years if the firm enjoys long-term success.

"This (1001) is big for CU, for its inventors, for Technology Transfer and for the Colorado economy," said Allen.

He didn't mention gambling, but HB 1001 funding for fiscal years 2008-2009 through 2011-2012 will come from state limited gaming fund moneys.

Money from HB 1001 will be disbursed under three broad categories, according to a Colorado

BioScience Association fact sheet. First, TTOs may apply for Proof of Concept Grants of up to \$150,000 per project, and the grant money must be matched by a one-to-one source of dedicated funding.

The grants will be awarded to projects designed to improve agriculture, the quality of human or animal life, the environment or biofuels.

The state Legislature also adopted a bill in 2006, HB 1360, that included money for Proof of Concept Grants. Allen said CU's TTO has experience with the grants because of 1360, and he anticipates that it might wind up with 10 to 12 eligible projects in the coming year.

"About 40 percent will be for drugs, about 20 percent will be for diagnostics, about 20 percent will be for devices, and about 20 percent will be for biofuels projects," said Allen. "That's what we expect because we know what is in the pipeline."

Second, start-ups working towards commercializing technologies developed in Colorado's research institutions may apply for Early-Stage Bioscience Company Grants of no more than \$250,000 over the lifetime of the company.

The companies must have headquarters in Colorado and again must come up with one-to-one matching funds, although the funds must come from other grants or third-party investors.

Also, the companies must produce or develop therapeutic or diagnostic products; devices or instruments that improve animal or human health; or technologies that improve agriculture or biofuels.

Third, no more than 40 percent of HB 1001 funding will go towards Bioscience Industry Infrastructure Development. Allen said this money would go towards programs that assist with the commercialization of biotech developments.

For example, Allen mentioned the Boulder Innovation Center, an "entrepreneurial hub" created by the City of Boulder and partners that has a general mission of facilitating the business growth of its clients.

"We have a great relationship with them, and I fully expect that they would be, in some manner or another, a beneficiary," said Allen.

A Thursday release from Ritter's office said HB 1001 was the "first piece" of a string of business development bills that could receive his signature in coming weeks. Ritter said the biotech bill will help bring health-related and quality of life benefits to the state, and will allow Colorado to compete for biotech business on the national and international level.

"With the work being done at the Anschutz Medical Campus at Fitzsimons, in Boulder and in Ft. Collins, Colorado can be a global leader in the bioscience field and in developing treatments for cancer, Alzheimer's, tuberculosis, diabetes, heart disease, obesity and West Nile disease," said Ritter in the release.

#### MORE MONEY NEWS

Ritter is scheduled to sign the state's Long Bill, or the fiscal year 2008-2009 budget document, into law Monday at 1:30 p.m.

The \$18.4 billion budget will include an 8.4 percent increase for the state's Department of Higher Education, compared to 2007-2008 funding. It also includes an \$188 million increase for statewide capital construction projects, and some of the projects will occur at institutions of higher education.

The State Senate approved last Friday Senate Bill (SB) 218, which in part would set aside money from federal mineral lease bonus payments for a higher education "rainy day" savings fund.

The bill, sponsored on the Senate side by former CU Regent Gail Schwartz, D-Snowmass and Josh Penry, R-Grand Junction, would allow interest from the rainy day fund to be used in funding for higher education projects. The fund itself could also be tapped into, in case of a recession, for use in higher education operating budgets.

SB 218 also designates funding for higher education capital construction and funding for communities impacted by oil and gas drilling. The bill will now head to the House for consideration.

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