

LETTERS

HB 1256 would aid health coverage

Colorado House Bill 1256 would bring affordable insurance to thousands of Coloradans by allowing them to buy less-expensive policies available in other states (Health Care, Feb. 19).

Consider the average annual premium costs for nongroup policies. According to America's Health Insurance Plans, in four states the costs are \$500 less than in Colorado. The savings are more for family plans: In five states, costs are \$1,000 less than in Colorado.

Opponents of a similar bill proposed last year claimed healthy consumers who bought out-of-state policies would increase premiums for others. True or not, this reveals the effect of Colorado's insurance mandates and price controls. They bundle medical insurance with politically mandated charity. Never mind that these controls increase premium costs and the number of uninsured.

But we have the right to buy insurance and give to charity as we see fit, without political mandates and prohibitions. Politicians shouldn't forbid Coloradans from buying more affordable insurance available in other states. HB 1256 recognizes this.

Brian T. Schwartz
Independence Institute

RTD cutbacks are serious

RTD soon will announce major reductions in light-rail and bus service, far more serious than previously announced.

It's more serious when a strike or lock-



out is factored into the equation. For downtown office workers, now is the time to prepare for the spring. For downtown employers who presently help pay for transit passes, don't expect to have your contribution reduced or eliminated since service is nonexistent. This had happened in the past.

Since RTD is in far worse shape than before, the situation will be more serious. Added to the fact that RTD pays \$1.30 a gallon more for diesel fuel than the public

and no alternative fuels are used in revenue service, you can see what's happening. Think van pooling

Richard Weber
Denver

Exports a key to recovery

Congratulations to Jim Reis, president of the World Trade Center Denver; Dan Halstrom from Swift; Hermes Gonzalez from Hach; Nancy Metzger from TeleTech; and the many other Coloradans who are exporting Colorado products and services to other countries.

Not only has this been the fastest-growing sector of the Colorado economy, but exports are key to our eventual economic recovery.

Although a strong economic stimulus package is essential to stabilizing today's very frightening economy, in the long run, we can't regain long-term economic prosperity by simply recycling internally monies that we have borrowed from other countries, such as China.

We will have to bring new money into the United States — money earned by developing the world's best products and services — and then selling them to other countries. Government leaders will have to assist by opening up new markets and by standing up to the growing threat of protectionism.

Congratulations to Jim Reis and the others who are leading this effort.

Morgan Smith
Former director, Colorado International Trade Office

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