



THE PITON FOUNDATION

at Gary Community
Investments



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Colorado Families Eligible for \$77 Million from State EITC

Lt. Gov. Joseph Garcia & Senator John Kefalas join Colorado Fiscal Institute, The Piton Foundation & Mile High United Way on Jan. 28 to celebrate Colorado State Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day

What:

Because the Colorado state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is available to working families for the first time in 15 years, **Governor Hickenlooper** proclaimed Thursday, January 28 **Colorado State Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Day**. To celebrate, **Lieutenant Governor Joseph Garcia** will read the proclamation at a press conference on January 28 at Mile High United Way. **Senator John Kefalas** and leadership from **Colorado Fiscal Institute**, **The Piton Foundation** and **Mile High United Way** will join Lt. Gov. Garcia in raising awareness about the availability of the credit. The Colorado state EITC, which is worth 10% of the federal EITC, will provide more than 350,000 working Coloradans with more than \$77 million in refunds.

One of the nation's most successful anti-poverty tools, the EITC promotes employment while providing valuable refunds to lower-wage earners who are striving to achieve financial security. While more than 354,000 Coloradans claimed \$772 million from the federal EITC last year, an estimated 118,000 Coloradans missed out on as much as \$257 million in refunds because they didn't know they exist. To increase awareness about the state and federal EITC, the Denver-based Piton Foundation is conducting a statewide public education campaign to ensure that all eligible families—including active military and returning veterans—claim the EITC refunds they deserve.

According to The Piton Foundation, research shows that lifting struggling families' incomes helps children do better in school, which leads to increased educational attainment and higher earnings in adulthood. The EITC also pumps hundreds of millions of federal dollars into the state and local economies as families use these dollars to put food on their tables, pay rent, heat their homes, fix their cars and buy school supplies.

The press conference will also raise awareness about free tax help available through programs like Tax Help Colorado, which provides free tax preparation to individuals with incomes less than \$53,000, helping to link more families to the EITC while easing the cost of commercial tax preparation on low-wage earners. Colorado residents can contact Colorado

United Way 2-1-1 Help Centers by dialing 2-1-1, toll free, to find out if they are eligible for the EITC and to be connected to free tax services.

When: **Thursday, January 28, 1:15 p.m.**

Where: **Mile High United Way, Main Lobby**
711 Park Avenue West Denver, CO

Who: **Lieutenant Governor Joseph Garcia**, State of Colorado
Senator John Kefalas, State of Colorado
Carol Hedges, Executive Director, Colorado Fiscal Institute
Stephanie Sanchez, 2-1-1 Statewide Director, Mile High United Way
Courtney Sabine, Public Information Campaigns Manager, The Piton Foundation
Krysten Stevenson, Earned Income Tax Credit recipient

More Info: Learn more about the Piton Foundation's Tax Credits for Working Families Public Information Campaign and the Tax Help Colorado program by visiting www.piton.org/eitc, or finding Tax Help Colorado on Facebook (www.facebook.com/taxhelpcolorado) and Twitter (@TaxHelpCO).

Photo Opps: There will be photo and interview opportunities at the press conference's conclusion. In addition, media is invited to visit Tax Help Colorado free tax sites to speak with EITC-eligible families and learn more about free tax help. A full list of Tax Help Colorado locations and operating hours is available [here](#).

About The Piton Foundation:

The Piton Foundation, which is part of [Gary Community Investments](#), is a private, operating foundation established in 1976 by Denver oilman Sam Gary. We are committed to improving the lives of Colorado's low-income children and their families by increasing access to quality early childhood and youth development opportunities and fostering healthy family and community environments.

About Colorado Fiscal Institute:

The Colorado Fiscal Institute provides credible, independent and accessible information and analysis of fiscal and economic issues facing Colorado. Our aim is to inform and influence policy debates and contribute to sound decisions that improve the well being of individuals, communities and the state as a whole.

About Mile High United Way:

Mile High United Way creates opportunities for all children, their families and individuals through our unique position at the intersection of the public, private, philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.

We are more than an organization—we are a catalyst for social change. We develop long-term solutions that ensure children are learning and reading at grade-level; young people graduate from high school ready for college or the workforce; and families and individuals have their basic needs met and are afforded every opportunity to move toward economic success.



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Mile High United Way

2-1-1 Colorado is a free and confidential community referral service that connects hundreds of thousands of callers annually with resources providing food, shelter, clothing, child care options, tax help, and much more.