

# Colorado rates 4th in economics

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*Rating is states highest on competitiveness list*

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Strength in technology and business incubation continue to move Colorado higher among the national leaders for economic competitiveness, according to a report released today by Suffolk University's Beacon Hill Institute.

The fifth annual report shows Colorado advancing one spot from a year ago to No. 4 — trailing only Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Utah — based on strengths across a broad range of economic indicators.

Although Colorado has been in the top 10 every year but one, this is the highest the state has ever climbed.

Beacon Hill Executive Director David Tuerck cited Colorado's technology subindex as a key factor in the state's ranking.

Colorado is third nationwide in the percent- age of engineers and scientists in the work force, second overall in the percentage of total wage and salary jobs in high technology.

The state's continuing ability to attract venture capital, fifth-best in the nation, and a minimum wage, \$5.15, that has stayed in line with the federal standard have helped secure Colorado's status as one of the top business-incubation states.

A government and fiscal policy subindex was Colorado's only substantial weakness, ranking at 39th, according to the study.

The lowest-ranking state was Louisiana, followed by Mississippi, 49th; Arkansas, 48th; West Virginia, 47th; Indiana, 46th; and Hawaii, 45th.

The study's authors define competitiveness as "the policies and conditions that ensure and sustain a higher level of per capita income and its continued growth."

The report assigns 42 variables to eight categories: government and fiscal policy, security, infrastructure, human resources, technology, business incubation, openness and environmental policy.

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