



Press Release
Keeping an Eye on Stimulus Funds
Gallagher Hosts Oversight Forum

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(Denver) Denver Auditor Dennis Gallagher has taken the lead nationally in monitoring local government spending of federal stimulus dollars. As a result, he is hosting a major regional forum in Denver August 26 and 27 addressing the issue.

The Mountains and Plains Intergovernmental Audit Forum (MPIAF) will hold its summer conference in Denver on the topic Oversight and Monitoring of Stimulus Funds. The conference will focus on current strategies and lessons learned related to the oversight and monitoring of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. Gallagher is co-chair of MPIAF which is an association of audit professionals from federal, state, and local governments under the auspices of the Government Accountability Office. It includes the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

Panelists and speakers at the dynamic two-day event are coming from around the country and from the public and private sector bringing a wide-range of knowledge, expertise and capability to the conference. Locally, Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper will deliver the welcoming address, Congresswoman Diana DeGette will give the Keynote address and Channel 7 investigative reporter, Tony Kovaleski will speak about "Investigating Government Activity."

“We are very excited to host this event, which is generating a tremendous amount of interest and enthusiasm around the country,” Gallagher said. “The topic is very timely and we have really set a national example of how to monitor local government expenditures of these ARRA funds.”

The conference agenda also has an anti-fraud component, and a technology update, both key areas that the Denver Auditor’s office has developed component units in.

The conference is shaping up to be the largest, most successful event of its kind in the country.

“This is turning out to be such a success. Unfortunately, we continue to get calls from people who want to attend but I have to tell them we are sold out – I can’t even offer standing room only,” Gallagher said wryly.

He noted that his office has been monitoring Denver’s process for receiving and spending stimulus dollars from the outset.

“I thought that it was important to closely watch this process. Tens of millions of dollars, of the billions being spent nation-wide, are being spent in Denver. That’s a lot of money and taxpayers have a right and a need to know that it is being spent wisely and appropriately. Knowing that we are monitoring the process helps maintain citizen confidence in their government and the process.”

Gallagher also said that Colorado is one of only sixteen states receiving enhanced oversight by the GAO, and the monitoring of Denver’s process by his office provides a real complement to that oversight.