

## **Editorial: Denver would be a great location for U.S. patent office**

By The Denver Post The Denver Post

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If your Washington, D.C.-based organization needed to pick a city in which to open a branch office, Denver would come to mind simply for its quality of life.

If you needed an educated workforce and geographic diversity, you could check two more boxes for the Queen City of the Plains.

And if you needed a place on the leading edge of innovation in the 21st century, the Mile High City would again rank high.

Denver is one of several cities bidding to be home to one of the two new satellite U.S. Patent and Trademark Offices. We think it would make an excellent location.

The expansion will be paid for by the fees charged to patent applicants. Currently, the agency faces an annual backlog of nearly 660,000 applications.

A law passed last year gave the agency new tools to reduce that number, and — thanks in large measure to an amendment sponsored by Sen. Michael Bennet and co-sponsored by Sen. Mark Udall — authorized the addition of three satellite offices by 2014 (Detroit has already been selected for one).

The prospect of nearly 600 new jobs over five years and \$400 million in related economic activity — according to an analysis by the University of Colorado's Leeds School of Business — are big drivers in our support. But there is ample evidence to suggest the city would help the patent and trademark office meet key needs moving forward.

Already home to the largest concentration of federal employees outside of the Washington, D.C., area, Denver is an easy sell as far as drawing and retaining employees. It has an unmatched quality of life and reasonable cost of living, particularly in comparison to cities on the East and West coasts.

As a result, it is hardly a surprise that we recently were the No. 1 destination in the country for 25- to 34-year-olds, according to the Brookings Institution.

Government officials would also find suitable applicants from the area's prominent research institutions and a state population that ranks second in the nation as far as adults with at least a college degree.

The region already has prominent energy, bioscience and aerospace sectors. And it is viewed as a hub of innovation — ranking near the top nationally for entrepreneurial and venture capital investments. Colorado is also home to two dozen federal labs — several of which are notable in the fields of renewable energy and atmospheric and climate research.

Colorado is a regional center of commerce that can easily serve business in multiple time zones. Denver International Airport and the region's FasTracks transit plan make travel and transit easy for visitors and residents alike.

Boosters of bids to land satellite offices from the Silicon Valley, Seattle and Massachusetts may be able to point out that they are home to a greater number of patent applications, but they have a hard time competing with Denver when it comes to the combination of assets that make a city a smart place to expand.