

Rocky Mountain News

Ballot measure targets drilling tax

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By Rocky Mountain News

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A ballot measure filed Wednesday would close a loophole in Colorado's severance tax law, raising about \$200 million for higher education and to help communities affected by gas and oil exploration.

The measure was filed by Tony Lewis, director of the Donnell-Kay Foundation, which works on education issues, and Randy Udall, former director of Community Office for Resource Efficiency, a West Slope group that promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The proposal faces a lengthy review process before the legislative staff before advocates will be permitted to gather signatures to put it on the ballot.

Gov. Bill Ritter and legislative leaders have discussed the possibility of a fund-raising measure for the 2008 ballot.

Lewis said he'd be willing to consider withdrawing his proposal if the lawmakers come up with a measure to raise funds for higher education.

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