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COLOR's Testimony for HB18-1438

1 message

Emily Alves <emily@colorlatina.org>
To: Emily Alves <emily@colorlatina.org>

Thu, May 3, 2018 at 1:39 PM

Dear Committee Members, Writing on Behalf of Karla Gonzales Garcia, Policy and Programs Director:

My name is Karla Gonzales Garcia. I am the Policy and Program Director for the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR). COLOR works to engage and empower the Latino community to speak out about the policies that impact our community.

I am writing in regards to House Bill 1438, which after being introduced late last night will be heard in your committee today. This bill would help to ensure that Coloradans have health coverage for the full range of reproductive health services. For me this bill is about what is at stake for women in my community and for women like me when we can't afford to get the care we need.

Too many women of color and marginalized communities continue to struggle to be able afford services to manage our health and plan our families. This means more women of color facing pregnancy complications and maternal mortality. It means women of color are more likely to be diagnosed in later stages of cancer. It means we face higher rates of unintended pregnancy and then can't get the abortion we may need. It means that immigrant women can't get basic reproductive healthcare, which impacts us and our families.

If we don't provide health coverage for the full range of reproductive services, we are allowing our state to be a place where people with money can always care for themselves and plan their families and futures, but people on the margins are continually harmed and denied the services we need to thrive. That is NOT the kind of community or state that I want to live in.

Attached you will find COLOR's written testimony. We strongly urge you to support HB 1438. I would welcome the chance to speak with you or your staff about this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

5/3/2018

Gmail - COLOR's Testimony for HB18-1438

Sincerely,

Karla Gonzales Garcia

--

Emily Alves, MSW
Contract Policy Associate

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)

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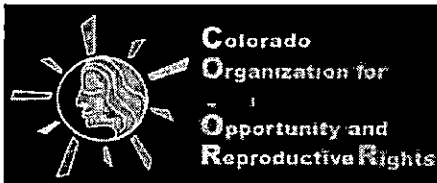
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We're celebrating 20 years of advancing reproductive justice in Colorado! Details coming soon.



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Written Testimony in Strong Support of House Bill 1438: Ensuring Access to the Reproductive Healthcare People Need Protects the Health and Dignity of Marginalized Communities

My name is Karla Gonzales Garcia. I am the Program and Policy Director for the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR). We engage and empower the Latinx community to speak out about the policies that impact our community.

I am strongly support House Bill 1438, which would help to ensure that Coloradans have health coverage for the full range of reproductive health services. For me this bill is about what is at stake for women in my community and for women like me when we can't afford to get the care we need.

Due to systemic barriers, Latinas are twice as likely to experience unintended pregnancy and because so many people cannot get the abortion they need more and more women are taking matters into their own hands. Studies show an increase in people trying to end pregnancies at home and many have put their health, future fertility and lives at great risk. Pushing care out of reach doesn't mean people won't seek an abortion, it means that they can't get safe care.

There are also people who can't get coverage who forego paying rent or buying groceries. Is that the kind of community we want to live in?

Women of color are facing an increase in pregnancy complications and Black women are 4x more likely to die in childbirth right here in this country because they don't have prenatal care or their coverage runs out after they give birth and they face complications. Think about when we talk about protecting women.

The arbitrary five year wait forced on immigrants plays political games with our health and lives. Holding back coverage does not just hurt individuals. When we can't get the services we need it has long lasting impacts on our families and our community.

Women of color are more likely to be diagnosed at an advanced stage of breast cancer and succumb to the disease because we can't afford to use early detection screenings.

For me this bill is simple. If we don't provide health coverage for the full range of reproductive services, we are allowing our state to be a place where people with money can always care for themselves and plan their families and futures, but people on the margins are continually harmed and denied the services we need to thrive.

This bill will help to truly meet the needs of women and families and better enable us all to live with health and dignity. I strongly urge you to support House Bill 1438. Thank you.

Submitted by: Submitted by: Karla Gonzales Garcia, Program and Policy Director, Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR), 303-393-0382