



1705 17th Street
Suite 200
Denver, CO 80202

P 303.454.3757
E info@garycommunity.org
W garycommunity.org

March 20, 2023

Dear House Behavioral Health & Human Services Committee and interested parties:

My name is Angie McPhaul, and I am the Director of Youth Success at Gary Community Ventures, the legacy of Colorado philanthropists Sam and Nancy Gary, who have dedicated their lives to increasing opportunity for Colorado kids and families. Today I am writing on behalf of our mission-focused business entity, Gary Ventures, to support [HB23 -1223 Task Force To Prioritize Grants Target Population](#) sponsored by Representative Jennifer Bacon and Representative Regina English.

Dramatically decreasing youth suicide, youth violence, and risky behaviors are issues we care about deeply at Gary. We know that youth mental health is at a record low across the nation, including in Colorado. We further know that many youth, in particular those from lower-income backgrounds, can thrive with greater access to meaningful out-of-school activities that can reduce youth violence and risky behavior. Gary has been committed to working on improving youth outcomes with our partners and community for many years. Gary envisions a world where every youth has a strong sense of purpose and path that buffer them from negative outcomes.

The Task Force established under HB23-1223 is created to focus on good data and outcomes in order to prioritize future spending on this important work. Better coordination for maximum impact across state agencies is certainly an important component of the work. Further, the Task Force's dual charges to deeply understand and focus on those youth with the greatest need as well as deeply understand program outcome data to drive the greatest impact represent real steps forward. We believe that in order to see a meaningful change in youth suicide, violence, and risky behavior, we need our resources going to quality programs that serve the young people who need them the most. As such, we support HB 23-1223, and we encourage you to do the same.

Sincerely,

Angie McPhaul
Director, Youth Success
Gary Ventures