



FREEDOM FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

April 20, 2022

Health & Insurance Committee
Colorado House of Representatives

Dear Chair Lontine and members of the committee:

The Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA) is a statewide membership organization representing over 100 sexual assault service providers and survivors throughout Colorado. CCASA and our members believe that every barrier that survivors face to access healing and justice must be removed to adequately address sexual violence in our state. As such, we support House Bill 22-1293 concerning medical records requests by attorneys.

Sexual violence is the least reported crime in our country. Many survivors require time to heal and recover in order to be ready to pursue a criminal or civil legal case. Further, if a survivor does pursue justice, sexual violence is incredibly difficult to prosecute given the nature of the crime and societal attitudes and beliefs. Research has found that for every 1,000 rapes that occur, only 230 are reported to law enforcement, 46 lead to arrest, 9 are prosecuted, and 4.6 rapists will be incarcerated. Given this low probability for justice through the criminal legal system and strict time limits on how quickly they must act, many survivors turn to civil lawsuits for accountability and resources to support their healing, for which medical records can be key evidence.

Survivors already shoulder the majority of the costs and navigate numerous complex systems in responding to something that they didn't ask to happen to them. The ability for attorneys to request their medical records on their behalf for a reasonable fee – as a parent or personal representative could – will ease the burden of sexual assault on survivors ever so slightly, but do so nonetheless. For these reasons, CCASA supports House Bill 22-1293 and urges a Yes vote from the committee today.

Sincerely,

Brie Franklin
Executive Director