

Members of the Public and Behavioral Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Anne Auld, Director of Education at Illuminate Colorado. Illuminate is a statewide nonprofit working to strengthen families, organizations, and communities to prevent child maltreatment. Illuminate serves as the Colorado Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and I am a voting member for the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Task Group representing the Community Stakeholder perspective. I am writing this letter in support of HB21-1099, with the strike-below amendment, on behalf of Illuminate Colorado.

Witnessing violence in the home is an adverse childhood experience with significant economic and social costs to families, communities, and society.¹ According to the Colorado Child Fatality Review Team, 45% of the families involved in a fatal child maltreatment incident which met criteria for review by the CFRT in calendar year 2019 were identified to have a history of domestic violence. The 2019 report states: “Violence is a prevalent risk factor identified in the histories of the families involved in fatal, near fatal, and egregious incidents of child maltreatment, and research indicates that violence is a predictor of future maltreatment. Families’ histories often involve domestic violence and it is evident that Colorado needs more resources for victims, and a system that holds perpetrators accountable for their actions.”²

The primary purpose of the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Task Group is to make recommendations for CDHS leadership and Colorado communities regarding strategies, policies, and needed resources for Colorado’s child welfare agencies and community partners to respond to families who are involved with child welfare and who have an identified concern regarding domestic violence. I co-chair the Domestic Violence Training and Education Subcommittee of that Task Group which focuses on how training and education address the co-occurrence of domestic abuse and child maltreatment. Both the task group and the subcommittee have engaged the voices of survivors, as well as multidisciplinary stakeholders.

House Bill 1099 underscores the important work being done in this task group and associated subcommittees and ensures that a multidisciplinary group of stakeholders, including those with lived experience, will continue to pursue strategies to recognize and respond to domestic abuse and the associated impacts on children.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have questions, as I am available for any follow up.

Sincerely,

Anne Auld
Director of Education
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¹https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Fcestudy%2Ffastfact.html

² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IkEt1f-GfRJQGSdmb8DBjWYonszMyX8K/view>