



Written Testimony as prepared for delivery in support of HB21-1117 (Local Government Authority Promote Affordable Housing Units) to the House Transportation & Local Government Committee by Sarah Barnes, Manager of Special Policy Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign

- Mr. Chair and members of the committee, my name is Sarah Barnes and I am the Manager of Special Policy Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign.
- Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1117, and thank you Representatives Lontine and Gonzales-Gutierrez for your leadership on this bill.
- **The Colorado Children's Campaign supports HB 1117** because it is one tool to help mitigate the affordable housing crisis in Colorado communities.
- We believe every Colorado family should have a safe place to call home. Even before the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, many Colorado families were facing a housing crisis throughout our state.
- Housing costs have continued to increase in Colorado. Yet families' annual income has remained relatively flat. For those families in single parent households or who are unemployed or under-employed, the housing crisis is chronic.
- HB 1117 clarifies that local governments can promote the development of affordable housing in order to meet the needs of their communities. The Children's Campaign believes this bill is one vital tool to help Colorado families access safe and affordable housing throughout the state.
- Colorado families need solutions to help them stay in their homes. Lack of access to safe and affordable housing has serious impacts on kids' health and well-being.
 - **Three in 10 Colorado kids** live in a household that is "housing cost burdened," which means their family spends more than 30 percent of their income each month on housing costs.
 - Families with children **face eviction at significantly higher rates**. A study found that families with children disproportionately receive eviction judgments.
 - During September and October of 2020, Colorado households with children were **nearly three times** as likely as those without children to report being behind on rent, and **significantly more likely** to have slight or no confidence in their ability to pay next month's rent.
- Housing security is also a racial justice issue. Due to past and current racist policies and practices that create more barriers to housing stability for communities of color, **communities of color are significantly more likely to experience higher housing cost burden, higher rates of eviction, and higher rates of homelessness**.
- **HB 1117 will allow local governments to promote affordable housing solutions so that families in all communities across Colorado have access to quality, stable, affordable housing. I urge your support. Thank you.**