

SENATE

HB 21-1075 Replacing the Term “Illegal Alien” with “Worker Without Authorization” as it Relates to Public Contracts for Services

Good afternoon Madame Chair and committee members. My name is Jean Nofles, volunteer state president for AARP of Colorado and its 660,000 plus members in Colorado.

AARP strongly supports HB21-1075.

The direct focus of this bill is on contractors, but the indirect focus is on the potential employees who feel the sting of hostile language.

The phrase, “illegal alien” has worked its way into our everyday vernacular. People use it without giving thought to how it can deny the humanity and legitimacy of non-citizens and/or their American family members.

We are the first to say, “That is not who we are!”, when the damage of discrimination and its language is pointed out to us. However, if we continue to hurl dehumanizing labels at others, that is exactly who we are.

Public contracting language can be just as effective using a less disparaging term, a phrase such as, “worker without authorization” and still perform the function for which the contracting guidance was designed.

A change of terms in the state’s contracting documents will demonstrate that the state understands the need for respect and civility in public contracting.

AARP is an inclusive organization working to improve the lives of older people, and in doing so, improves the lives of us all...including workers without authorization.

We strongly support this bill and encourage you to vote a resounding “YES” for its passage.

Thank you Senator Gonzales, for sponsoring this bill. Thank you, Committee, for listening.

House Bill 21-1075

Concerning replacing the term “illegal alien” with “worker without authorization” as it relates to public contracts.

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Erlinda Archuleta and I am a volunteer advocate with AARP.

Thank you for making accommodations to receive testimony from the public on bills being proposed this legislative session.

It has definitely been an unusual year. One in which each of us has had to learn new lessons and make changes in our public and private life. One of the many lessons brought home loud and clear this year is that " words matter" and "labels matter". What we say and the words we use and hear have a profound impact on the way we view our world. Words and labels influence us daily.

Which brings me to HB21-1075 and replacing the term used in state contracts from "illegal alien" to “worker without authorization”.

A recent New York Times article discusses this proposed change in Colorado as introduced by State Representative Susan Lontine and states that there is a growing awareness that the term “illegal alien” denigrates immigrants by branding humans - as opposed to actions- as illegal. Language in our state code about who can work on public projects must not color undocumented workers with the stigma that “illegal alien” carries with it.

The term “worker without authorization” is clear. The term addresses what we mean, and the term removes a label which offends many people.

Messages are sent by what we say and what we do. Words and labels matter.

Let me express gratitude to the sponsors of this bill and I urge members of this committee to support the change in HB21-1075. Thank you.

Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs

Testimony - HB21-1075 Replace The Term Illegal Alien

First Name	Last Name	Position	Representing	Testifying	Text of Testimony	Registered
Benjamin	Waters	For	Stand for Children Colorado	Submitted text	<p>Madame Chairwoman Gonzales and members of the Committee, _x000D_</p> <p>My name is Benjamin Waters and I'm representing Colorado Stand for Children, a non-profit advocacy organization focused on ensuring all students receive a high quality, relevant education, especially those whose boundless potential is overlooked and under-tapped because of their skin color, zip code, first language, or disability. _x000D_</p> <p>_x000D_</p> <p>We stand in strong support of House Bill-1075 and thank Senator Gonzales for bringing it forward.</p>	3/23/2021 14:08