



COLORADO  
PHARMACISTS  
SOCIETY

**Colorado Pharmacists Society**

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April 14, 2021

Dear Chairman Lee and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

The Colorado Pharmacists Society (CPS) supports HB21-1107. As a professional association, our Mission includes "...to optimize patient care and public health".

We stand in strong support of the safety of our colleagues in public health as they fulfill their critical duties. We furthermore support the development of protections for those engaged in public health as proposed in this bill.

We must all work together dutifully, but also safely, in service to the residents of Colorado. We urge you to support HB 21-1107.

Sincerely,

**Emily Zadvorny, PharmD, BCPS**  
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April 14, 2021

Dear Colorado Senators:

My name is Marsha Porter-Norton and I am a La Plata County Commissioner. I strongly support HB1107 and urge you to vote in the affirmative for this common sense legislation.

I live in a county where our public health director has been targeted by protesters at her home over many weeks just for doing her job. This situation must be changed. Our public health workforce has been on the front lines of this pandemic working long, long hours and dealing with competing, confusing directives from the State and Federal Governments.

They are aptly responding to this global pandemic in the midst of tight budgets and a public that is, frankly, worn out. Sadly, many public health professionals have received death threats, social media doxing, hateful emails or calls, and for some, they are harassed at their residences. For much of the pandemic and in order to be safe, they have had to work from home offices -- a situation that is entirely out of their control. I am for the freedom of expression and speech.

I support the ability of any group or individual, within the law(s), to protest. However, targeting public health officials at their homes goes too far. It is only logical and fair that we would afford public health workers the same considerations for privacy and safety that we have given human service workers. I urge you to vote yes on HB1107.

If you have any questions, please contact me. I thank you for your time and service.

Marsha Porter-Norton  
La Plata County Commissioner  
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Mr. Chair and honorable legislators. My name is Susan Wheelan and I serve as Public Health Director for El Paso County and Colorado Springs.

Our local public health team (to mention a few) includes highly educated epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, registered nurses, medical doctors, communication professionals, and emergency preparedness and response staff - all with advanced degrees. We entered this career field to help people. We are dedicated and we work tirelessly to protect and serve everyone in our communities. I've served as a public health practitioner for more than 20 years. This past year has taken a toll on me, my family and my team. As a Director I've had to drive unmarked vehicles, enhance agency security and at times be escorted by law enforcement with alternative ways to enter and exist rooms and buildings – this is all due to concerns for my employee's safety and my safety.

We should be able to be proud of with work we are accomplishing and the service to our community without fear for our safety. Frequently numerous members of my team have found that identifying themselves as public health employees has led to contentious conversations where they have been the targets of venting of intense anger and blame regarding the consequences of the novel virus and our role in contact tracing and implementing the state's policies and restrictions within our county.

For example, there have been comments of “We better call an ambulance if we show up...or comments that we will end up in body bags and also there have been accusations relayed, pointedly that we are responsible for killing loved ones and the mental health crisis.”

Our hearts are heavy with the lives and livelihoods that have been lost. Our mission has been to work with partners, including numerous sectors,

to prevent illness, hospitalizations and deaths as we navigate together through the pandemic with resilience.

Some of our staff are experiencing secondary trauma as a consequence of the pandemic and our statutory responsibility of being the lead crisis response agency.

El Paso County has one of the top 2 largest populations in the state and the longevity and future of our public health workforce are concerning to me, when my team does not feel comfortable to share their employment and career field publicly (during their non-work time) for fear of reprisal.

It's the consequences of the virus, the worst public health crisis experienced in our lifetime that is responsible for the multitude of hardships this past year.

My employees have demonstrated time and time again, they are phenomenal public servants, making positive impacts and always with helpful attitudes.

I extend gratitude to you, Mr. Chair, honorable legislators for taking the initiative to protect our safety and the future of our public health workforce, which is critically important to our role as first responders and achieving significant, measurable health outcomes for the benefit of all residents in El Paso County – and the state of Colorado.

Thank you.