

House Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services

SB21-158 Increase Medical Providers For Senior Citizens

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Robert Brocker</p> <p>For</p> <p>Colorado Senior Lobby</p>	<p>Colorado Senior Lobby fully supports this bill. We are deeply concerned about the health care that is being and will be provided to our older Coloradans, specifically as that population grows faster than the number of geriatric health care providers available to care for them.</p> <p>Picture yourself as you move into your 70's, 80's and beyond. Would you rather have a very high coordination of care and medicines provided or little to no such coordination?</p> <p>The funding requested represents far less than 10% of what is really needed, but it's a beginning--one for which we are grateful.</p> <p>Geriatric Medicine becomes increasingly important as and the percentage and absolute number of older adults swell dramatically in our society, and there is greater need to care for these more complex frail, older patients.</p> <p>This is also a veterans issue: 24% of America's veterans live in rural areas; they are significantly older than urban veterans, likely to have complex—serious--medical problems, and have far less access to geriatric medical care than their urban counterparts.</p> <p>And it is a dementia care issue: According to the Alzheimer's Association, 17% of Americans age 75-84, and 32% of those 85+ suffer from some form of dementia. Colorado is estimated to have 125,000 dementia-afflicted people by 2030, including about 25,000 in rural areas. Geriatrics-trained health care professionals are highly trained to care for those patients and their families/caretakers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting medical professionals to rural areas is difficult, with only 40% remaining five years. • Nearly 50% of Coloradans 75 years of age or older live in rural areas of the state, yet only about TEN geriatric trained providers serve this population.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced Practice Professionals (APPs; Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants) with additional training/experience in geriatrics will be critical to meet the level of care required for our growing aging population.• An important “multiplier effect” of this plan is that participating APPs will not only deliver direct geriatric care to Colorado’s older adults but also provide seriously needed geriatric education and training sites for future APP trainees. <p>Please vote YES on SB21-158. Thank You.</p> <p>Robert Brocker, Colorado Senior Lobby</p>
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