

## Senate Health &amp; Human Services

## HB21-1099 Policies &amp; Procedures To Identify Domestic Abuse

## Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Ashley Chase</p> <p>For</p> <p>Colorado Office of the Child's Representative</p>	<p>Hello Madame Chair and members of the committee. My name is Ashley Chase, the staff attorney and legislative liaison for the Office of the Child's Representative, which is the independent agency within the Judicial Department that oversees the attorneys who, among other things, represent the best interest of every child/youth in dependency and neglect cases in every judicial district in Colorado. Our agency is in support of HB21-1099 as domestic abuse, in its many forms, has devastating impacts on the children/youth our attorneys represent.</p> <p>I had the pleasure of participating in the robust stakeholding process CCI organized regarding this bill and during those many meetings I was struck at how often the conversation is focused adult victims or adult perpetrators and not really on the children/youth. Even when the youth were discussed, it was often in the context of their caregiver. So it is my sincere hope and belief that the taskforce will keep the youth voice and important perspective at the center of their work. This taskforce will be important as it is clear that we need to improve the way in which we deal with domestic abuse in the child welfare system. We need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarity in how we define domestic abuse, in all its forms</li> <li>- Consistency in how we deal with domestic abuse across the state</li> <li>- and Quality in how we assess for and train about Domestic abuse in our state.</li> </ul> <p>This bill does all three.</p> <p>It is important to note that what it does not do is change the legal bar required to intervene in a family nor does it change the legal standards once a family is involved in the legal system. This is a thoughtful and grounded approach in making needed change in Colorado which is why the OCR hopes you join us in support of HB21-1099.</p>

--	--



Madame Chair and Members of the Senate 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 House Bill 21-1099** 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.”<sup>2</sup>

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  
[aauld@illuminatecolorado.org](mailto:aauld@illuminatecolorado.org)

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Fcestudy%2Ffastfact.html](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Fcestudy%2Ffastfact.html)

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