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Written Testimony for HB 19-1176

Thank you, Chair Lontine...Vice-Chair Caraveo. Thank you committee members. My name is Michael Neil and I rise to strongly support HB 19-1176 on behalf of CCDC and on behalf of myself. I rise as a person with a disability, a person who has had eighteen surgeries, an active citizen and voter, and a healthcare activist. I applaud HB 1176 for including a person or people with a disability on the proposed panel. I further applaud the bill and its sponsors, Rep. Sirota, Rep. Jaquez Lewis, and Sen. Foote for including a universal health care possibility to be studied. I will be brief so as not to prejudice my choice of the conclusions that the board could take, but I will note that, as, first, a Medicaid recipient and, then, a Medicare recipient, no explanation of benefits has ever come back requiring personal payment that I did not expect.

I will further note that the current system has resulted in several of my surgeries being day-surgery brain-surgeries. Not only are we leaving behind hundreds of thousands of Coloradans without health insurance and hundreds of thousands more underinsured, as the bill explains, but with an extreme profit motive, diligence and quality are sacrificed for speed. Thankfully, I have not been further injured because of this, but many have, including, I suspect, a dear colleague and warrior in the health care fight, Carrie Ann Lucas, who passed away just this weekend.