

Representatives:

I am writing on behalf of the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition to request your support of SB 17-245 by Senator Priola. This bill may seem like a small issue--giving a notice of 21 days instead of 7 days for a rent increase or termination of the lease. However, for the people we represent, it is a huge issue. People with disabilities already have a very hard time finding housing. At last count, 57% of people experiencing homelessness in Denver had a disability.

When I was looking for people to testify about this bill I thought of members I knew had experienced a situation where they had 7 days to find new housing. Some are still homeless, therefore I cannot find them quickly. Others have ended up in institutions such as nursing facilities. When someone is physically so disabled that a shelter will not take them, often Adult Protective Services is called. APS usually has no other option than a nursing facility. The cost to the government is often over \$5000 a month. While the bill has no direct fiscal note, there are many costs when people with disabilities are kicked out of their housing without adequate time to find alternative housing.

Not only is it hard to find housing that meets our disability needs (e.g. no steps, on a transit line, etc.) but people on fixed incomes often cannot afford to move quickly. With a few exceptions, we are not allowed to save money (assuming we had enough to save) so in order to afford moving costs such as deposits on electric bills, security deposit, etc., people often must often borrow money or seek assistance for these unexpected costs. Hopefully, work we are doing on improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities will alter this bleak picture in the future. However, it will take years for such changes to be meaningful, and Colorado has only recently started work in this arena.

When people with disabilities are forced into homelessness, they often do not recover. We have seen with increasing frequency, people lose housing quickly and end up homeless or institutionalized and are never able to get back into housing.

This bill is not going to solve our severe problem with housing. There is no one bill that will do this. We need policies that prevent homelessness as well as programs to resolve homeless situations. This bill will prevent some people from joining the growing ranks of people who experience homelessness. There is no downside, no cost to the state, and no reason to vote no on this simple proposal.

I apologize that I cannot be there in person, and please accept this email as confirmation of the strong support of SB 17-245 on behalf of the members of the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition.

Sincerely,

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