

Testimony in Support of Colorado HB25-1017  
Community Integration Plan for Individuals with Disabilities

To: Colorado Senate Health & Human Services Committee

From: Marcella Schieffelin | Primary Family Caregiver

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### Why HB25-1017 Matters

HB25-1017 strengthens Colorado's commitment to disability rights by requiring a statewide Community Integration Plan that ensures individuals with disabilities receive services in the most integrated, least restrictive settings appropriate to their needs. **It aligns state practice with the Olmstead v. L.C. Supreme Court decision and provides safeguards when service reductions risk institutionalization.**

### Personal Statement in Support of HB25-1017

Thanks to the **Olmstead Act** and Colorado's commitment to inclusive policies, my adult daughter with disabilities can live in a place of her choosing—in the community, with supports that promote her independence and dignity.

I can't imagine how different her life would be if she were placed in an institutional setting. The thought is heartbreaking. Institutionalization would strip away her autonomy, growth, and ability to live a self-directed life. **We cannot return to those days.**

To do so would be not only a policy failure, but a **human and civil rights tragedy**.

### Community-Based Living Works — The Evidence Is Clear

#### - Higher Quality of Life

Individuals moving from institutions to community-based settings report significantly greater satisfaction, inclusion, and autonomy. (National Core Indicators, 2021)

#### - Better Health & Lower Mortality

People with disabilities in community settings experience better physical and mental health outcomes. (Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 2010)

#### - More Cost-Effective Care

Medicaid HCBS waivers are typically less expensive per person than institutional care. (MACPAC & Kaiser Family Foundation, 2022)

#### - Greater Self-Determination

Living in a chosen environment enhances self-esteem, reduces isolation, and promotes personal development. (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2019)

### A Call for Inclusive Action

I support HB25-1017 because it:

- Promotes civil rights and autonomy
- Creates transparent, measurable goals for integration

- Prevents unnecessary institutionalization
- Reflects best practices and sound public policy

We must protect the rights and dignity of those who rely on us to uphold them. That means ensuring access to **person-centered, community-based options** that honor choice and belonging. HB25-1017 moves us forward. I urge you to support it.

Let's ensure that all Coloradans—regardless of ability—have the right to live, grow, and thrive in their home community.

Respectfully submitted,

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