



February 29, 2024

SUPPORT for HB24-1067 Ballot Access for Candidates with Disabilities

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Mar Galvez Seminario and I am the Legislative and Research Manager at the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights. COLOR is a reproductive justice organization that works to engage and empower Latinas in the state to speak out about the policies that impact our daily lives.

I am writing in support of HB 1067, that will ensure disability and/org geographic location are not a barrier to people's participation in the democratic process. At COLOR, we work to protect our community's voice in our democracy. When I say democracy, I mean the fullness of democracy. At COLOR, we believe the fullness of democracy means access, it means safety, it means living the lives we determine for ourselves, ALL without fear or stigma, or coercion, or criminalization.

As a reproductive justice organization, we know our work is intricately connected to disability justice, a framework that teaches us that our worth is not dependent on what and how much we can produce. Structurally, our laws and our cultural norms operate under the assumption that disability is temporary, and having an able body-mind is the "norm." And those with chronic illnesses and disabilities are thus treated as disposable. What disability justice teaches us is that the reality is the opposite. Anyone can become disabled at any given time, and in fact, systems of oppression, such as racism, sexism, transphobia, xenophobia, etc are disabling factors. Whether it's because neighborhoods of color are disproportionately exposed to air pollution, developing respiratory diseases, or because the toll of the stress that comes with discrimination *does* physically deteriorate our immune and nervous systems.

We know our communities are more vulnerable to experience disability, and when we do become disabled, disability is more likely to be an obstacle to our basic human and civil rights because they are compounded by our disproportionate economic instability, potential language barriers, discrimination (at the polls or otherwise), and more.

If our society is built on democracy, and democracy is dependent upon civic engagement, then we must ensure that everyone has access to the most basic pillar of our democracy. HB23-1067 would make it so all members of our community, particularly those with disabilities and those in rural areas, have access to and can participate in the most basic pillar of democracy and self-determination.

Reproductive Justice centers self-determination and this is why I ask you to vote yes on this bill.