

Hello Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Dr. Natalie Hamilton and I am a family physician in the Denver area who cares for patients with both physical and intellectual disabilities. I am speaking to you on behalf of myself and I urge you to vote yes on HB24-1115 because every patient deserves healthcare accessibility.

As a physician I have the ability to prescribe lifesaving medications, but if a patient can't read the prescription and therefore does not know how to take it then how much am I really doing for them?

Before I began my journey as a physician I worked as a home health care aide and volunteer for athletes competing in Special Olympics. These athletes lived independently and required minimal assistance for various activities such as transportation. They had various disabilities including visual impairments. I remember vividly driving an athlete to a doctor's appointment and being shocked when the physician would address me instead of the athlete to discuss their medical conditions. They were fully capable of taking care of their own health, but stereotypes and prejudices impacted their care. The same goes for medications, and this bill would close the gap. Why do we assume that a generic small font will work for all patients? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 4 people in the United States have some type of disability. Imagine how many patients have difficulty seeing their prescription drug labeling. Now as a physician I personally see every day how easy it is for my patients to mix up their medications. The barrier to not being able to see the prescription drug label as the reason medication is misused is extremely unsafe, costly, and unacceptable in our current technological state.

All patients deserve accessibility and independence to take control of their own healthcare. Thank you for your time today and I ask that you vote yes in support of HB24-1115.