

**DATE: April 18, 2025**

**TO: Colorado House Judiciary Committee**

**RE: SB25-116 Spousal Maintenance Guidelines, Written Testimony**

**FROM: Colorado Women's Bar Association**

Mister Chair, Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to all of you today. My name is Chelsea Augelli, and I am here to represent the Colorado Women's Bar Association (CWBA). I am a Colorado attorney that specializes in family law, but I am not speaking in the capacity of anything but the Women's bar.

I am here to testify in support of the Spousal Maintenance Guidelines, SB116. The CWBA's mission is to promote women in the legal profession and the interests of women, and children, generally. As part of that, the CWBA appreciates that SB116 seeks to protect the interests of victims who may be the monied spouse in a dissolution of marriage proceeding and may be required to pay their abuser spousal maintenance.

We also thank the sponsors of the bill, Sen Snyder and Senator Frizell for their willingness to work with the CWBA regarding our many requested modifications and amendments based on our knowledge and experience as attorneys and the specialized knowledge from our members that specifically practice in family law. There were extensive changes made to this bill that addressed many of the concerns about how this could have an unintended affect on victims.

It is important to note that Colorado remains a no-fault divorce state and marital conduct is not to be considered in a divorce, with limited exceptions. There are many factors that the court uses to determine an award of spousal support, and this addition is one of many, I believe 12 or 13 other factors, the Court is to consider. This provides victims the opportunity to make these arguments to the Court and provide evidence in support of those arguments, which are often nuanced and more complicated currently. Other states such as California and New York have incorporated varied provisions about considerations of coercive control and domestic violence in these determinations.

The CWBA is pleased to see that these nuanced issues affecting many women that are victims of domestic violence, who may also be the monied spouse, are being addressed. Thank you.