



April 2024

To: House Finance Committee

Re: AAUW Support for HB1360- Colorado Disability Opportunity Office

Dear Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are AAUW members in local branches around Colorado.

AAUW has led the fight for economic empowerment for women, and we have made progress over the years. Yet women continue to face barriers to reach our full potential. For women with disabilities, these barriers become even more difficult to overcome, needlessly preventing them from reaching their full potential. When women are held back, it impacts our families, our communities and our state's economy.

Creating a central office for issues affecting people with disabilities is long overdue. HB1360 has a lofty goal: *to ensure full societal inclusion for individuals with disabilities*. Establishing the Colorado Disability Opportunity Office (CDOO) as a central resource for disability issues in the state will provide the framework to reach this goal. Transferring the duties of the Colorado Disability Funding Committee from the Department of Personnel to the CDOO will help streamline the process of obtaining disability benefits and funding for disabled projects.

For these reasons, AAUW of Colorado urges your YES vote on HB-1360 in committee and as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden".

Su Ryden

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American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.