

House Transportation, Housing & Local Government

03/03/2026 Upon Adjournment

HB26-1202 Strategy to Reduce & Prevent Homelessness

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Jessica Ehinger For Colorado Village Collaborative	<p>Members of the committee, my name is Jessica Ehinger; I am the CEO of the Colorado Village Collaborative, and I'm writing to provide testimony in support of HB26-1202. CVC is an organization that aims to bridge the gap between the streets and stable housing by creating and operating transformational shelter communities. We've operated multiple innovative shelter programs throughout the Denver metro area, and throughout our history, one of the biggest challenges we've faced is the overlapping permitting, zoning, and regulatory requirements of municipalities and counties throughout this region. We collaborate closely with DOLA, and we know they understand the complexities of local needs while also recognizing the importance of regional guidelines and support when it comes to homelessness services. Homelessness is not confined by municipal jurisdictions and it doesn't stop at county lines. In just the last year, we've met with leadership in Lakewood, Thornton, Commerce City, Adams County, and Denver City & County, and each of these jurisdictions have their own zoning rules to navigate, despite the overlapping communities that they serve. This legislation will allow providers and local stakeholders to work collaboratively to find solutions, including utilizing documentary fees so as not to raise taxes or increase the cost of homelessness services on local governments. It would also allow CVC to expand and bring our adaptable, community-responsive model to more jurisdictions, giving local governments options for shelter services beyond the traditional congregate model. Creating regional authorities would allow providers like CVC to partner with city and county agencies, pool knowledge and resources on current need, and work together to create preventative and interventive programs that address the root causes of homelessness and hopefully help stem the tide of those facing this potentially life-threatening risk. With the rising rates of</p>

	<p>homelessness and increased threats to Coloradans that can lead to homelessness, we need proactive strategies that leverage collaboration and innovation. I strongly recommend that this committee approve HB26-1202 and take the first step in creating that proactive strategy. Thank you.</p>
<p>Brooke Cowden For themselves</p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>My name is Brooke, I am a constituent of District 53. I am writing to Andrew Boeseneck and other members of the House Transportation, Housing & Local Government committee regarding HB26-1202, imploring you all to vote yes in support of Strategy to Reduce and Prevent Homelessness.</p> <p>In 2025, the Point in Time Count, which is a survey aiming to numerically capture experience of homelessness on a single night, demonstrated that over 3,000 individuals experienced homelessness on Tuesday, January 28th. As a resident of Larimer County, news about upcoming Loveland shelter closure and an updated ordinance allowing ticketing of individuals without alternative shelter option or notice makes passing this bill an urgent matter. Among those surveyed and those who will be impacted are human beings with diverse and complex backgrounds and lives, who are inherently worthy of dignity, respect and compassion.</p> <p>Among others related to this matter, the Right to Rest and Task Force for Youth Experiencing Homelessness bills have not passed and have meant stalled efforts towards better communities and lapsed accountability to and care of all Coloradans. I believe this bill emphasizes collaboration and ensures that we move towards concrete process and ultimately infrastructure to support individuals, families and communities experiencing homelessness, and those at risk of such. As outlined in the bill, concerns such as Colorado’s lack of affordable housing, mean many of us are a medical bill or other fiscal event away from experiencing homelessness. This bill will help care for those impacted by our historical shortcomings and serve as safeguard into the future.</p>

	<p>I greatly appreciate your time and consideration and urge your support of this bill and the people that it will impact.</p> <p>Brooke Cowden</p>
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March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Froelich and Members of the House Transportation and Local Government Committee,

On behalf of Children's Hospital Colorado, the patients and families, and communities we serve, I am writing to respectfully ask for your **vote in support of House Bill 26-1202 Strategy to Reduce and Prevent Homelessness**.

Children's Hospital Colorado is proud to partner with the community to advocate for the health and well-being of kids and families. Our work goes beyond our hospital walls and into the communities we support. In addition to our patient care, Children's Hospital Colorado supports families by providing care coordination, advocacy and facilitating access to community programs and resources.

Children's Colorado is also committed to the philosophy that all children and families have easily accessible, affordable and safe housing options for optimal health and well-being. We recognize that stable housing improves health outcomes. According to a 2011 [study](#) published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, stable and affordable housing has long-lasting effects for children that can impact health, education, and employment throughout people's lives and into future generations.

Yet in many communities across Colorado, children do not have a stable place to live. According to data from the Colorado Department of Education, nearly 23,000 public school students were experiencing some form of housing instability in the 2023-24 school year – a 28% increase from the prior year. The number of children experiencing homelessness or unstable housing has also increased significantly. In just one year, between 2023 and 2024, the number of children living in a shelter or on the street more than doubled.

Periods of homelessness have significant effects on children's long-term health and well-being. Children who have experienced homelessness are less likely to graduate from high school on time¹ and are more likely to experience traumatic events.² They are also at a higher risk for lifelong social-emotional and physical health challenges.³ Children most commonly experience homelessness alongside their family, often because of economic insecurity and difficulty affording housing.⁴

This is why we urge your support for House Bill 26-1202 to improve and facilitate statewide strategies and coordination on homelessness resolution through a multi-pronged approach that includes meeting the needs of children and families. While the state and local governments have taken important steps to prevent homelessness and support affordable housing, there remains a need for improved statewide strategies and coordination between local governments, continuums of care, and other housing organizations to prevent and resolve homelessness. The bill allows for a more coordinated and strategic approach from the Department of Local Affairs to develop a statewide strategy on homelessness, allowing counties and municipalities to form regional authorities to respond to homelessness and allowing documentary fees to be used by local governments for affordable housing.

Thank you for your continued support of the health and wellbeing of Colorado kids. In this effort, we encourage you to vote in favor of House Bill 26-1202 to support strategies that can assist Colorado children and families in having access to affordable housing and resources to prevent and resolve homelessness no matter where they reside in Colorado.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislation. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Julie Selsberg, JD
Attorney, Medical-Legal Partnership
Children's Hospital Colorado

Dorothy Leggett, JD, MPP
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1 Colorado Department of Education. (2024). [Graduation Statistics](#).
2 The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023). [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness in America](#).
3 School House Connection. (2022-2023). [Infant & Toddler Homelessness Across 50 States](#).
4 Colorado Homeless Management Information System. (2025). [Colorado's First Annual State of Homelessness Report 2024](#).

Sources:

- 1 Colorado Department of Education. (2024). [Graduation Statistics.](#)
- 2 The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023). [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness in America.](#)
- 3 School House Connection. (2022-2023). [Infant & Toddler Homelessness Across 50 States.](#)
- 4 Colorado Homeless Management Information System. (2025). [Colorado's First Annual State of Homelessness Report 2024.](#)