



Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Jillian Fabricius, and I am Deputy Director with Illuminate Colorado, a statewide nonprofit working to strengthen families, organizations, and communities to prevent child maltreatment. I am submitting written testimony **to ask you for a yes vote on HB23-1186 Remote Participation in Residential Evictions.**

When families have increased access to court and opportunities to remain stably housed, we strengthen the foundation for families and communities to thrive.

Illuminate supports HB23-1186 for two main reasons:

1. **Requiring an option for remote participation in eviction proceedings removes barriers for parents and caregivers of young children.** When parents with young children are required to attend court in person, they often must pay for childcare to ensure their children are safe and cared for during their court appearance.¹ This places an especially large burden on low income parents and parents living in rural areas who must travel long distances to attend court. By enabling parents to participate in eviction proceedings remotely, this bill would remove barriers unique to parents and caregivers of young children by alleviating the high cost of childcare while a parent is traveling to and attending court.
2. **Increasing opportunities to remain housed reduces chronic stress, preventing child maltreatment.** When families face housing instability, parents often experience chronic stress, inhibiting a parent's ability to respond to their child's needs. Housing instability is connected to increased risk of child maltreatment and child welfare system involvement.² When tenants are unable to appear in court due to unresolved barriers, they often face a default judgment, resulting in an eviction. Therefore, this bill would prevent child maltreatment linked to housing instability and strengthen families by reducing barriers to court participation, increasing opportunities for families to remain stably housed.

In closing, when families have increased access to court participation to remain housed, we strengthen the foundations of families and communities to thrive. **We urge you to support the option for remote participation in residential eviction proceedings to increase opportunities for families to remain housed by voting 'yes' on HB23-1186.**

Sincerely,
Jillian Adams Fabricius, Deputy Director
jfabricius@illuminatecolorado.org

¹ Colorado Access to Justice Commission. (2022). Remote court proceedings: Opportunities and challenges in Colorado. Retrieved From: https://www.coloradoaccesstojustice.org/_files/ugd/c659b2_7a26283a211743319aaaca46824ed725.pdf

² Katherine E. Marcal. (2018). The impact of housing instability on child maltreatment: A causal investigation, *Journal of Family Social Work*, 21:4-5, 331-347. Retrieved From: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10522158.2018.1469563>



April 4, 2023

RE: HB23-1186 Remote Participation in Residential Evictions - SUPPORT

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Kathy Smith, and I am a Volunteer Lobbyist with the League of Women Voters of Colorado's Legislative Action Committee. **I am writing in support of HB23-1186, on behalf of the League's Legislative Action Committee.**

The League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) has been a nonpartisan organization for 103 years, encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our membership spans the state of Colorado with 19 local leagues operating in several regions around the state.

The LWVCO supports policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every person, and equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Currently, when a tenant does not appear for an eviction court proceeding, a default judgment is automatically entered against them, and the tenant is evicted without a hearing. Many tenants face significant barriers to appearing in person for eviction proceedings, including work, child care, transportation, and living with a disability. Tenants living in rural parts of Colorado can be particularly challenged in appearing in person for an eviction hearing, as county courthouses can be located many miles away. The option of remote participation and electronic submittal of documents will result in fewer default judgments and an increase in participation.

Uniform access to due process and justice requires statewide uniformity for eviction proceedings, which includes having a choice for remote participation and accommodations for people with a disability or people with limited English proficiency. **We urge the committee members to vote YES on HB23-1186.** Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Respectfully,
Kathy Smith, Volunteer Lobbyist
League of Women Voters of Colorado
1410 Grant Street, Suite B-204
Denver, CO 80203
303-863-0437