

Legislative Health Benefit Exchange Implementation Review Committee
State Capitol Building
200 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Legislative Health Benefit Exchange Implementation Review Committee:

Thank you for your work in helping to ensure that all Coloradans have access to affordable, quality health care. We write in support of Connect for Health Colorado's (C4HCO) proposed Level 2 establishment grant application including the revised request for federal funding in the total amount of \$13 million to support the assistance network for outreach and enrollment.

Colorado made the decision to establish a state-based health insurance exchange, rather than rely on the federal government to develop a new insurance marketplace for Coloradans. We supported that decision, which was made possible by the passage of SB11-200.

C4HCO is the new marketplace for health insurance contemplated in SB11-200. Building and launching this new marketplace is a significant undertaking. C4HCO must build and operate substantial information technology systems so that people can compare and shop for health insurance products and apply for available tax subsidies. It must track and display quality data and manage complaints and appeals. It must enter into and manage contracts with participating health plans. Most importantly, it must bring people in the door which requires outreach and marketing, establishing and running a customer service center, and supporting accessible, culturally competent, and diverse community-based assisters and navigators.

Like any new business, C4HCO must be sufficiently well capitalized in order to succeed. The Level 2 grant is designed to ensure that our exchange has sufficient funds. To put the Level 2 request into perspective, half of all states that have received Level 2 grants received more than \$125 million.

We fully support efforts to ensure that Coloradans' tax dollars are used judiciously. The federal government has already allocated funding to support exchanges across the country and any grant dollars that Colorado does not receive will be given to other states. Since Coloradans' tax dollars are being used to support other exchanges, it is in the interest of every Coloradan that C4HCO responsibly utilize federal resources to fund start up and operation.

The long-term viability of the exchange strongly depends on its success in the first year when Coloradans' initial experiences will shape their impressions of the exchange for years to come. We urge you to approve the Level 2 grant request. We look forward to working with you to ensure that SB11-200's goals of increasing access, affordability and choice are realized, and that Colorado's Exchange is well run, and customer friendly.

On behalf of:

AARP Colorado
Adams County Department of Human Services
Adelante con la Salud: Latino Health Care Engagement Project
Autism Society of Colorado
Bell Policy Center
Boulder County
THE CENTER/GLBT Community Center of Colorado
Colorado AIDS Project
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Colorado Progressive Coalition
Family Voices Colorado
Gilpin County Human Services
Health District of Northern Larimer County
Jefferson County Human Services
The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People
One Colorado
Washington County Department of Human Services

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