



Servicios de La Raza
4055 Tejon Street
Denver, CO 80211
Phone (303) 458-5851
Fax (303) 455-1332
www.serviciosdelaraza.org

May 9th 2013

Connect for Health Colorado Board Members
3773 Cherry Creek Driver North
Denver, CO

Esteemed Members of the Board:

As a long standing, culturally responsive community organization for 41 years, I write this letter on behalf of Servicios de la Raza, requesting that the funding for Connect for Health Colorado be maintained at the originally proposed \$125 million. It is imperative that sufficient funding for the assistance network is requested, since underfunding this initiative would have adverse impacts on the quality and amount of services offered. Consequently, the impact of underfunding this initiative will be felt by the consumers of the exchange, and will impede the true potential of the community based organizations like Servicios de La Raza, which applied to become hubs and assistance sites.

Coloradans bravely undertook a huge project with Connect for Health Colorado. Many taxpayers have recognized the importance of covering the uninsured and offering better choices for underinsured Coloradans. Getting Coloradans insured will provide for monetary savings at an individual and state level; most importantly, insured Coloradans will provide for a healthier community. As a community based organization, we have consistently addressed the needs of our community and have seen the havoc that underfunding causes, because it allows for our constituents to fall through the cracks. Historically, our organization has been severely underfunded and we must always make do with what we are given. Our staff members put in long hours on a regular basis in order to best meet the needs of the community, but are often faced with the reality of leaving many needs unmet, because budgets are underestimated and services are undervalued by potential funders.

The services that need to be provided to make Connect for Health Colorado successful are a huge undertaking, and funding is an economic imperative to ensure successful delivery of consumer services. Our years of work with communities of color have informed our approach regarding the great need for outreach— consumer education that is culturally and linguistically appropriate, but most importantly the need for enrollment assistance and face to face navigation of the labyrinthine systems of healthcare. Cutting funding directly contradicts the Connect for Health Colorado's goals of increased access, affordability and choice of insurance for consumers.

We urge the Board to ensure a successful exchange in Colorado starting with the prerequisite of adequate funding for the long-term sustainability of Connect for Health Colorado. Adequate funding will ensure that Colorado implements a robust assistance network that will help enroll Coloradans in health insurance so they can get the care they need when they need it.

Respectfully,

Rudolph Gonzales, Executive Director
303.458.5851

