



## **VOTE YES ON HB17-1143, HB17-1126, HB17-1129**

Disability Law Colorado is a Colorado nonprofit organization established to protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities. It serves as the federally-mandated and state-designated Protection and Advocacy System for people with disabilities as authorized by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals Rights section of the Rehabilitation Act. Disability Law Colorado also serves as the state-wide Medicare/Medicaid Ombudsman. Disability Law Colorado is in a unique position as our staff interacts with Medicaid client correspondence on an almost daily basis.

### **These bills would greatly increase client understanding of HCPF correspondence and further ensure the protections in current law**

The Interim Study Committee on Communication between the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) and Medicaid Clients (Interim Study Committee) was created in April 2016 to focus on three main issues: the form and content of communication, the frequency of communication, and the understandability of the communication. Disability Law Colorado supports all efforts to simplify and clarify client notices in Medicaid, making the documents user friendly, providing information clients need to assess the propriety of the Departments' action, and comply with the legal requirements. Our Medicaid clients report that letters issued by HCPF are difficult to understand and do not clearly convey the information about the Departments action or decision. **HB17-1143** builds upon the recommendations of the 2016 Interim Study Committee and the spring 2016 HCPF Improving Client Communications Report by continuing to audit client communications on a regular basis.

**HB17-1126** simplifies the hearing process and conserves resources by allowing an Administrative Law Judge to review the sufficiency of the Notice of Action before having a hearing on the merits. Additionally, **HB17-1129** clarifies that Medicaid clients who appeal a termination or reduction in benefits within 10 days are automatically ensured continuing benefits during the appeal, unless the client specifically opts-out. Disability Law Colorado has had instances where client benefits have not continued automatically despite a timely appeal.

*Clear communication from HCPF should be client centered, and these reforms further that goal.*

### **Disability Law Colorado supports HB19-1126, HB17-1129, and HB17-1143.**

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