

Written testimony as prepared for delivery in support of SB19-228 Substance Use Disorders Prevention Measures [F. Winter | D. Moreno / B. Buentello | J. Singer] by Erin Miller, Vice President of Health Initiatives at the Colorado Children’s Campaign

April 11, 2019

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

1:30 p.m.

LSB-B

- Chair Fields and members of the Committee, my name is Erin Miller and I serve as Vice President of Health Initiatives at the Colorado Children’s Campaign.
- Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 228 and thank you to Senators Winter and Moreno for bringing this bill forward.
- This bill contains a number of important policies that will help to prevent substance use disorders and to mitigate their impact on Colorado families and children.
- We know that misuse of prescription pain drugs is the most common substance use behavior among Colorado youth after tobacco, alcohol and marijuana and the youth opioid prevention grants in this bill will create innovative ways to combat these behaviors among youth.
- However, I’d like to spend most of my time today focusing on the Maternal and Child Health Pilot Programs outlined in section 15.
- There is a real need to improve substance use disorder services for pregnant and parenting people. From 2011 – 2016, neonatal abstinence syndrome rates increased by 120 percent in Colorado.¹
- And we hear about the personal and community costs of this issue from our leaders in our It’s About Kids network, who describe struggling to find enough volunteers in their communities to hold and comfort the newborn babies going through withdrawal in our hospitals across the state.
- Research shows that integrated primary and behavioral health care is an extremely effective method for getting folks into treatment in treatment.
- This bill creates two complementary pilot programs to provide integrated care that would help increase the number of women who are referred to

¹ <http://www.corxconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/Heroin-in-Colorado-April-2018.pdf>

and receive substance use and mental health services prenatally and in the postpartum period – helping to create strong Colorado families.

- For both of these pilots, after the initial cost of startup, all eligible Medicaid services are reimbursable through Medicaid, allowing for a more sustainable program.
- These pilots are Colorado solutions that are based on some of the most promising practices from other states tackling this issue – where we have seen these integrated services significantly improve outcomes for mom and babies.
- Among women with substance use disorders, these programs have increased access to prenatal care, reduced c-sections, and reduced preterm birth and the need for higher-level newborn care.
- They also reduce substance use 6-months postpartum – reducing the risk of mortality among new moms and helping new parents form healthy attachments with their children.
- And among women with depression, these programs can help them be the kind of moms they want to be to their babies and improve child wellbeing and development.
- Thank you again to Senators Winter and Moreno. We urge your support of this critical bill and I am happy to take any questions.