

Testimony in Opposition to SB16-162, Medicaid Recipient Access to Medical Professionals

House State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee – May 4, 2016 – Erin Miller

- Thank you, Chairwoman Ryden and members of the committee for having me here today.
- My name is Erin Miller, I'm Vice President of Health Initiatives at the Colorado Children's Campaign. The Children's Campaign is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization committed since 1985 to realizing every chance for every child.
- The Children's Campaign is opposed to Senate Bill 162 because of its potential impact on Medicaid client access to affordable health care. One-third of the kids in Colorado use Medicaid for their health insurance coverage.
- This bill has the potential to create real financial strain on beneficiaries, through high bills for covered services – and any service that is rendered as a result of a referral from a non-enrolled provider – such as a filled prescription or image.
- Currently, one of the largest benefits of Medicaid coverage is the protection it provides against catastrophic out-of-pocket medical costs, the risks of having a bill sent to collections, or the need to borrow money to cover a medical bill – these are all really important in a program that provides coverage to people with very limited financial resources.
- Without better protections for clients, these financial benefits could be lost.
- And we know that financial hardship and the stress that it creates is bad for kids across all domains of their development.
- We understand that there are concerns with access to providers in the Medicaid program, but we think that those issues should be addressed specifically and thoughtfully and with built-in protections for clients.
- While we understand the intent of this bill, we think that this issue deserves a scalpel approach and requires a broader and more thoughtful stakeholder process to avoid any unintended consequences. We would be happy to engage in those conversations over the summer.