

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 24-0554.01 Chelsea Princell x4335

HOUSE BILL 24-1286

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Joseph and Lindsay, Bacon, Brown, Clifford, Garcia, Mabrey, Rutinel, Velasco

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Roberts,

House Committees

Judiciary
Finance

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING MEASURES TO INCREASE ACCESS TO THE COURTS FOR**
102 **INDIGENT PERSONS.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill creates the equal justice fund authority as a special purpose authority to administer the equal justice fund for the purpose of providing monetary support to local organizations that provide legal representation and legal advice to low-income individuals.

The bill requires certain court filings to incur an additional \$20 filing fee that must be annually deposited into the equal justice fund.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.*

The bill prohibits a judge from requiring indigent parties to pay the docket fee for a civil action.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds that:

4 (a) Access to justice is a basic principle of the rule of law, and it
5 ensures that all persons, institutions, and entities, public and private,
6 including the state, are held accountable to laws that are publicly
7 promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated;

8 (b) In the absence of access to justice, people are unable to have
9 their voices heard, exercise their rights, challenge discrimination, or hold
10 decision-makers accountable;

11 (c) Providing civil legal aid to people in poverty is vital to
12 Colorado in supporting justice for victims of intimate partner violence,
13 ensuring veterans receive their well-earned benefits, protecting against
14 elder abuse, fighting human trafficking, protecting access to necessities
15 such as food and shelter, and other areas;

16 (d) Without access to civil legal representation, many laws and
17 protections remain unenforceable for low-income Coloradans;

18 (e) State-funded legal aid in certain civil matters reinforces the
19 importance of the right to counsel to ensure a fair trial;

20 (f) Equal access to justice would have little effective meaning if
21 an individual could not afford that right on the basis of income;

22 (g) In order to meet the needs of our most vulnerable community
23 members, it is necessary, appropriate, equitable, and in the best interest
24 of all Coloradans to create a special purpose authority to allow
25 low-income Coloradans access to the court system by imposing a fee on

1 a party's first court filing;

2 (h) The fee imposed is for the specific purpose of serving users of
3 Colorado courts, who will pay the fee on all initial pleadings and answers
4 because the fee:

5 (I) Will serve all qualified court users by increasing the efficiency
6 of courts for all court users by reducing slowdowns caused by
7 self-represented parties because providing guidance and legal assistance
8 to unrepresented litigants increases efficiency in courts;

9 (II) Will increase the provision of justice in our courts for all court
10 users, regardless of income, which is an interest shared among all court
11 users;

12 (III) Is collected at a rate reasonably calculated based on the
13 overall costs of the services provided by the authority; and

14 (IV) Is not a tax;

15 (i) Furthering access to Colorado's civil courts is a pillar of our
16 democratic legal systems; and

17 (j) The state of Colorado must endeavor to systematically support
18 the delivery of equal access to legal aid services to all qualified
19 Coloradans.

20 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that the lack of
21 access to civil legal justice is a problem that has serious social, legal,
22 economic, and political consequences, and the general assembly enacts
23 this legislation to fund equal access to justice and reaffirm the
24 commitment to equitable access to the civil legal process.

25 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 2 to article
26 5.7 of title 13 as follows:

27 **PART 2**

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EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY

13-5.7-201. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS PART 2, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(1) "AUTHORITY" MEANS THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY CREATED IN SECTION 13-5.7-202.

(2) "BOARD" MEANS THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY BOARD CREATED IN SECTION 13-5.7-204.

(3) "EQUAL JUSTICE FEE" MEANS THE FEE COLLECTED ON CIVIL ACTIONS AS SET FORTH IN SECTIONS 13-4-112 (3)(a), 13-32-101 (9)(a), AND 13-32-102 (7)(a). PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2.

(4) "QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER" MEANS A 501 (c)(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN THE COLORADO RECIPIENT OF A FEDERAL LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT THAT PROVIDES LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND ADVICE TO PEOPLE IN COLORADO WHO ARE AT OR BELOW TWO HUNDRED FIFTY PERCENT OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINE TO SUPPORT THEIR ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS SUCH AS HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH SERVICES, EDUCATION, AND ASSISTANCE WITH FAMILY MATTERS AND IMMIGRATION STATUS ISSUES.

13-5.7-202. Creation and purpose. THERE IS CREATED AS A SPECIAL PURPOSE AUTHORITY, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 24-77-102, THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY, WHICH IS A BODY CORPORATE AND A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE, WHICH SHALL NOT BE AN AGENCY OF STATE GOVERNMENT AND SHALL NOT BE SUBJECT TO ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTION BY ANY DEPARTMENT, COMMISSION, BOARD, BUREAU, OR AGENCY OF THE STATE. THE AUTHORITY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DISTRIBUTING THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE PURSUANT TO SECTION 13-5.7-206 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING EQUAL ACCESS TO LEGAL AID SERVICES

1 AND TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY OF THE COURT SYSTEM FOR ALL COURT
2 USERS.

3 **13-5.7-203. General powers.** (1) IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER
4 POWERS GRANTED TO THE AUTHORITY IN THIS PART 2, THE AUTHORITY HAS
5 THE FOLLOWING POWERS:

6 (a) TO HAVE THE DUTIES, PRIVILEGES, IMMUNITIES, RIGHTS,
7 LIABILITIES, AND DISABILITIES OF A BODY CORPORATE AND POLITICAL
8 SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE;

9 (b) TO HAVE PERPETUAL EXISTENCE AND SUCCESSION;

10 (c) TO ADOPT, HAVE, AND USE A SEAL AND TO ALTER THE SAME AT
11 ITS PLEASURE;

12 (d) TO SUE AND BE SUED;

13 (e) TO ENTER INTO ANY CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT NOT
14 INCONSISTENT WITH THIS PART 2 OR THE LAWS OF THE STATE;

15 (f) TO PURCHASE, LEASE, LEASE WITH AN OPTION TO PURCHASE,
16 TRADE, EXCHANGE, OR OTHERWISE ACQUIRE, MAINTAIN, HOLD, IMPROVE,
17 MORTGAGE, ENCUMBER, AND DISPOSE OF REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL
18 PROPERTY, WHETHER TANGIBLE OR INTANGIBLE, AND ANY INTEREST,
19 INCLUDING EASEMENTS AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY, WITHOUT RESTRICTION OR
20 LIMITATION;

21 (g) TO ACQUIRE OFFICE SPACE, EQUIPMENT, SERVICES, SUPPLIES,
22 AND INSURANCE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSES OF THIS PART
23 2;

24 (h) TO DEPOSIT ANY MONEY OF THE AUTHORITY IN ANY BANKING
25 INSTITUTION OR IN ANY DEPOSITORY AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO SECTION
26 24-75-603, AND TO APPOINT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING SUCH
27 DEPOSITS, ONE OR MORE PERSONS TO ACT AS CUSTODIANS OF THE MONEY

1 OF THE AUTHORITY, WHO SHALL GIVE SURETY BONDS IN SUCH AMOUNTS
2 AND FORM AND FOR SUCH PURPOSES AS THE BOARD REQUIRES;

3 (i) TO CONTRACT FOR AND TO ACCEPT ANY GIFTS, GRANTS, AND
4 LOANS OF FUNDS, PROPERTY, OR ANY OTHER AID IN ANY FORM FROM THE
5 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THE STATE, ANY STATE AGENCY, OR ANY OTHER
6 SOURCE, OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF, AND TO COMPLY, SUBJECT TO
7 THE PROVISIONS OF THIS PART 2, WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF
8 SUCH CONTRACTS OR THE ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH ITEMS;

9 (j) TO HAVE AND EXERCISE ALL RIGHTS AND POWERS NECESSARY
10 OR INCIDENTAL TO OR IMPLIED FROM THE SPECIFIC POWERS GRANTED IN
11 THIS PART 2, WHICH SPECIFIC POWERS SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A
12 LIMITATION UPON ANY POWER NECESSARY OR APPROPRIATE TO CARRY OUT
13 THE PURPOSES AND INTENT OF THIS PART 2;

14 (k) TO FIX THE TIME AND PLACE OR PLACES AT WHICH ITS REGULAR
15 AND SPECIAL MEETINGS ARE TO BE HELD;

16 (l) TO ELECT ONE MEMBER AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD AND
17 ANOTHER MEMBER AS VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD AND TO ELECT
18 ONE OR MORE MEMBERS AS SECRETARY AND TREASURER OF THE BOARD
19 AND ELECT OR APPOINT SUCH OTHER OFFICERS AS THE BOARD MAY
20 DETERMINE AND PROVIDE FOR THEIR DUTIES AND TERMS OF OFFICE;

21 (m) TO APPOINT AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, AND PROFESSIONAL AND
22 BUSINESS ADVISERS, INCLUDING REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS,
23 CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES, PROPERTY MANAGERS, ATTORNEYS,
24 ACCOUNTANTS, AND FINANCIAL ADVISERS AS MAY FROM TIME TO TIME BE
25 NECESSARY IN THE AUTHORITY'S JUDGMENT TO ACCOMPLISH THE
26 PURPOSES OF THIS PART 2, AND TO FIX THE COMPENSATION OF SUCH
27 AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, AND ADVISERS, AND TO ESTABLISH THE POWERS AND

1 DUTIES OF ALL AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, AND ADVISERS, AS WELL AS ANY
2 OTHER PERSON CONTRACTING WITH THE AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE
3 SERVICES, INCLUDING TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT OR THE CONTRACT
4 FOR SERVICES;

5 (n) TO MAKE AND EXECUTE AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, AND
6 OTHER INSTRUMENTS NECESSARY OR CONVENIENT IN THE EXERCISE OF THE
7 POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2,
8 INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, CONTRACTS WITH ANY PERSON, FIRM,
9 CORPORATION, MUNICIPALITY, STATE AGENCY, COUNTY, OR OTHER
10 ENTITY. ALL MUNICIPALITIES, COUNTIES, AND STATE AGENCIES MAY
11 ENTER INTO AND DO ALL THINGS NECESSARY TO PERFORM ANY SUCH
12 ARRANGEMENT OR CONTRACT WITH THE AUTHORITY.

13 (o) OTHER POWERS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THE AUTHORITY'S
14 SPECIFIC GOALS AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2.

15 **13-5.7-204. Equal justice authority board - membership and**
16 **meetings - rules.** (1) THE AUTHORITY IS GOVERNED BY THE EQUAL
17 JUSTICE AUTHORITY BOARD, WHICH IS MADE UP OF SEVEN MEMBERS WHO
18 ARE RESIDENTS OF THIS STATE AND HAVE A DEMONSTRATED COMMITMENT
19 TO PROVIDING CIVIL LEGAL AID THROUGH CURRENT OR PRIOR
20 EMPLOYMENT WITH A QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER, OR THROUGH
21 SUBSTANTIAL VOLUNTEER SERVICE WITH A SIMILAR ORGANIZATION.

22 (2) MEMBERS OF THE BOARD MUST BE APPOINTED AS FOLLOWS:

23 (a) ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE
24 COLORADO SUPREME COURT;

25 (b) ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL;

26 (c) ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE COLORADO BAR
27 ASSOCIATION;

1 (d) ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE COLORADO LAWYER TRUST
2 ACCOUNT FOUNDATION; AND

3 (e) THREE MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COLORADO ACCESS TO
4 JUSTICE COMMISSION, AT LEAST TWO OF WHOM ARE EMPLOYED BY A
5 QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER, AND AT LEAST ONE OF WHOM IS
6 EMPLOYED BY A QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER THAT EMPLOYS TEN
7 OR FEWER FULL-TIME ATTORNEYS.

8 (3) THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL MAKE REASONABLE
9 EFFORTS TO APPOINT BOARD MEMBERS THAT REFLECT THE GEOGRAPHIC
10 AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF THE STATE, INCLUDING MEMBERS FROM
11 BOTH RURAL AND URBAN PARTS OF THE STATE, AND MEMBERS OF DIVERSE
12 POLITICAL, RACIAL, ABILITY, CULTURAL GROUP, AND SOCIOECONOMIC
13 STATUS.

14 (4) MEMBERS SERVE TERMS OF THREE YEARS; EXCEPT THAT
15 INITIAL TERMS OF THE MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE COLORADO ACCESS
16 TO JUSTICE COMMISSION ARE TWO-YEAR TERMS IN ORDER TO STAGGER THE
17 TERMS SO THAT NO MORE THAN FOUR MEMBERS' TERMS EXPIRE IN THE
18 SAME YEAR. THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL DESIGNATE THE INITIAL
19 TERMS AND FILL ANY VACANCIES ON THE BOARD.

20 (5) TERMS EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31 OF THE FINAL YEAR OF THE
21 TERM.

22 (6) MEMBERS MAY BE REAPPOINTED TO SERVE TWO ADDITIONAL
23 TERMS.

24 (7) A MEMBER MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE BOARD BY MAJORITY
25 VOTE OF THE BOARD FOR MISFEASANCE, MALFEASANCE, WILLFUL NEGLECT
26 OF DUTY, OR OTHER CAUSE AFTER NOTICE AND A PUBLIC HEARING, UNLESS
27 NOTICE AND A PUBLIC HEARING ARE EXPRESSLY WAIVED IN WRITING BY

1 THE MEMBER BEING REMOVED.

2 (8) THE BOARD SHALL MEET AT LEAST FOUR TIMES PER YEAR.

3 (9) THE BOARD SHALL ELECT A CHAIR AND A VICE-CHAIR AT ITS
4 FIRST MEETING OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR.

5 (10) MEMBERS SERVE WITHOUT COMPENSATION BUT MUST BE
6 REIMBURSED FOR ACTUAL AND REASONABLE EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE
7 PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

8 (11) THE BOARD SHALL ADOPT ITS OWN RULES OF PROCEDURE AND
9 KEEP A RECORD OF ALL PROCEEDINGS.

10 (12) THE BOARD, BY RESOLUTION, SHALL ESTABLISH RULES TO
11 ENSURE MONEY RECEIVED FROM A GRANT IS USED FOR PURPOSES
12 SPECIFIED IN SECTION 13-5.7-206 AND TO ESTABLISH A FUNDING FORMULA
13 TO USE TO DETERMINE THE GRANT DISTRIBUTION AMOUNT FOR EACH
14 QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER.

15 (13) (a) THE AUTHORITY MAY COOPERATE AND ENTER INTO
16 CONTRACTS WITH THE COMMISSION OR ANOTHER AGENCY OR ENTITY, FOR
17 ADMINISTRATIVE OR OPERATIONAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING FOR STAFFING.

18 (b) THE AUTHORITY SHALL PAY THE CONTRACTED ENTITY IN
19 ADVANCE FOR ALL AGREED UPON COSTS INCURRED BY THE CONTRACTED
20 ENTITY IN PROVIDING STAFFING FOR THE AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT ITS
21 MISSION, INCLUDING COMPENSATION FOR EMPLOYEES STAFFING THE
22 AUTHORITY AND ANY ADMINISTRATION AND INDIRECT COSTS ASSOCIATED
23 WITH STAFFING THE AUTHORITY.

24 (14) IF THE CONTRACTED ENTITY EXPECTS TO INCUR ACTUAL
25 COSTS AS A RESULT OF STAFFING THE AUTHORITY THAT EXCEEDS THE
26 AMOUNT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO SECTION
27 13-5.7-206, THE AUTHORITY SHALL PAY THE CONTRACTED ENTITY FOR ALL

1 COSTS INCURRED BY THE CONTRACTED ENTITY IN PROVIDING STAFFING TO
2 THE AUTHORITY, INCLUDING, BUT LIMITED TO, COMPENSATION FOR
3 EMPLOYEES STAFFING THE AUTHORITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS IN AN
4 AMOUNT AGREED UPON BY THE AUTHORITY AND CONTRACTED ENTITY.

5 (15) THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHALL REPRESENT THE AUTHORITY
6 IN A CAUSE OF ACTION.

7 **13-5.7-205. Imposition and collection of the equal justice fee.**

8 (1) BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THE AUTHORITY SHALL IMPOSE, AND
9 THE COURT SHALL COLLECT ON BEHALF OF THE AUTHORITY, AN EQUAL
10 JUSTICE FEE IN THE AMOUNT SPECIFIED IN SECTIONS 13-4-112 (3)(a),
11 13-32-101 (9)(a), AND 13-32-102 (7)(a) ON THE COURT FILINGS SPECIFIED
12 IN SECTIONS 13-4-112 (1)(a) AND (1)(b); 13-32-101 (1), EXCEPT FILINGS
13 IN SMALL CLAIMS COURT; AND 13-32-102 (1)(a), (1)(b), AND (1)(f). FOR
14 THE PURPOSE OF MINIMIZING COMPLIANCE COSTS FOR COURT USERS AND
15 ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS FOR THE AUTHORITY, THE COURT SHALL COLLECT
16 THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE ON BEHALF OF THE AUTHORITY IN THE SAME
17 MANNER IN WHICH IT COLLECTS COURT FILING FEES IMPOSED BY SECTIONS
18 13-4-112, 13-32-101, AND 13-32-102; EXCEPT THAT THE COURT SHALL
19 NOT TRANSMIT THE COLLECTED EQUAL JUSTICE FEES TO THE STATE
20 TREASURER FOR DEPOSIT TO ANY STATE FUND BUT SHALL INSTEAD REMIT
21 THE FEES COLLECTED TO THE AUTHORITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
22 PROCESS DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION.

23 (2) THE AUTHORITY SHALL MAINTAIN AN ACCOUNT IN A FINANCIAL
24 INSTITUTION TO WHICH ALL MONEY COLLECTED FOR THE EQUAL JUSTICE
25 FEE IS DEPOSITED. THE AUTHORITY SHALL WORK WITH THE JUDICIAL
26 DEPARTMENT TO DEVELOP A PROCESS THAT ENSURES THAT EACH COURT
27 IS ABLE TO PROMPTLY AND EFFICIENTLY DEPOSIT ALL EQUAL JUSTICE FEES

1 COLLECTED DIRECTLY TO THE ACCOUNT OR OTHERWISE PROMPTLY AND
2 EFFICIENTLY REMIT SUCH FEES TO THE AUTHORITY.

3 (3) EQUAL JUSTICE FEES COLLECTED AND REMITTED TO THE
4 AUTHORITY PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION ARE NOT STATE REVENUE.

5 **13-5.7-206. Distribution of equal justice fees - purpose.** (1) ON
6 JULY 1, 2025, AND EACH JULY 1 THEREAFTER, THE AUTHORITY SHALL
7 ANNUALLY DISTRIBUTE ALL MONEY DEPOSITED INTO THE AUTHORITY'S
8 ACCOUNT AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 13-5.7-205 (2), LESS THE AUTHORITY'S
9 DIRECT AND INDIRECT EXPENSES IN ADMINISTERING THE REQUIREMENTS
10 OF THIS PART 2 AND ANY OTHER RELATED WORK COMPLETED TO ADVANCE
11 THE MISSION OF THE AUTHORITY. THE AUTHORITY SHALL DISTRIBUTE
12 SIXTY-SEVEN PERCENT OF THE REMAINING REVENUE TO THE COLORADO
13 RECIPIENT OF A FEDERAL LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT
14 AND THIRTY-THREE PERCENT TO QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDERS.

15 (2) THE BOARD, BY RESOLUTION, SHALL ESTABLISH A FUNDING
16 FORMULA TO USE TO DETERMINE THE DISTRIBUTION AMOUNT FOR EACH
17 QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER. IN DEVELOPING THE FORMULA, THE
18 BOARD SHALL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

19 (a) THE NUMBER OF ATTORNEY HOURS SPENT SERVING PEOPLE IN
20 COLORADO IN POVERTY IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR;

21 (b) THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME ATTORNEYS EMPLOYED BY THE
22 QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDER;

23 (c) THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN POVERTY WHO RECEIVE
24 LEGAL REPRESENTATION OR LEGAL ADVICE FROM THE QUALIFIED CIVIL
25 LEGAL AID PROVIDER;

26 (d) GEOGRAPHIC REACH OF SERVICES; AND

27 (e) ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE SERVING POPULATIONS WITH

1 BARRIERS TO LEGAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
2 AND PEOPLE WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

3 (3) IN ESTABLISHING THE FUNDING FORMULA PURSUANT TO
4 SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION, THE BOARD SHALL CONSIDER THE VITAL
5 IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK OF QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDERS
6 THAT EMPLOY TEN OR FEWER FULL-TIME ATTORNEYS TO LOW-INCOME
7 COLORADO COMMUNITIES.

8 (4) MONEY RECEIVED FROM A GRANT MUST BE USED FOR THE
9 FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

10 (a) TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION TO INDIGENT
11 PERSONS BY PROVIDING ANNUAL GRANTS TO THE COLORADO RECIPIENT OF
12 A FEDERAL LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT AND OTHER
13 QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDERS PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION;

14 (b) TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF COLORADO COURTS FOR ALL
15 COURT USERS BY REDUCING SLOWDOWNS CAUSED BY
16 SELF-REPRESENTATION; AND

17 (c) TO PAY THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS OF ADMINISTERING
18 THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS PART 2, INCLUDING PAYMENT FOR COSTS
19 ASSOCIATED WITH STAFFING THE AUTHORITY AND REIMBURSEMENT OF THE
20 ACTUAL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES OF BOARD MEMBERS AS REQUIRED BY
21 SECTION 13-5.7-204.

22 **13-5.7-207. Report.** (1) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2026, AND
23 EACH JANUARY 1 THEREAFTER, THE AUTHORITY SHALL PREPARE AND
24 SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES JUDICIARY
25 COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, OR THEIR
26 SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, THAT DETAILS THE USE OF THE EQUAL JUSTICE
27 FEES. AT A MINIMUM, THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE:

1 (a) HOW MUCH MONEY WAS COLLECTED IN EQUAL JUSTICE FEES
2 AND DEPOSITED IN THE AUTHORITY'S ACCOUNT AS REQUIRED BY SECTION
3 13-5.7-205 (2) IN THE PRECEDING YEAR;

4 (b) HOW MUCH MONEY THE COLORADO RECIPIENT OF A FEDERAL
5 LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT AND OTHER QUALIFIED CIVIL
6 LEGAL AID PROVIDERS RECEIVED FROM THE COLLECTED EQUAL JUSTICE
7 FEES IN THE PRECEDING YEAR;

8 (c) THE AMOUNT OF MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE COLLECTED
9 EQUAL JUSTICE FEES THAT REMAINED UNUSED BY THE COLORADO
10 RECIPIENT OF A FEDERAL LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT
11 AND THE QUALIFIED CIVIL LEGAL AID PROVIDERS AT THE CONCLUSION OF
12 THE PRECEDING YEAR; AND

13 (d) THE TYPES OF LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WHO
14 RECEIVED LEGAL SERVICES FROM THE COLORADO RECIPIENT OF A FEDERAL
15 LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FIELD GRANT AND OTHER QUALIFIED CIVIL
16 LEGAL AID PROVIDERS THAT RECEIVED MONEY FROM THE COLLECTED
17 EQUAL JUSTICE FEES.

18 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-4-112, **add** (3) as
19 follows:

20 **13-4-112. Fees of the clerk of court of appeals - equal justice**
21 **fee collection.** (3) (a) BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THE CLERK OF THE
22 COURT OF APPEALS SHALL COLLECT THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE ON FILINGS
23 SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTIONS (1)(a) AND (1)(b) OF THIS SECTION ON BEHALF
24 OF THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY AND TRANSMIT THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE
25 IN THE AMOUNT OF THIRTY DOLLARS IN THE MANNER SPECIFIED IN SECTION
26 13-5.7-205 (2).

27 (b) AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE INCOME IS BELOW TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

1 PERCENT OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE IS EXEMPT FROM PAYING THE
2 EQUAL JUSTICE FEE REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

3 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-32-101, **add** (9)
4 as follows:

5 **13-32-101. Docket fees in civil actions - judicial stabilization**
6 **cash fund - justice center cash fund - justice center maintenance fund**
7 **- equal justice fee collection - created - report - legislative declaration.**

8 (9) (a) BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THE COURT SHALL COLLECT THE
9 EQUAL JUSTICE FEE ON FILINGS SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS
10 SECTION IN THE AMOUNT OF THIRTY DOLLARS ON CIVIL ACTIONS FILED IN
11 DISTRICT COURT AND TEN DOLLARS ON CIVIL ACTIONS FILED IN COUNTY
12 COURT, EXCEPT FOR FILINGS IN SMALL CLAIMS COURT, ON BEHALF OF THE
13 EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY AND TRANSMIT THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE IN THE
14 MANNER SPECIFIED IN SECTION 13-5.7-205 (2).

15 (b) AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE INCOME IS BELOW TWO HUNDRED FIFTY
16 PERCENT OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE IS EXEMPT FROM PAYING THE
17 EQUAL JUSTICE FEE REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (9)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

18 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 13-32-102, **add** (7)
19 as follows:

20 **13-32-102. Fees in probate proceedings - equal justice fee**
21 **collection.** (7) (a) BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, THE COURT SHALL
22 COLLECT THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE IN THE AMOUNT OF THIRTY DOLLARS ON
23 FILINGS SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTIONS (1)(a), (1)(b), AND (1)(f) OF THIS
24 SECTION ON BEHALF OF THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY AND TRANSMIT
25 THE EQUAL JUSTICE FEE IN THE MANNER SPECIFIED IN SECTION 13-5.7-205
26 (2).

27 (b) AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE INCOME IS BELOW TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

1 PERCENT OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE IS EXEMPT FROM PAYING THE
2 EQUAL JUSTICE FEE REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (7)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

3 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-77-102, **amend**
4 (15)(b)(XIX) and (15)(b)(XX); and **add** (15)(b)(XXI) as follows:

5 **24-77-102. Definitions.** As used in this article 77, unless the
6 context otherwise requires:

7 (15) (b) "Special purpose authority" includes, but is not limited to:

8 (XIX) The Colorado electric transmission authority created in
9 section 40-42-103 (1); **and**

10 (XX) The middle-income housing authority created in section
11 29-4-1104 (1); **AND**

12 (XXI) THE EQUAL JUSTICE AUTHORITY CREATED IN SECTION
13 13-5.7-202.

14 **SECTION 7. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
15 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
16 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
17 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
18 institutions.