



May 2, 2022

Dear Members of the Senate Health & Human Services Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB22-1369. On behalf of Children's Hospital Colorado, we are pleased to share our support and urge you to vote YES on this important bill.

This committee has heard repeatedly of the mental health crisis facing children and youth in Colorado. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, children and families were struggling to access the services and supports they needed. However, during the pandemic, these needs have been exacerbated as children and families experienced tremendous stress driven by disruptions in daily routine, social isolation, financial insecurity and grief.

There has been a lot of media coverage about during the pandemic about rising rates of anxiety, depression and suicide. Suicide continues to be a leading cause of death in Colorado (and nationwide) for children and youth age 10-24. However, we are also seeing negative impacts in babies and toddlers. At Children's Hospital Colorado, we've seen developmental regression in young children, such as more tantrums, problems with sleeping and eating and regression in potty training. Providing mental health supports to families with children from prenatal to six of years of age has never been more important.

HB22-1369 provides \$2 million to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood to support an evidence-based, two-generation and home-based prevention and early intervention program for infants, young children and their caregivers. It also requires ongoing quality assessments and improvement recommendations to ensure high-quality implementation and sustainability of this program. This one-time investment builds a strong foundation for infant and young children, but sustainability of these efforts is even more important. It also requires the program to report outcomes to both the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) and the Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) to ensure that the BHA is accountable for outcomes along the full care continuum, including infant and early childhood mental health.

We urge you to support HB22-1369 and thank you for your commitment to the behavioral health needs of Colorado infant, young children and their families. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

Sincerely,

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Senate Health & Human Services
 05/02/2022 01:30 PM
 HB22-1399 Music Therapist Title Protection
 Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

| Name, Position, Representing | Typed Text of Testimony |
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| Rebekah Stewart For Self | <p>Thank you Madam Chair, members of the Committee,</p> <p>My name is Rebekah Stewart and I have been a board-certified music therapist with a nonprofit practice in the community serving children and adults with both developmental and neurological differences for the past 9 years. I am also the co-director of our internship program, providing the 1,000+ supervised clinical hours needed for new professionals to sit for their board-certification exam. Our work includes medicaid-waiver covered services for individuals with IDD, and I also have the privilege of working with individuals with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease, and stroke and brain injury survivors. I have been the therapist in the hospital room who was able to support and facilitate someone's very first words following a stroke by singing a familiar song with them. Many people who lose their ability to speak words due to a stroke can still sing words because of the differentiated neural pathways of singing vs. speaking, and my job is to use music as a tool to help exercise new pathways in the brain so people can gain back some communication in those cases. This is just one example of what a highly skilled profession music therapy is; we work with some of the most vulnerable populations in Colorado, but are often one of the only professionals in those spaces who have no credential recognition or regulation by the state. We need to ensure that every stroke survivor who needs it is getting access to a trained, skilled, and credentialed professional when they are told "the music therapist is coming to see you." We owe them that because they deserve the chance to speak again. Thank you.</p> <p>--</p> <p>Rebekah Stewart, MA, MT-BC Certified Neurologic Music Therapist Rehabilitative Rhythms Music Therapy</p> |