

February 1, 2023

Dear Senate Health and Human Services Committee and interested parties:

My name is Chyrise Harris and I am the Vice President of Communications at Gary Community Ventures, the legacy of Colorado philanthropists Sam and Nancy Gary, who have dedicated their lives to increasing opportunity for Colorado kids and families. Today I am writing on behalf of our mission-focused business entity, Gary Ventures, to support former Piton Fellow Aimee Resnick and her work on the Colorado Youth Advisory Council (COYAC) as it pertains to SB23-014: Disordered Eating Prevention sponsored by Senator Moreno and Representative Lindsay.

In her work as a Piton Fellow and member of the COYAC, Aimee has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to address youth mental health in Colorado specifically as it relates to making treatment for disordered eating accessible and equitable for all young people. The COYAC recommendation to form an office of disordered eating prevention in the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment illustrates the tremendous power of youth to lead Colorado toward stronger mental health outcomes.

At Gary, we believe in the power of amplifying youth voice. So often we've seen youth as the experts in their own lives and over and over again, young people in Colorado have urged us to address the mental health challenges they face every day. We stand ready to listen and we hope you will as well. The COYAC recommendation brings forward the important issue of addressing eating disorders for public awareness and debate.

We applaud Ms. Resnick for her courage in speaking openly about her own lived experience regarding disordered eating and have no doubt she will spend her life committed to improving youth mental health outcomes in the future. She is extremely learned in this area and strives to educate herself and the community about the challenges facing young people with eating disorders. She is an exemplary youth advocate and her voice is an important one in the youth mental health arena.

We support Ms. Resnick in her advocacy for improving youth mental health as well as the work of the COYAC, Senator Moreno, and Representative Lindsay in bringing forward the important issue of disordered eating for legislative action.

Sincerely,

Chyrise Harris
Vice President, Communications
Gary Ventures

Senate Health & Human Services
 03/23/2023 01:30 PM
 SB23-014 Disordered Eating Prevention
 Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Alexandra Reyes For Young Invincibles</p>	<p>Thank you members of the committee for your time today. My name is Alexandra Reyes, I use she/her pronouns, and am a Policy Fellow at Young Invincibles, an organization committed to uplifting young adult voices.</p> <p>Awareness is so critical, because most of us have someone in our lives who has or had an eating disorder. If it's not in our personal life, it's in our professional one.</p> <p>It is crucial for physicians, parents, and schools to recognize these dangerous signs of an eating disorder.</p> <p>I have struggled with my relationship to food my entire life. My junior year of high school, I was eating almost nothing and wasting away. I wasn't sleeping, laughing, or enjoying life. It took such a toll on my mental health, and that year I was closest to suicide than I have ever been. I remember the praise I got from the people in my life. My friends said I looked so good and how jealous they were of me. My doctor said she was proud I had lost the weight, not once asking me how I had lost so much so quickly. My mom noticed, but her way of showing she was worried was yelling at me to eat more.</p> <p>None of this helped me. Now, I continue my work on my body image and relationship with food everyday. I also know the signs of an eating disorder, and I see so many of my peers continue to struggle.</p> <p>It takes a shared effort in our communities to help each other. We need to be able to recognize the signs and also know how to help. This is crucial so we don't lose any more lives and prevent a debilitating disorder.</p> <p>I ask you to vote yes today on SB23-014 so youth like me can receive the support they deserve. Thank you.</p>
<p>Christian McFarland For themselves</p>	<p>I am writing my support for this bill on behalf of my stepchild. My stepchild was more or less traumatized by the level of service they received at Eating Recovery Center and I believe having rules and regulations on the level of care these places should be providing will greatly benefit future children who will need to seek treatment. From stories from them and other kids at the center it was clear that the standard of care was not met. They were denied outside access for the entire four months they were there with little to no improvement while attending there and we were basically told towards the end we can't do</p>

	<p>anything for them and they should leave. We feel we were constantly lied to or led to believe items that were misleading or entirely false and feel that while ERC did help them restore their weight via an NG tube they have not or will they ever be the same from the trauma that occurred at the center. Additionally we have found it nearly impossible to find support and have been denied countless times for care due to various reasons including having a so called healthy BMI even though my stepchild did not consume a single thing for nearly three weeks, was fainting consistently, could hardly walk and we were in and out of hospitals every other day. Hospitals in the area are incredibly unaware of how to treat eating disorders unless they meet this BMI requirement and we were given incredibly obtuse advice to go home and bake cookies by the doctors at Denver Health. We were thankful the insurance was finally accepted at Children's Hospital. so they were able to receive the urgent care they needed. People with eating disorders and especially children deserve access to better care and I wholly support this bill.</p>
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