



## Board of County Commissioners

February 9, 2022

Chair Weissman  
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Dear Chair Weissman and Committee Members:

I write today on behalf of the Boulder County Commissioners to express Boulder County's strong support for HB 22-1063, Jail Standards Commission, sponsored by Reps. Amabile and Benavidez. I respectfully ask for your YES vote on the bill when it is heard by the Judiciary Committee on Wednesday, February 9, 2022.

Boulder County's support for HB 1063 stems from the county's commitment to operating a county jail that delivers inmate services with the highest regard for fairness, respect, and dignity of the individual with a focus on successful community reentry and one that has a positive impact on our community and on the individuals we detain through provision of a safe, secure, and humane facility.

HB 1063 will support these goals through the development of operational standards for Colorado's county jails that will draw on the experiences of the commission members and best practices being employed across the country. In particular, the diversity of representation included in the commission membership will ensure that the operational standards developed by the commission are both humane and modern while maintaining a focus on public safety. HB 1063 will expand our access to new and evidence-based operational standards and provide an opportunity for Boulder County to support our county peers in ensuring that all county jails in Colorado are operating to humane and modern jail standards.

I would like to thank Reps. Amabile and Benavidez for bringing HB 1063 forward, and again, on behalf of the Boulder County Commissioners, respectfully ask for your YES vote on the bill.

Sincerely,

Mark Ruzzin  
Senior Policy Advisor  
Boulder County Commissioners' Office

**Matt Jones** County Commissioner   **Claire Levy** County Commissioner   **Marta Loachamin** County Commissioner

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House Judiciary  
02/02/2022 01:30 PM  
HB22-1063 Jail Standards Commission  
Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Beth Utton For Self	<p>I favor standardization of Colorado county jails for two basic reasons.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) The current legislative process of chipping away at specific issues in specific jails leads to confusion across the system, which can then result in lack of compliance. Having clear standards will enhance the ability of all county jails to maintain compliance.</li><li>2) Having clear standards will make it more possible for people who are incarcerated, for whatever reason, to know what their rights are while incarcerated, and to take action when those rights are violated.</li></ol> <p>I applaud the described membership of the jail standards commission. It is broadly inclusive and would lend itself to development of standards that consider the needs and capabilities of all parties involved.</p> <p>I urge you to vote YES on HB22-1063.</p>

Thank you Chairman Weissman and members of the committee. My name is Jennifer Roberts and I am the Behavioral Health Advocate for the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition, a statewide organization run both by and for people with disabilities. We support this bill.

Until recently, the history of the disability community was one of segregation and forced isolation. Though the institutional system begun by Margaret Sanger had good intentions, these places quickly declined into lock up facilities where people with disabilities were forgotten, experiencing extreme levels of neglect in the process. Those individuals with disabilities who were lucky enough to remain in their homes faced overwhelming barriers in attending schools, receiving employment and medical care, and participating in every day life. Out of this came the disability rights movement with core values of self determination, independent living, and equal access to the same freedoms enjoyed by everyone else.

I grew up in a law enforcement family, and have lived as a person with multiple disabilities. It is only through my work on the commission created through HB 21-1122, First Responder Interactions with Persons with Disabilities, that I have come to recognize striking parallels between our criminal justice system and the early institutionalization of people with disabilities. I learned that 40% of people in jails have a traumatic brain injury, and 60% of people in jails have some form of mental illness, in addition to disproportionate representation from people who are intellectually and developmentally disabled. In looking at the Basic Academy and In Service curriculum, officers have been taught very little about people with disabilities or how to interact with them, leading to numerous negative outcomes. Lack of understanding and resources in our state's mental health system leads to use of the jail system like another mental health resource, with no training on the part of officers on how to provide these resources.

CCDC recognizes that people with disabilities need to be accountable for crimes they commit, just like everyone in the community. However, without education or support, we risk continuously institutionalizing people with disabilities at great expense. We ask that you support this bill, and would also like to work with the sponsors to include education for staff on people with disabilities. Thank you.

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