Please reach out to members of the House Judiciary Committee and ask them to commit to a YES vote on HB 21-1110. It will be heard on March 24, 2021 at 1:30PM

* Rep Mike Weissman Chair 303-866-2942 mike.weissman.house@state.co.us (Arapahoe)
* Rep Kerry Tipper Vice Chair 303-866-2939 kerry.tipper.house@state.co.us (Jeffco)
* Rep Jennifer Bacon 303-866-2909 jennifer.bacon.house@state.co.us (Denver)
* Rep Adrienne Benavidez 303-866-2964 adrienne.benavidez.house@state.co.us (Adams)
* Rep Rod Bockenfeld 303-866-2912 rod.bockenfeld.house@state.co.us (Adams/Arapahoe)
* Rep Terri Carver 303-866-2191 terri.carver.house@state.co.us (El Paso)
* Rep Lindsey Daugherty 303-866-2950 lindsey.daugherty.house@state.co.us (Jeffco)
* Rep Stephanie Luck 303-866-2905 stephanie.luck.house@state.co.us (Freemont/Otero/Pueblo)
* Rep Mike Lynch 303-866-2907 mike.lynch.house@state.co.us (Larimer/Weld)
* Rep Dylan Roberts 303-866-2923 dylan.roberts.house@state.co.us (Eagle/Routt)
* Rep Steven Woodrow 303-866-2967 steven.woodrow.house@state.co.us (Denver)

Please vote **YES** on **HB 21-1110** - Colorado Laws for Persons with Disabilities

Sponsor: David Ortiz

[HB21-1110](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1110)adopts Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act into state law. Title II of the ADA applies to state and local governments. Please support HB21-1110 so that Colorado law tracks with federal law improving clarity for state agencies, local governments and special districts.   (Other aspects of the ADA are already in state law).

**This bill adopts the Americans with Disabilities Act into state law** and incorporates it into the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act. The added protections apply to state and local governments and include:

* Prohibiting a person with a disability from being excluded from participating in or being denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity; and
* Clarifying that such prohibition includes the failure of a public entity to comply with the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (“WCAG”), the internationally-recognized guidelines for web and digital content accessibility.

**State courts:** The bill permits state court enforcement of the ADA, which is cheaper for *all* parties and more accessible to underserved communities (including rural communities who do not have easy access to federal court facilities).

**Tracking federal law:** The bill tracks federal law and does not add any new requirements; however, it does specify the standards by which state and local governments’ measure accessibility for web and digital content.

**Why WCAG standards are needed**: International regulations and standards (such as ones set for engineering and construction in existing statute) reduces ambiguity. WCAG standards are best-practices and easily incorporated into websites and content. WCAG standards were to be included in ADA-rulemaking in 2015, but that was delayed. The Biden administration is expected to formally incorporate WCAG in the coming year.  **HB 21-1110** will help make Colorado a national leader in disability rights as well as help state and local governments plan ahead for future regulations.

**Three-year phase-in for WCAG:** After extensive stakeholdering, proponents have agreed to introduce an amendment for a three-year compliance period for WCAG standards, with the expectation that governments will incorporate compliance into their strategic planning and make that plan available to the public record. In addition, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) has committed to providing educational resources for local governments to become compliant with web accessibility standards.

**Penalties:** Injunctive relief, attorneys’ costs and fees, and a flat penalty of $3,500 as provided in the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (“CADA”) AFTER the three year ramp-up period. It is exempt from the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act (“CGIA”), but placed under CADA, for which the (lower) penalty can be made applicable.

**Why the Colorado disability community needs HB 21-1110**

Colorado anti-discrimination statutes have progressed significantly in the last ten years, but have lagged behind in disability discrimination protections. It's long past time for the state to formally incorporate and affirm the 31-year-old Americans with Disabilities Act!

* HB21-1110 creates a culture of disability lens *inclusion* in government planning (versus the reactive model in which we currently operate)
* **Nearly ten percent (500,000) of Coloradans have a disability under the definition provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act**
	+ 107,000 Coloradans are visually disabled (According to the American Community Survey, 2016)
	+ 48 million Americans are deaf or hard of hearing (National Association of the Deaf)
	+ Disability status, according to the CDC: 1 in 4 are Black, 3 in 10 are indigenous, 5 in 10 are Hispanic, 6 in 10 are White, and 1 in 10 are Asian-American/Pacific Islander
* According to a 2018 survey conducted by WebAIM, 42% of computer users with visual disabilities frequently give up reading on a computer because it is too difficult
	+ Screen readers help blind or low-vision people function independently, when online government services are accessible.
* Coloradans with significant disabilities are more likely to be reliant on state programs (such as Medicaid) or public transit to live freely in and contribute to their communities - it is critical that those services are ADA-accessible
* From safety at parks, finding affordable housing, accessing the State Capitol, to renewing a driver’s license online, Coloradans with disabilities have a right to equal protections under the law (and freedom to live independently)

Contact: Julie Reiskin, CO Cross-Disability Coalition 303-667-4216 jreiskin@ccdconline.org or

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