

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: 12/13/23

Meeting Time: 12-2pm

Attendees: General public - Reps Ortiz, Young, DEN Team, Center for People with Disabilities, Rep Young, Disability Law Colorado, Colorado Cross Disability Coalition, Vincent on behalf of Representative Joseph, Representative Bird, Peter Axelson, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Colorado Access, Senator Winter, Representative Duran, Lacey Henderson, Denver International Airport,

Summary of the discussion:

Disability Legislative Preview

Intro -

- Presentation by Julie Reiskin from Colorado Cross Disability Coalition about the current state of the disability community in Colorado

Bills and Other Action Topics

- Colorado Commission on Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind is facing a budget shortfall. We are going to the JBC to ask for a supplemental so rural interpreting services can continue through the end of the fiscal year. After that, there needs to be a community led solution going forward for how services are prioritized.
- Representative Ortiz
 - Accessibility in Airports Bill
 - New training programs for DIA staff on how to create basic access for disabled passengers
 - Create committee for disability community to provide feedback and be involved in any new changes
 - More adult restrooms and adult changing tables
 - Dashboard for reporting issues
 - Implementing wayfinding technology
 - State legislature cannot regulate the airlines, but can regulate the airport
 - Access for Disabled People who use Automobiles
 - Accessible charging stations that adhere to universal design
 - Collaborate with businesses to make sure accessible parking is kept clear during inclement weather, food truck rentals, etc.
 - Better rental access to accessible vehicles

- Safeguarding Access to the Ballot for Disabled Candidates
 - Preserve the right to caucusing to get on the ballot because it's the most accessible way for disabled candidates to get on the ballot
 - Ensure that caucus is physically accessible and that there is a virtual option
- Accessibility of Hotels
 - More teeth for people who need accessible hotel rooms
- Business Obligations Under the ADA
 - Ensuring that businesses understand their obligations under the ADA
- Josh Winkler, Senior Disability Policy Advisor, from the Lieutenant Governor's Office
 - Administrative budget request to increase the funding authority for the Disability Funding Committee
 - Bill to create the Colorado Disability Opportunity Office to ensure that disability continues to be a priority for future administrations
 - In very early stages of discussion
- Craig Towler and Maria Stepanyan, Center for People with Disabilities
 - Federal legislation
 - Universal Design Access Tax Incentive Bill
 - Creates a federal working group to create universal design standards
 - Provisions for retrofitting homes to allow people to age in place
 - Getting disability included in the Office of New Americans' priorities
- Representative Bird - JBC Overview
 - Overview of the JBC process
- Shawn Smith, DEN Team (Denver International Airport)
 - Fly Denver website is now accessible
 - Going to be more transparent about disability and accessibility related complaints
 - Working with rideshare partners to establish accessible loading zones
 - Working on designing tactile paving for Level 5 + adding safety features
 - Starting in January, starting Accessibility Advisory Committee - invitations are forthcoming - will provide feedback about accessibility of airport
 - Working with city of Denver to provide more sensory spaces and get a better sense of how DIA rates in terms of sensory friendly spaces
 - Working on a conveyance modernization process to ensure they're responsive to the needs of community
 - Installing accessible charging stations
 - Renewing legacy restrooms on all concourses and part of that project will include constructing height adjustable changing tables
- Jack Johnson, Disability Law Colorado
 - Expansion of Allowable Uses for ADUs
 - Rep Amabilie is sponsoring this bill
 - Housing Reasonable Modification Bill
 - Remove requirement to remove accessible features when people move out of a rental unit

- Use of Seclusion in Public Schools Bill
 - Disproportionately used against students with disabilities
 - Rep English is sponsoring this bill
- Representative Young
 - Accessibility of prescription labels for people who are Blind, have low vision, etc.
 - Will allow patient can ask for accessible label
 - Shortened School Days
 - Kids with disabilities are often told they can't go to a full day of school
 - Bill will put guardrails and due process back into when a school district can shorten a school day
- Vincent on behalf of Representative Joseph
 - Rights for Youth Bill
 - Aims to establish bill of rights for youth who are under the jurisdiction of CDHS
- Jamie Zias from Colorado Access
 - Information sharing about resources available from CO Access
- Jim Vacik from ??
 - Need for accessibility and visitability in single family homes
- Elizabeth Moran, Arc of Colorado
 - Colorado Uniform Guardianship Bill
 - CO Commission on State Uniform Laws has accepted this bill
 - Current guardianship statute is 23 years old
 - Law is out of date, we need to update it to align with current best practices
 - Ensures least restrictive alternative is available
- Senator Winter, remarks from Senate Leadership
 - Vulnerable Road User Fee Bill
 - Information on how community can be involved in the legislative process
 - Please don't wait until committee hearing to reach out about a bill
 - Sometimes legislators are running bills that they don't know affect the disability community and that makes it really important that the community reaches out
 - Senate caucus enjoys working with community, so please reach out!
- Cyndy Vaughn from the DeafBlind community
 - Colorado Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind
 - Offer interpretive and support services for rural individuals, including SSPs
 - On November 29th, services were stopped because of a budget shortfall, there was no notice, no information given about the reason why
 - If there's no supplemental to fund through the end of the fiscal year, people may have to go without those services until July
- Heather Ainsley, PVA
 - Federal FAA Reauthorization
 - House and Senate versions include provisions for travelers with disabilities

- Website accessibility regulations
 - New regs being considered now
- Peter Axelson, Beneficial Designs - B77 process
 - January 16th - ski industry access meetings, Ad hoc ADA Accessibility Advisory Committee
 - Happening at Keystone Conference Center
 - Will cover accessibility of ski lifts, which have become less accessible as ski companies are releasing new designs that are less accessible for adaptive skiers
- Lacey Henderson, Paralympic Athlete
 - Closing remarks, sharing her experience becoming involved in the legislative process
 - Everyone should get involved in the legislative process!
- Speaker McCluskie and Majority Leader Duran
 - Speaker McCluskie
 - This is a valuable convening, hope there are many more in year to come
 - Shout out to Rep Ortiz
 - HB 1296 task force created in partnership w/ Lt. Gov's office is a vehicle for long lasting change
 - Please reach out to legislators, connect with your legislators, build that relationship and help build understanding
 - Every voice matters, every story matters, but we need to hear those stories
 - Majority Leader Duran
 - Excited to see everyone
 - Rep Ortiz's has made an impact while he's been here
 - This is how you make change
 - Whether we have a visible disability or not, we need to be thoughtful of the community
 - "My door is always open" - please to reach out with issues, it's the only way we're going to make change
 - House kitchen has been made more accessible bc of Rep Ortiz
- Q+A, Comment Period
 - Comment on DIA - is DIA decommissioning the train? If that's the case, it would be a step back for our committee
 - Comment: We are in need of accessible, affordable housing
 - FHA requires to put applications in and application process is often not accessible
 - It's a combination of state, federal law and local non-profits, which makes the fix complicated
 - Law does allow for reasonable accommodations, so you can go to each entity and ask for a reasonable accommodation
 - If a reasonable accommodation isn't granted, please contact Disability Law Colorado. Co Cross Disability Coalition, or if you're in Denver, the Denver Fair Housing Center

- Comment: We need to make sure that we're including cognitive accessibility in DIA design and hope the DIA committee considers this in universal design (e.g. wayfinding)
- Comment/Question for DIA team: Hearing loops progress?
 - DEN team: this is on the list of things we're trying to implement in various locations across the airport, currently working to identify the best locations
- Comment: Disaster preparedness exercises for emergency planning are happening in Denver

Action taken:

- None - this was an informational meeting only