



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 09-039

BY SENATOR(S) Spence, Boyd, Carroll M., Gibbs, Groff, Heath, Hodge, Hudak, Isgar, Keller, Kester, Morse, Newell, Sandoval, Schwartz, Shaffer B., Tapia, Tochtrop, Veiga, White, Williams;
 also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Primavera, Acree, Apuan, Balmer, Baumgardner, Benefield, Bradford, Casso, Court, Curry, Ferrandino, Fischer, Frangas, Gagliardi, Gardner B., Gardner C., Gerou, Green, Hullinghorst, Judd, Kagan, Kefalas, Kerr A., Kerr J., King S., Labuda, Lambert, Levy, Liston, Looper, Marostica, Massey, May, McCann, McFadyen, McKinley, McNulty, Merrifield, Middleton, Miklosi, Murray, Nikkel, Pace, Peniston, Pommer, Priola, Rice, Riesberg, Roberts, Ryden, Scanlan, Schafer S., Solano, Sonnenberg, Soper, Stephens, Summers, Swalm, Tipton, Todd, Vaad, Vigil, Waller, Weissmann, Carroll T.

CONCERNING RECOGNITION OF THE HISTORY OF THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, PROCLAIMING DISABILITY HISTORY WEEK IN COLORADO.

WHEREAS, More than 54 million Americans, or 19% of the population, are living with some level of disability, and 12% of the population, or about 35 million people, are classified as having a severe disability; and

WHEREAS, About 656,000 Coloradans, which is 13% of the state's residents, live with disabilities, and over 80,000 students, or approximately 12% of the student population in the state, receive either special education services or some type of accommodation for a disability; and

WHEREAS, Colorado is recognized nationwide for its leadership in the disability rights movement and for promoting disability rights and providing services that enable people with disabilities to participate in and contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, a group of young, disabled Colorado nursing

home residents, assisted by concerned staff members, fought to secure provision of Medicaid support services for home settings and moved out of the nursing home to form the Atlantis Community, the first home health agency in Colorado to provide attendant services in a community setting; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Atlantis Community brought legal action against the nursing home, which case highlighted serious problems with the institutional care of persons with disabilities and helped to bring about federal minimum standards of direct patient care for residents in nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, The Atlantis Community also coordinated one of the first major disability rights protests in the United States when, in July 1978, nineteen people with severe disabilities stopped traffic at Broadway and Colfax in downtown Denver and blocked buses overnight to demonstrate for wheelchair-accessible public transportation, a protest commemorated by a plaque installed at the intersection by the City and County of Denver on July 26, 1992, that lists the names of the "Gang of Nineteen" who participated in the blockade; and

WHEREAS, In 1983, members of Denver's disability rights community organized "ADAPT", originally the American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit, a grassroots activist movement that has worked to highlight the needs and rights of the disabled community and that has grown into a successful national advocacy organization; and

WHEREAS, The disability community's continuing nationwide activism has led to significant progress in rights and accommodations for persons with disabilities, such as sidewalk curb cuts, requirements for wheelchair accessibility in public buildings, access to polling places, deinstitutionalization, and supported employment efforts; and

WHEREAS, A major milestone in the disability rights movement was the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which was passed on July 26th of that year and which provides broad civil rights protections for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Disability rights activists continue to fight for home- and community-based health care options and to advocate for the expansion of

community-based programs; and

WHEREAS, Leaders in Colorado's government have long recognized that inclusion of people with disabilities in public policy-making, particularly regarding policies that affect people in the disabled community, is in the best interest of the state; and

WHEREAS, Progressive businesses and agencies demonstrate that employing persons with disabilities benefits the business, the employee, and the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, To ensure the full inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of society, it is essential to educate the public about the history of the disability rights movement and to raise awareness of the daily challenges faced by persons living with disabilities and of the talents and skills that such persons can bring to the work environment; and

WHEREAS, Public schools, postsecondary educational institutions, state agencies, and community organizations in the state can and should help to promote awareness and understanding about people with disabilities and the disability rights movement through educational programs and activities; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

(1) That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, recognize and applaud the fortitude and tenacity of those Coloradans who began the campaign to secure civil rights for persons with disabilities and those who continue the fight;

(2) That we encourage schools, educational institutions, state agencies, businesses, and community organizations to work together to raise the public's awareness of disability issues, to share the history of the disability rights movement, and to promote fair treatment of and equal opportunities for people with disabilities; and

(3) That we proclaim the week beginning July 26, 2009, the anniversary of the signing of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as Disability History Week in Colorado.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the state Department of Human Services, the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council, the Colorado Traumatic Brain Injury Board, the Colorado Advisory Council for People with Disabilities, the State Rehabilitation Council, the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition, the Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People, the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, the Colorado Association of the Deaf, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - Colorado, the Disability Business Technical Assistance Center in Colorado Springs, the Brain Injury Association of Colorado, and the Association of Colorado Centers for Independent Living.

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