

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Reggie Bicha

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

February 1, 2013

The Honorable Pat Steadman
Chair, Joint Budget Committee
Legislative Services Building, 3rd Floor
200 East 14th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Senator Steadman:

The Colorado Department of Human Services (hereinafter referred to as “the Department”) has been granted waivers by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (hereinafter referred to as “ACF”), through which the Department will receive a capped level of Title IV-E funding over a five-year period. During this five-year timeframe, the Department will implement a series of interventions whose collective impact will be to improve children’s safety, permanency and well-being.

To effectuate the agreement with ACF, the Department executed the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project Terms and Conditions on October 23, 2012. The Department is to begin implementing the waiver interventions between April 1 and October 1, 2013. In order to do so, supporting legislation is needed.

Background: Title IV-E funds are provided to states for a number of distinct Child Welfare program services, including: foster care maintenance; case planning and administration; eligibility determination; training; subsidized adoption; information systems; and state administration.

Changes in county practices over the past several years have led to a reduction in out-of-home placement. As a result, the Department has seen a fairly steady decline in the amount of earned federal Title IV-E revenues. In 2012, ACF authorized states to apply to become a Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Sites. The Department’s application included capping the level of Title IV-E funds for foster care maintenance, case planning and administration, and eligibility determination.

The Honorable Pat Steadman
February 1, 2013
Page 2

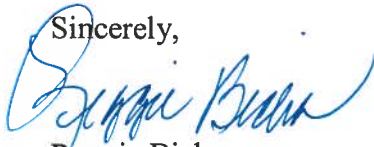
The Department was successful in negotiating a capped level of funding that was roughly \$8 million greater than what it earned in the prior fiscal year. In return, the department agreed to implement three interventions statewide over the five-year term: family engagement; trauma-informed child assessment; and trauma-focused behavioral health treatment. Additionally, the Department agreed to assist a subset of counties in implementing permanency round tables and kinship supports.

Proposed Legislation: The Department would appreciate your support with legislation that would create the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project in statute. The legislation, as proposed, will enable the Department to distribute project funds to County Departments through a "performance agreement," and will require those counties to participate in the federally required evaluation of the waiver.

The legislation will also define how savings resulting from the interventions will be shared between the Department and the counties, as well as specify how any such savings are to be expended on child welfare services. An annotated draft of the legislation is attached for your review.

Please contact Sarah Sills at 303-866-3019 or myself, should you need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Reggie Bicha
Executive Director

cc: Representative Claire Levy, Vice Chair, Joint Budget Committee
Senator Mary Hodge, Vice Chair, Joint Budget Committee
Senator Mary Hodge, Joint Budget Committee
Senator Kent Lambert, Joint Budget Committee
Representative Cheri Gerou, Joint Budget Committee
Representative Crisanta Duran, Joint Budget Committee
Mr. John Ziegler, Staff Director, Joint Budget Committee
Mr. Byron DeLuke, Joint Budget Committee Staff
Mr. Henry Sobanet, Director, Office of State Planning & Budgeting
Ms. Ann Renaud, Office of State Planning and Budgeting
Ms. Nikki Hatch, Deputy Executive Director of Operations
Ms. Dee Martinez, Deputy Executive Director of Enterprise Partnerships
Ms. Julie Krow, Director, Office of Children, Youth and Families
Mr. Jay Morein, Director, Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes
Ms. Sarah Sills, CDHS Legislative Liaison
Mr. Will Kugel, Budget Director, Colorado Department of Human Services

Enclosure