

HB22-1026 Alternative Transportation Options Tax Credit

Thursday, February 3rd, 2022

House Finance

Written Testimony: Support

Good morning and thank you, Madame Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide this testimony. My name is Raymond Gonzales, and I'm the president of the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation and executive vice president of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

For 154 years, the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce has been a leading voice for Colorado's business community, advocating for sound policy that strengthens our economy and makes our state the best place to live, work and do business. The Chamber's Metro Denver EDC is committed to promoting, supporting, recruiting and growing our region's businesses and workforce.

I'm here today on behalf of the Chamber, the Metro Denver EDC and our members to express our support for House Bill 1026.

House Bill 1026 is sound policy, bringing different viewpoints to the table to move us toward reducing emissions and preserving our environment. It incentivizes employers through an income tax credit to help cover the cost of providing alternative transportation options for employees. When these costs are covered for employees, they're more likely to use other forms of transportation for their commutes. That results in reduced congestion on our roadways and improved air quality in our communities.

We strongly support voluntary, incentive-based approaches. Voluntary programs work because they leverage the existing alignment of interests between employers and their employees to save money and reduce stress, while at the same time maintaining flexibility, autonomy and freedom.

Chamber Trustee DaVita is an example of how this can be successful. The company takes advantage of the Denver Regional Council of Governments' voluntary Way to Go program. As a result, 86% of DaVita's workforce does not commute to work in a single-occupancy vehicle. Likewise, during its first year in the voluntary Way to Go program, Charter Communications reduced the number of employees commuting to work in single-occupancy vehicles by 11% and increased the number of employees using public transit by 200%.

We thank bill sponsors Representatives Bird and Woog and Senators Hansen and Liston for bringing this bill and we urge the committee to vote yes. House Bill 1026 is good for our employers, our workforce, our economy and our environment.