

HB22-1377 Grant Program Providing Responses To Homelessness

Tuesday, April 26 2022

Transportation & Local Government | 1:30 p.m. Room LSB-A

In Person Testimony: Support

Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee. My name is Jessica Kostelnik and I'm a Government Affairs Manager at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

I'm here today on behalf of the Chamber to express our support of House Bill 1377.

Colorado has a well-documented housing crisis. Through our work under Prosper Colorado, we've worked within a defined: housing continuum: homelessness, transitional housing, subsidized housing, workforce housing, market rate, first time homeowner and eventually, long term homeowner. As an organization that represents the business community, we've felt that our best place to intervene in this crisis is to promote, protect and encourage the development of workforce housing, which is 60-120% AMI.

However, many folks in the Denver Metro Area don't meet the threshold of workforce housing, and in 2021, 5.6% of Coloradans said they were experiencing housing insecurity and were concerned they wouldn't have stable housing within two months. If we do not address the entirety of the housing continuum, we run the risk of allowing people to backslide into even more precarious housing circumstances.

The business community's interest and urgency around this issue is because when Coloradans are at any point on more insecure end of the housing continuum, the business community and our economy are impacted. The Chamber's interventions into workforce housing are meant to safeguard Colorado's viability as a place where talent can live and work. However, it is also imperative that we provide solutions for folks experiencing homelessness or who need access to transitional or subsidized housing if we are to move them up the continuum into more stable housing.

No one goes from housing insecurity into a two bed-room townhome. The time to act on this crisis is now. We support House Bill 1377 because Colorado needs to develop solutions for the entire continuum of housing needs.

Thank you for your time and we urge members of the committee to vote yes on HB 1377.