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Arapahoe County Commissioners pass resolution to oppose state takeover of social services

County reaffirms its commitment to excellence in local administration of child welfare, public assistance and child support enforcement programs

Littleton, Colo.— Amidst increasing dialogue about the future of Colorado's social services system, Arapahoe County's Board of County Commissioners has unanimously passed a resolution to affirm the county's support for a locally-administered human services system, and its commitment to excellence in the delivery of child protection, child support enforcement and public assistance programs.

The resolution was passed at a public hearing on July 6, 2010 and expresses the County's commitment to excellence, quality improvement and enhanced accountability of local and state government in the delivery of human services. View a copy of the resolution below, or find it under 'What's New' at www.co.arapahoe.co.us.

This action comes in response to a recommendation released in 2009 by Governor Ritter's Child Welfare Action Committee to conduct a massive overhaul of Colorado's state-supervised, county-administered human services system and place the entire system in the control of the State.

"The Board strongly believes that it is most logical for social services to be delivered by local government rooted in a community, where there is a better understanding of the factors that impact families and children," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Susan Beckman. "Local governments have the ability to be more flexible and responsive to meet the needs our most vulnerable populations."

The Arapahoe County Department of Human Services has worked long and hard to develop relationships with community partners, ranging from law enforcement agencies to mental health care providers, courts, non-profits and other local governments. In 2008, the County joined forces with Jefferson County to form a collaborative foster care program that would streamline resources and improve support for foster families and children.

Arapahoe County also is fully in support of 27 other recommendations that arose from the Child Welfare Action Committee to improve the child welfare system, and is engaged in partnership with the state and Colorado Counties Inc. to produce rule, legislative and policy change to bring many of those recommendations to fruition. The County has already started using the Child Welfare Caseworker

Training Academy and is one of five counties involved in the pilot project for Differential Response. Arapahoe County is also involved in an initiative led by the Colorado Division of Child Welfare to build a new Child Welfare Practice Model that will streamline how counties approach child protection cases.

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STATE OF COLORADO }
COUNTY OF ARAPAHOE } ss.

At the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners for Arapahoe County, Colorado held at the Administration Building, Littleton, Colorado on Tuesday, the 6th day of July, 2010, there were present:

Rod Bockenfeld, Commissioner	Present
Pat Noonan, Chair Pro-Tem	Present
Susan Beckman, Commissioner	Present
Jim Dyer, Commissioner	Present
Frank Weddig, Commissioner	Present
Kathryn L. Schroeder, County Attorney	Present
John E. Bush, Jr., Deputy County Attorney	Present
Nancy A. Doty, Clerk to the Board	Absent and Excused
Terri Maulik, Assistant Clerk to the Board	Present

when the following proceedings, among others, were had and done, to-wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 100567 It was moved by Commissioner Dyer and duly seconded by Commissioner Noonan to adopt the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee (CWAC) established by Executive Order B 006 08 on April 16, 2008, examined the child welfare system over the course of eighteen months and developed thirty-five recommendations to improve the safety of vulnerable children in Colorado; and

WHEREAS, Arapahoe County supported the creation of the Governor's CWAC and endorsed twenty-seven of the twenty-nine recommendations that originated from it; and

WHEREAS, many recommendations from the Governor's CWAC have already been implemented including the Child Welfare Training Academy and the Differential Response Pilot; and

WHEREAS, National data from the United States Department of Human Services shows that the rate of child fatalities due to abuse or neglect per 100,000 children is slightly higher for state administered systems than county administered systems; and

WHEREAS, in Colorado, the percent of child fatalities with prior county involvement has declined over a seven year period from 56% to 24%; and

WHEREAS, one of the Governor's CWAC recommendations was to structurally reorganize the delivery of human services in the state, not just the child welfare system; and

WHEREAS, this recommendation, despite the work and focus of the Governor's CWAC on child welfare, implicated all of human services including, but not limited to, food stamps, child care, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); and

WHEREAS, Colorado Counties Inc.'s (CCI) Health and Human Services Policy Statement states that CCI supports and "advocates local administration of the social services system in order to maximize the flexibility and responsiveness of the system to local needs, while ensuring efficient management and local control."; and

WHEREAS, CCI's bylaws state our opposition to any movement that has as its objective centralization of government in large units to the detriment of Colorado's residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners that Arapahoe County reaffirms its commitment to excellence in the provision of human services and child welfare.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Arapahoe County is committed to continuous quality improvement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Arapahoe County is committed to enhancing the accountability of both state and local governments' management.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Arapahoe County reaffirms its support for a locally-administered human services system.

The vote was:

Commissioner Noonan, Yes; Commissioner Dyer, Yes; Commissioner Weddig, Yes; Commissioner Beckman, Yes; Commissioner Bockenfeld, Yes.

The Chair declared the motion carried and so ordered.

I, Nancy A. Doty, County Clerk and ex-officio Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners in and for the County and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that the annexed and foregoing Order is truly copied from the records of the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners for said Arapahoe County, now in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said County, at Littleton, Colorado this 14th day of July, 2010.

Nancy A. Doty, Clerk to the Board

