

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

136 State Capitol Building
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 866-2471
(303) 866-2003 fax



John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

July 30, 2014

Dear Coloradans,

On June 22, 1999, the United States Supreme Court held in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that unnecessary segregation of individuals with disabilities in institutions constitutes a form of discrimination based on disability. Referring to title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the *Olmstead* decision holds states accountable for providing community-based care whenever appropriate, rather than placing individuals with disabilities in institutional settings. In response to the *Olmstead* decision, states have drafted strategic plans as either a direct result of litigation or to comply with the *Olmstead* Decision, such as Colorado's Community Living Plan. This plan represents Colorado's commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities and older adults have the same rights as those without disabilities to live in the home of their choice with the supports and services they need to live independent lives. Colorado's intent with this plan is out of respect for the rights of individuals at risk for placement in long-term care facilities to know about their community-based alternatives and to support them in action upon their choices about how, when and where they receive the supports they need. This plan represents the collaboration of the Departments of Health Care Policy and Financing, Human Services and Local Affairs.

On July 5, 2012, Governor Hickenlooper issued Executive Order D 2012-027, establishing the Office of Community Living. In this order, the Governor articulated the following vision, "All Coloradans—including people with disabilities and aging adults—should be able to live in the home of their choosing with the supports they need and participate in the communities that value their contributions." Colorado's Plan for Community Living provides specific strategies to realize this vision and is synergistic with the charge of the Office of Community Living and the work of the Colorado Community Living Advisory Group. Colorado's success in this endeavor requires that all relevant stakeholders ensure that aging adults and people with disabilities have real choice in how they live their lives in the community of their choice.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Birch MBA, BSN, RN
Executive Director, Colorado Department of
Health Care Policy and Financing

Reggie Bicha
Executive Director, Colorado Department of
Human Services

Reeves Brown
Executive Director, Colorado Department of
Local Affairs