

The Honorable Governor Jared Polis  
The Honorable Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera  
State Capitol, Room 136, Denver, CO 80203

January 9, 2019

Governor Polis & Lieutenant Governor Primavera,

Congratulations on your inauguration! With your incoming administration, Colorado has an opportunity to refresh and modernize the state's approach to providing every Coloradan with the opportunity to live healthy lives. Applying a health equity lens to reform is fundamental to creating this opportunity. "Health equity" is the absence of disparities, biases and barriers that are systematically associated with social and historical advantage and disadvantage, and the presence of equitable access to opportunities, resources and supports.

Health equity applies not just to medical settings, but to all areas of life within our state's diverse communities. We wholeheartedly support your stated goal of providing every Coloradan with access to quality, affordable health care. Moreover, we support a broad policy approach that enhances the way in which Coloradans live, work and learn, which research shows not only produces better health outcomes, but is also more cost efficient overall. Consequently, our state government's approach to health policy should include health care, as well as other policies that address inequity, and so-called "upstream" supports, including, but not limited to:

- Improved food security;
- Economic policies that acknowledge and address institutionalized bias;
- Support for safe and affordable housing;
- Positive socio-emotional environments for our young people; and
- Sustainable, accessible built environments that promote health

These investments and interventions are key to supporting all Coloradans in their efforts to lead their healthiest lives and build more equitable communities. When considering how to structure state government and prioritize its areas of focus, we urge you to apply the values of health equity as well as the related scientific evidence that shows we can make more progress by taking a broad approach on health. Please consider our organizations as ones with whom you can consult in good faith to determine how to take this approach and create a Colorado that is both healthier and more just. We stand ready to communicate with you in whatever way would be most helpful.

Sincerely,

Deidre Johnson  
Executive Director  
**The Center for African-American  
Health**

Joe Sammen  
Executive Director  
**Center For Health Progress**

Claire Levy  
Executive Director  
**Colorado Center on Law and Policy**

Kelly Causey  
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Adela Flores-Brennan  
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Julie Reiskin  
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Carol Hedges  
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Jake Williams  
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Gabriel Guillaume  
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Karen Middleton  
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**United for a New Economy (UNE)**

Cesiah Guadarrama Trejo  
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