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Colorado Tells Trump: “If You Won’t Protect Students with Disabilities, We Will”

Landmark Measure Banning Discrimination Awaits Polis Signature

DENVER, CO — A landmark measure to ban discrimination in Colorado’s schools now awaits a signature from Gov. Jared Polis. [Senate Bill 26-125](#) cleared the state legislature last week with bipartisan support.

The move comes as the U.S. Department of Education continues to gut the enforcement of federal civil rights laws. Education Secretary Linda McMahon defended the Trump administration in Congressional testimony last week.

“Our message to the administration is clear,” said **Andrew Romanoff**, executive director of Disability Law Colorado (DLC). “If you won’t protect students with disabilities, we will.”

More than 44,000 students in Colorado rely on an accommodation because of a disability. SB 125 enshrines their rights in state law.

Under the bill, students with disabilities must be able to participate fully in school — not just sit in the classroom, but actually learn, communicate, travel, join activities, and be treated with equal dignity and opportunity. A school could not exclude a child from a field trip because they use a wheelchair, deny a deaf student an interpreter, or unnecessarily isolate students with disabilities from their peers.

DLC Co-Legal Director **Emily Harvey**, who helped draft the legislation, called it “an enormous step” in the march toward justice for all. “If Coloradans can’t count on the federal government to enforce the law, we should enact a law of our own,” Harvey said.

SB 125 creates a formal complaint process, requires school districts to investigate and correct problems, and allows the state to step in — even withholding funding in serious cases — if schools repeatedly violate disability rights. The bill also prohibits retaliation against families who file complaints.

To schedule an interview with **Andrew Romanoff, Emily Harvey, or Colorado families** affected by the legislation, contact DLC Communications Manager **Felix Ortiz** at **720-202-9871** or fortiz@disabilitylawco.org.

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Disability Law Colorado is a nonprofit civil rights organization, authorized by federal law to combat discrimination, abuse, and neglect. We aim to make Colorado the best place in America for people with disabilities to thrive. For more information, visit disabilitylawco.org.