

**A RESOLUTION
TO INTEGRATE COMMUNITY CHOICE INTO HEALTH CARE REFORM**

WHEREAS Americans with disabilities and chronic health conditions rely heavily on public health programs, primarily Medicaid and Medicare, not only for primary health care but also for long-term care needs; and

WHEREAS Medicaid and Medicare contain a strong institutional bias, with funding policies favoring placement in nursing homes and other facilities, thus draining resources away from home and community based care; and

WHEREAS every state participating in the federal Medicaid program is required to provide nursing home services, but home and community based services are optional, and are thereby unavailable in many states; and

WHEREAS sixty-seven percent of Medicaid long-term care dollars pay for institutional services, while the remaining thirty-three percent must pay for all community based services; and

WHEREAS the vast majority of people disabled by age, injury, or illness would prefer to receive services in their own homes rather than in institutions, yet many are forced by current policies to enter facilities in order to get the assistance they need; and

WHEREAS the institutional bias not only deprives people of choice, home, and independence, but also costs taxpayers far more than would a comprehensive nationwide system of home and community based services; and

WHEREAS as the population ages and more people require long-term care, the current institutionally-biased health care system will become more expensive and unsustainable; and

WHEREAS the Community Choice Act (CCA), introduced in the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate, would allow individuals to choose home and community based services as an alternative to placement in a nursing facility; and

WHEREAS the CCA would provide states with financial assistance and incentives to reform their long-term care service systems to provide services in the most integrated setting;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that

THE COLORADO DEMOCRATIC PARTY supports the concept of community choice in long-term care programs; and that

THE COLORADO DEMOCRATIC PARTY pledges to ensure that health care reform legislation and policy proposals emphasize choice and independence rather than institutionalization.