

## Western and Rural Colorado Health Care Coalition (WaRCHCC)

For a number of years people and businesses in western and rural Colorado have been impacted by the highest priced medical costs and health insurance prices in the country. Each geographic area and community encounters individual health care access problems. A growing group of representatives from communities and counties across western Colorado are collaborating to rectify this cost burden.

The Western and Rural Colorado Health Care Coalition includes members from multiple Colorado counties and represent government, nonprofit, business and consumer spheres. The coalition is taking multiple steps to effect positive change. We use our strength in numbers and representation to make sure our voice is heard in Colorado's front range urban communities.

Bob Semro, a former health policy analyst for the Bell Policy Center and a legislative and senior advocate, and Adam Fox, the Director of Strategic Engagement for the Colorado Consumer Health Initiative are both members of this group and guide our legislative endeavors.

**In 2020** our group is busy creating a short list of bills and efforts we plan to help try to enact. Our efforts include educating community groups, lobbying legislators, and testifying in Denver.

**During the 2019** state legislative season we selected four, of many good bills, to support through lobbying efforts and testifying.

- HB 1004      PROPOSAL FOR AFFORDABLE HEALTH COVERAGE OPTION  
Implementing a competitive state option for more affordable health care coverage in Colorado and requesting authorization to use existing federal money for the proposed state option.
- HB 1168      STATE INNOVATION WAIVER REINSURANCE PROGRAM  
Creation of a Colorado reinsurance program to provide reinsurance payments to health insurers to aid in paying high-cost insurance claims.
- SB 1004      ADDRESS HIGH-COST HEALTH INSURANCE PILOT PROGRAM  
Authorizing the state personnel director to implement a pilot program to allow residents of a specified region to participate in state employee medical benefit plans and modifying the health care coverage cooperatives laws to include consumer protections and allow consumers to collectively negotiate rates directly with providers.
- SB 1005      IMPORT PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FROM CANADA  
Wholesale importation of prescription pharmaceutical products from Canada for resale to Colorado residents.

### Other Coalition Projects:

1. Determine our own citizen initiatives to present to the state legislatures for the 2020 legislative session.
2. Developing a crowd sourced database where consumers can share their health care costs on procedures with or without insurance coverage.

The coalition meets in person or through conference call every second and fourth Friday at 9:00 am. The date and time is sometimes subject to change based on discussion and availability of guest speakers.