



### Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1115

Hello and thank you – My name is Elena Nunez, I am the program director with Colorado Common Cause. We fight for open, honest and accountable government and work to strengthen public participation in the political process.

We are here to testify in opposition to HB 1115 which requires photo ID for voting. Colorado Common Cause is the lead organization in the coalition of Just Vote Colorado, an election monitoring project that has been monitoring CO elections since 2004. In fact, the program was conceived in 2004 to address anticipated problems with the then new requirement to present ID at the polls before voting.

Certainly in 2004, but also in recent years, ID requirements for voting are problematic for many voters. While it may be surprising to some, not all eligible voters in Colorado have photo identification.

We have testified before this committee for several years and will continue to voice our opposition to this onerous and unnecessary requirement. There are several others here today who can speak to this burden, so I will limit my comments to two key points.

First, this bill addresses no problem. Proponents claim that a photo ID is necessary to prevent voter fraud; that is just not true. There are no known instances of voters impersonating other voters in order to vote illegally (more than once or if they are not eligible). Adding this requirement does nothing other than to create additional barriers to the voting process. It is also important to note that Colorado already has strict identification laws, requiring voters to show a form of ID when they go to the polls to vote.

Second, this bill will create serious problems for eligible voters in Colorado by eliminating the current list of acceptable ID and requiring only photo ID. Indeed the requirement will impact our more vulnerable populations including people of color, the elderly, youth, the disabled and low-income voters.

According to research from the Brennan Center for Justice, the following statistics reflect those individuals who do not have photo identification:

- 11% or as many as 21 million Americans
- 18% of Americans over 65
- 25% of African Americans
- 10% of people with disabilities
- 15% of low income voters

The bottom line is that this bill will do nothing other than intimidate and deter eligible voters in Colorado from voting. In recent years the Colorado County Clerks Association has testified that there are no cases of voter fraud in Colorado elections. We agree that we must take action to ensure the integrity of our voting systems, and welcome the opportunity to work on existing problems.