



### HB22-1255 Improve Higher Education for Students with a Disability

*Sponsored by Representatives Bradfield and Ortiz & Senators Kirkmeyer and Zenzinger*

This bill creates an advisory committee in the Department, with membership and expertise from institutions of higher education, members of the disability community, and non-profit stakeholder organizations to examine tools and techniques to increase access, retention, credential completion, and future employment opportunities for students with disabilities. The committee will develop a report with recommendations to the General Assembly to consider that will result in real and meaningful changes for success for students with disabilities in higher education and stronger career outcomes.



People with disabilities in Colorado experience being underserved in higher education, which creates inequitable workforce opportunities.



Create a postsecondary services advisory committee that will develop a statewide strategy and recommendations on how to better serve all Colorado students.



By creating an environment where students with disabilities can find success, all students benefit, and Colorado's workforce becomes stronger.

### Background

In 2019, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that 19.4% of undergraduate students have a disability. Based on a longitudinal study sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences within the U.S. Department of Education, national completion rates for students with disabilities in postsecondary education was 38% compared to 51% for students without reported disabilities. To put this in perspective, Colorado's 6-year credential completion rate is 56.6%. The state must do better to support all students. This bill is an important first step to support the disability community.

### Key Statutory Provisions

- The bill creates a new Article in Title 23 of Colorado Revised Statutes
- Section 2 of the bill requires institutions of higher education to share data with the Department to be included in statutorily required reports to provide a more comprehensive equity lens (all data will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, first-generation status, military status and Pell eligibility):
  - Number of students enrolled who identify as having a disability
  - Number of students with a disability that receive a service, support or accommodation that is related to the student's disability
  - Retention and credential completion data of students with disabilities will be included in the relevant existing state reporting
- Section 2 of the bill also creates the advisory committee, composed of 16 members who are experts in disability services in education, to improve outcomes for students with disabilities attending state institutions of higher education

Meets the strategic goals of *Colorado Rises* to



Erase Equity Gaps



Improve Student Success

For More Information

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Colorado Department of Higher Education <https://highered.colorado.gov/>

Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development

<http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/>

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