

Preserving Access to Critical Safety Net Programs & Services

This document is intended as a conversation guide for Day at the Capitol and is not a leave-behind.

Key Messages for Legislators

- Behavioral health safety net providers face mounting funding pressure as demand rises and new regulatory reforms are proposed. As Colorado enters an era of deficit budgets, care must be taken to preserve access to critical safety net programs and services.
- The federal CCBHC demonstration is an opportunity to stabilize behavioral health care through standardized services and a predictable payment model.

Why This Matters Now

Colorado is entering a period of budget constraint at the same time demand for behavioral health services continues to rise. Protecting the behavioral health safety net—programs that keep people stable and connected to care—is critical to preserving access, especially for individuals with the most complex needs who rely on Medicaid or are uninsured.

Bottom line: A strong safety net is the most cost-effective way to preserve access and stabilize communities.

Our Legislative Asks

Stabilize and Maximize Behavioral Health Funding

Our focus is on protecting existing funding and leveraging federal opportunities.

Ask legislators to:

- Ensure Colorado's CCBHC demonstration application fully aligns with the federal payment model, as directed in HB24-1384, to maximize enhanced federal Medicaid funding and reduce General Fund pressure.
- Ensure the Rural Health Transformation Program prioritizes behavioral health and allocates funding consistently across eligible provider types, including CMHCs and CCBHCs.
- Reject rate reductions during budget balancing that would destabilize behavioral health providers.

Preserve the Safety Net's Core Mission

In times of fiscal constraint, focus matters.

Ask legislators to:

- Protect and stabilize core safety net services by prioritizing Medicaid members, uninsured Coloradans, and individuals in crisis or with acute needs.
- Ensure funding decisions reflect the statutory purpose of safety net programs, rather than diffusing limited capacity.