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"WE CHOOSE TO FIGHT": DISABILITY ADVOCATES CONDEMN MOVE TO DISMANTLE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DENVER, CO — The state's leading advocates for disability justice today condemned President Trump's decision to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education.

"This is a deeply unjust assault on civil rights," said Emily Harvey, Co-Legal Director of Disability Law Colorado (DLC). "By dismantling the very agency charged with protecting disability rights in schools, the administration is sending a clear message: 'Students with disabilities do not matter.'"

DLC warned that eliminating the Department of Education will undermine enforcement of key federal protections, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Department's Office for Civil Rights enforces these laws, provides technical assistance, and allows students, families, and educators to file complaints.

Absent federal enforcement, students with disabilities will be left with little recourse. State agencies are ill equipped to handle these complaints; going to court can be costly, time-consuming, and typically requires an attorney.

"Without the Office for Civil Rights, we will lose decades of progress toward inclusive education," Harvey said. "Students will face increased discrimination and bullying, and fewer accommodations and opportunities for meaningful education."

DLC urged Congress to block the President's decision. The agency pledged to work with state and national allies to protect students' rights, enforce existing state-level protections, and hold policymakers accountable.

"This is a defining moment for Colorado and for our country," said DLC Executive Director Andrew Romanoff. "We can either defend the rights of students with disabilities or let those rights be erased. We choose to fight."

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Disability Law Colorado is a nonprofit civil rights organization, authorized by federal law to combat discrimination, abuse, and neglect. We aim to make Colorado the best place in America for people with disabilities to work and thrive. For more information, visit disabilitylawco.org.