



WHEREAS, people with disabilities make significant contributions to Colorado's economic and social wellbeing and face barriers to employment, denying them the opportunity to use their skills and perspectives and depriving employers of the talent they need to grow; and

WHEREAS, as the state continues its economic recovery in the wake of the pandemic, it's critical that it be powered by inclusion, providing people with disabilities the support they need to pursue their career goals and live independently; and

WHEREAS, as they enter or reenter the workforce in the wake of COVID-19, Colorado workers with disabilities can benefit by visiting one of the offices of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which partners with the state's 52 Workforce Centers; and

WHEREAS, the division can provide no-cost customized workforce development services to workers with disabilities, connecting them with employment opportunities, educational and training opportunities, and more; they also collaborate with business and other government and nonprofit organizations to fully integrate Coloradans living with disabilities into the workforce; and

WHEREAS, many Colorado employers understand the value that people with disabilities bring to the workplace; their example encourages others to create inclusive talent management practices, to the benefit of workers with disabilities, businesses, and local, state, and regional economies; and

WHEREAS, these employers know that hiring from this talent pool is more than doing the right thing, it is doing the smart thing. When employers create a culture of belonging for all of their talent, the dividends that are paid back to the company -- and to Colorado -- are significant; and

WHEREAS, in recognition that many workers from marginalized communities with low incomes face a high barrier to employment, investment in workforce services is essential. Workers with disabilities require customized workforce solutions tailored to their unique needs; and

WHEREAS, Centers for Independent Living and Certified Work Incentives Coordinators around the state can help people with disabilities navigate the impacts of working on any benefits they receive, including the Medicaid Buy-in for Working Adults with Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, our communities and our economy are at their best when all people, including people with disabilities, can earn an income and become independent, just like anyone else; and.

WHEREAS, activities during this month will reinforce the value and talent people with disabilities add to our workplaces and communities and affirm Colorado's commitment to an inclusive community that increases access and opportunities to all, including individuals with disabilities;

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the state of Colorado, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2021,

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

in the state of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the state of Colorado, this first day of October, 2021



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor