



## MESSAGE FROM MARSHA

### BLESSED ARE THE CHILDREN

Throughout Colorado there are more than a thousand children with chronic long-term disabilities who are on the state waiting list for access to special health care services currently not covered by most insurance companies. Unfortunately due to the present underfunding of these services it will be years before these children who were born with disabilities and facing life-long challenges will have access to essential health care services.

Last year I had the honor of representing the citizens of HD19 on an interim committee that held hearings regarding the daily challenges confronting these children and their parents. Typically private insurance companies exclude coverage for children born with special health care needs. The high cost of therapies, medical equipment, counseling and medications places a huge and often insurmountable financial burden on their families not to mention the emotional toll of having a child with special needs.

Providing services that allow these children to remain at home with their own families rather than becoming institutionalized is not only compassionate and beneficial for the families, it is also more cost effective for the state. Senate Bill 10-02, sponsored by myself and Rep. Primavera, is an effort to increase the dollars available for these services by requiring the Department of Health Care Policy and Finance to recover payments made by Medicaid that were actually the responsibility of private insurance companies and ultimately should have been paid by them. SB10-02 requires the Department to act as a representative for these families regarding their Medicaid claims and establishes an Ombudsman's office to assist families through the red-tape of the Medicaid bureaucracy.

I understand the sacrifices and heartbreak families live with when a child is born with physical and developmental challenges. My brother was born with developmental disabilities and has required lifetime assistance. These individuals were dealt a hand in life that requires patience, understanding, and never-ending hard work from their family members and friends. Without this support and assistance often the only alternative for the family is institutional care. As a society of compassionate people we can do much better for those children and offer options to institutional care by providing assistance for their needs. For additional information on SB10-02 visit [www.leg.state.co.us](http://www.leg.state.co.us) and for additional information on Medicaid benefits visit [www.colorado.gov/hcpf](http://www.colorado.gov/hcpf) or contact me at [MarshaLooper@gmail.com](mailto:MarshaLooper@gmail.com). Thank you for the opportunity to serve!

*Marsha Looper*

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