



May 6, 2024

Dear Governor Polis and Members of the Colorado General Assembly:

The Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP) respectfully urges you to pass the Diabetes Prevention & Obesity Treatment Act (SB54). As an organization focused on women's preventive health, AWHP recognizes that obesity is a chronic disease with a significant impact on women's health. We are pleased to see that Colorado is considering a bill that would greatly expand access to comprehensive obesity care and treatment by ensuring that the full spectrum of obesity care be covered by both the state Medicaid program and commercial insurance markets in the state.

Obesity is a chronic, treatable disease that affects more than [1 in 4 women in Colorado](#) and has a [disproportionate impact](#) on women of color. It is associated with over 200 other chronic conditions, including many that specifically affect women throughout their lives, such as breast and ovarian cancers as well as fertility issues. Women with obesity are also more likely to face harmful social stigma and discrimination. Finally, obesity has a tremendous economic burden, with economic costs (both direct and indirect) totaling [\\$1.72 trillion in 2018](#). Given obesity's extensive impact, AWHP believes that insurance coverage for the full scope of obesity care options—including counseling or intensive behavioral therapy, behavior modification, anti-obesity medications (AOMs), weight loss surgeries, and nutrition services—is critical to improving women's health.

Unfortunately, even though obesity has serious consequences, especially for women, it is often misunderstood, leading to health insurance barriers that keep the full range of obesity care options out of reach for many women—particularly AOMs.

Insurance coverage for comprehensive obesity care is critical to ensure that women living with obesity can access the care they need. **By passing the Diabetes Prevention & Obesity Treatment Act, Colorado would expand access to comprehensive obesity care for countless of its residents, thereby greatly decreasing the impact of obesity on population health and in turn promoting health equity.** Ensuring that Coloradans have access to evidence-based options for treating this disease is critical for their health and wellbeing. As such, AWHP strongly supports the passage of the Diabetes Prevention & Obesity Treatment Act.

Respectfully,

Millicent Gorham, CEO, Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention