

PRESS RELEASE – DENVER, COLORADO

AUGUST 10, 2009

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**COLORADO MAY BE LOSING MILLIONS IN FEDERAL MATCHING FUNDS-  
ADMINISTRATION REMAINS SILENT—REFUSES TO ANSWER QUESTIONS**

In November of 2006 the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) the federal monitors of our Medicaid dollars issued a cease and desist order regarding getting federal matching funds on the mil levy funds collected by the counties for developmental disability services. State Medicaid dollars are eligible for a match of at least 50% from the federal government. When taxpayers in local communities approve mil levy funds to support their local developmental disability programs these funds are collected by the counties and are given to the local Community Centered Board (CCB), the organizations that are statutorily in charge of managing and delivering services to developmentally disabled citizens. Until November 2006 these funds were eligible for federal match.

The (CCDC) Colorado Cross Disabilities Coalition, supported by PAD-CO (Parents of Adults with Disabilities of Colorado, and the Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council (CDDC) have been asking various state agencies since January why Colorado is no longer getting these essential matching funds. CCDC learned from the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) the agency in charge of Medicaid funds that they actually do not have control of this issue and that the matter lies within the purview of the State Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). CCDC sent an email on July 9<sup>th</sup> to CDHS Executive Director Karen Beye for an explanation. After getting no response we asked again on August 3<sup>rd</sup> but have heard nothing. The only explanation we received was that the reason that CMS stopped the match was because administrative changes in how the match was managed would have been required by both DHS and the CCBs receiving these funds. At the time, the state and CCB's were making many other changes to their programs but apparently declined to make this change.

Considering the magnitude of the Colorado budget crisis causing our governor to reduce our already lean budget by an astounding 10%, coupled with the lengthy waiting lists that our developmentally disabled citizens must endure, the loss of at least \$38 million annually in funding is a major concern. The Governor will be proposing a series of very painful budget cuts on August 24 to the Joint Budget Committee. These cuts will impact every Coloradoan—but will harm the most vulnerable citizens such as those with developmental disabilities most severely. In this environment the inability to receive a rational explanation about why the state did not require the changes recommended by CMS in November of 2006 or why they do not make the changes now to obtain those funds is the least that our citizenry should expect. By now this refusal has cost us over \$70 million. As we slash the budget our Governor needs to ask his cabinet members **CAN THE STATE OF COLORADO REALLY AFFORD TO LOSE \$38 MILLION ANNUALLY IN FEDERAL MATCH FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES?**

