

Chair Report

May 2023

Fellow Commissioners,

Despite being a shortened time frame due to the rescheduled meeting, this is an action packed report. We had another long day at the Capitol on May 2nd, but emerged from the House Judiciary Committee with an 11 to 1 vote. Many thanks to those stakeholders who testified or sent letters on our behalf.

As you will all be aware by the time you see this, SB 23-64 has subsequently passed the House on a 61 to 3 bipartisan vote and will be moving to the Governor's desk. There are no words for the masterful work our legislative liaison, Amanda Gall, has done on our behalf. Sophia and I have both asked that sponsors be encouraged to request a signing ceremony. It has been a long and winding road to get here and many people and organizations deserve recognition for the tremendous effort both within the Office and by so many different stakeholders outside the Office. I served on the 2013 judicial task force with Judge Elizabeth Leith whose two reports initiated the move toward a pilot project, and I subsequently participated closely with then Representative Dave Young to pass the original enabling bill. I worked with Representative Snyder, who stepped in to help gain the funding we needed to actually launch the pilot. Since that point, I have watched Director Alvarez and her staff go from no phone, email or office space to a functioning agency while in the midst of a historically disruptive pandemic no less. That makes 10 years of my involvement so perhaps no one knows better than I do how very many committed people have been instrumental over the years in making this Office a reality for Colorado. There are far too many to recognize them all here; however, I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of the current Commissioners as well as past members Shari Caton, Kelsey Lesco, Marco Chayet, Karen Kelley and Allison Zinn. Although finally from afar, I look forward to watching the Office expand to serve all Coloradoans in need and deserving of our care and support.

You will note an agenda item for the upcoming meeting to discuss letters of appreciation on behalf of the Commission for our legislative sponsors and liaisons. I will draft those letters for your review prior to the meeting. Please don't hesitate to provide feedback and suggestions for final drafts to be approved at the meeting.

I have provided AG Finke with final edited versions of the Director performance surveys and his office has been in the process of getting those formatted for distribution.

Director Alvarez has initiated contact with both the Governor's Office and the Office of the Chief Justice regarding appointment of the new Board. I hope to be able to provide more details on that at our meeting. I have been in contact with at least one interested candidate already. Just as a reminder, Commissioners Crona and Theissen have appointments that extend to Nov/Oct 2025. However, Commissioners Garcia and Fields were appointed mid-terms and have appointments that technically expire later this fall. Therefore, re-appointments need to be requested. While my own **second** term extends to 2025, as of August 1st, I do not meet the attorney qualification for appointment by the Chief Justice. As such, I will submit my resignation in June, effective September 1st when the new board is

seated. Continuity will be a huge asset to Director Alvarez as the Office moves to a permanent status and I strongly encourage all of you to continue your vital service.

DBW / 5-7-23