

May 18, 2021

House Judiciary Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Support for H.B. 1315 (Herod) – Ending Juvenile Fees in Colorado

Dear Representatives Weissman, Tipper, Bacon, Benavidez, Bockenfeld, Carver, Daugherty, Luck, Lynch, Roberts, and Woodrow:

We write as organizations across the political spectrum to urge you to **vote YES on House Bill 1315 (Herod)** to end the assessment and collection of juvenile fees and costs in Colorado.

Juvenile fees and costs – monetary sanctions imposed on youth and families to generate government revenue – are a regressive tax on vulnerable Coloradans. These fees include charges for public defender applications, genetic testing, restorative justice programs, miscellaneous court costs, late payment fees, and more, and come with harsh penalties and other negative consequences for nonpayment.

Studies show that juvenile fees create additional barriers for youth and families, often trapping them in cycles of debt and court involvement. Further, juvenile fees are linked to higher recidivism rates and lower levels of positive social spending, undermining community safety and youth rehabilitation.

Research consistently shows that jurisdictions tend to generate little to no net revenue from juvenile fees, which they collect at low rates with high costs. Still, relying on system-involved youth and families to generate potential government revenue creates a perverse incentive to entangle youth in the system. By ending juvenile fees that only push youth deeper into the system, Colorado could see long-term fiscal savings.

Ending juvenile fees is a common-sense juvenile justice reform with bipartisan support in Colorado and nationally. **We respectfully urge you to vote YES on H.B. 1315.**

Sincerely,

Tristan Gorman, Legislative Policy
Coordinator
Colorado Criminal Defense Bar

Jason Pye, Director, Rule of Law
Initiatives
Due Process Institute

William R. Maurer, Senior Attorney
Institute for Justice

Lauren Krisai, Senior Policy Analyst
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Jessica Feierman, Senior Managing
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Lt. Diane Goldstein (Ret.), Executive
Director
Law Enforcement Action Partnership

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**Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime
and Incarceration**

Michael Harris, Senior Director for Juvenile
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National Center for Youth Law

Mary Ann Scali, Executive Director
National Juvenile Defender Center

Marc Hyden, Director,
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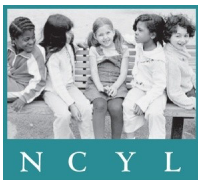
John Koufos, Executive Director
Safe Streets & Second Chances



DUE PROCESS
INSTITUTE



**Juvenile
Law Center**



NATIONAL JUVENILE DEFENDER CENTER

