

HB-1143

**Safety, Not Status:
Make Background Checks Inclusive**

Bill Sponsors: Rep Ricks & Joseph | Sen Weissman

Background

Colorado's success is rooted in policies that ensure everyone can live, study, work, and contribute fully. We have made significant strides in supporting immigrant communities, and now is the time to expand opportunities, and improve quality of life for all Coloradans.

At a time when federal protections like DACA, TPS & Parole are being taken away from Colorado immigrants, we need to step up to ensure a future where everyone, regardless of status, can participate in community institutions and contribute without fear.

Requiring an SSN inherently excludes people based on immigration status, not reasons of safety, creating unnecessary barriers.

While more than 18,000 Coloradans have benefited from DACA and ~12,000 remain enrolled, restrictive eligibility criteria and ongoing legal challenges have resulted in a growing number of talented, educated young people without work authorization or Social Security numbers. Even current DACA recipients remain vulnerable to federal policy shifts that could strip their protections.

The Problem

In Colorado, many institutions of higher education, health care facilities, nonprofit organizations, private contractors & volunteer organizations **require a Social Security Number (SSN) for non-employment background checks**, blocking thousands of Coloradans from participating in opportunities required for educational programs like:

- Clinical experiences for health careers, like nursing
- Internships, pre-apprenticeships & volunteer roles

This is happening despite neither the FBI nor CBI requiring a SSN for a criminal background check.

What the Bill Does

The bill prohibits an entity from requiring an individual to provide a SSN for a **background check for a non-employment-based educational opportunity** unless the entity also accepts an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) in lieu of a SSN.

This bill also requires that basic data privacy protocols be followed as outlined in the Colorado Privacy Act when fingerprints are taken for a background check for non-employment educational opportunities.

An entity that does not allow an individual to provide an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is subject to a civil penalty enforceable by the Attorney General.



Why It Matters

Opportunity for All: Everyone deserves the chance to study, volunteer, and participate in civic life without being excluded because of immigration status.

Safety: Name-based & fingerprint-based background checks remain intact, meaning that all criminal records can be searched, as can important databases like sex offender registries and child abuse and neglect records. Additionally, names and aliases, and address history can be verified using a collection of public & private data, and even a credit score can be checked, allowing background checks that accept an SSN or ITIN to be focused on actual safety, not immigration paperwork.

Public Health: Opening the door for immigrants regardless of status to enter careers in health care will help address workforce shortages, and contribute linguistic and cultural competency skills that lead to improved patient care. Additionally, health careers can provide individuals and families with dignity & economic stability that end generational cycles of poverty.

Our Message

Colorado should be a place where **safety, not status** determines opportunity.

By removing unnecessary background barriers, we strengthen our communities, protect vulnerable people, and ensure everyone can contribute.

Supporters:



- Alianza NORCO
- American Friends Service Committee, Colorado
- Boulder County
- Celestial Alegria
- College Access Navigators
- Colorado Center on Law and Policy
- Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
- Colorado Fiscal Institute
- Colorado Immigrant Partnership Teams
- Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition
- Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy & Research Organization
- COMBINE
- Compañeros: Four Corners Immigrant Resource Center
- Convivir Colorado
- Denver Justice and Peace Committee
- DU Center for Immigration Policy & Research
- Edgewater Collective
- Ednum: The Alumni Collective
- First Universalist Church of Denver
- Healthier Colorado
- ISAAC of Northern Colorado
- Indivisible Front Range Resistance
- Landmark Immigration & Estates Law
- The Latino Chamber of Commerce
- Lamar Unidos
- Latinx Therapist Project CO
- Metropolitan State University of Denver
- Mountain Dreamers
- Movimiento Poder
- Panamericana Media
- Rise Beyond Freedom, LLC
- Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute
- San Luis Valley Immigrant Partnership Team
- Small Business Majority
- Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning
- United Way of Larimer County
- Wezesha Dada Center
- Young Invincibles

Individual Petition Sign-On: bit.ly/noSSN | **Business/Org Sign-On:** bit.ly/orgrespaldo

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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