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Invest State Funds to Benefit Communities [SB25-167]

Housing Investments for Public-School Workforce

Efren Garcia, Policy Analyst, April 1st, 2025

Thank you, Madam Chair Kipp and committee members, for the opportunity to speak today. I am Efren Garcia, a policy analyst with the Bell Policy Center, where we work to advance economic mobility for every Coloradan. I'm here to express our support for Senate Bill 167 and its broader vision for a community-centered housing investment.

The ongoing housing affordability crisis has become ubiquitous. As of 2022 in Colorado, [over half of the renter households are cost-burdened, and only 11 percent can afford to purchase a typical home](#). Housing unaffordability especially impacts the public school workforce. In 2021, [only 20 percent of the 1.9 million homes statewide](#) were considered affordable for educators relative to their district. Other essential roles, such as [education support professionals](#), also face unaffordable housing costs.

While [Proposition 123](#) and other programs are helping increase affordable housing, [a significant gap remains](#), especially regarding affordable homeownership. This limits the ability of educators and school staff to build wealth while serving their communities.

At the same time, [Colorado faces significant budget constraints](#). We lack the capacity in the general fund to address all long-term needs—especially as these needs continue to grow. Therefore, we believe it's both responsible and necessary to explore alternative funding sources that can support long-term public good.

The Community Investment Portfolio proposed in the bill aims to do just that — increase affordable housing and expand homeownership opportunities for the public school workforce. Given the circumstances, this initiative reflects an innovative, strategic use of state resources to meet needs the market and local governments cannot fill alone.

This presents wealth-building opportunities for a workforce that is the backbone of our communities while generating long-term returns for the state — an approach that is timely as the state simultaneously continues to face budget and housing pressures.

We appreciate the work done to refine the bill and thank the sponsors and other housing advocates for their leadership. I urge your support. Thank you for your time.