



WHEREAS, October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. It is a time to increase public awareness about the untapped talent resource that exists in people with disabilities and resources that are available for employers to hire, retain and advance this talent pool. It is a time to celebrate the value and many contributions people with disabilities add to the workplace; and

WHEREAS, the theme for 2023, "Advancing Access and Equity: Then, Now, and Next", was selected to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its importance as the first federal legislation to address access and equity rights for people with disabilities. It conveys the important message that people with disabilities play an essential role in our economic success, that enhancing and building the diversity of Colorado's workforce is critical and that people with disabilities are part of an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace; and

WHEREAS, skills-based hiring works against bias in recruiting processes by disrupting pre-conceived notions and leads to a workforce with more diverse perspectives and with skills applicable to the job, enhancing both equity and access within the workplace by expanding the career pathway opportunities for people with disabilities. Skills-based hiring supports work-based learning models, such as apprenticeships, which create new pathways to employment for untapped talent, such as people with disabilities, while also building a culture of upskilling for current employees; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation collaborates with business and other government and nonprofit organizations to fully integrate Coloradans living with disabilities into the workforce, providing resources, support and training. The division can provide customized workforce development services to job seekers and workers with disabilities, connecting them with employment opportunities, educational and training opportunities, and more; and

WHEREAS, employers are challenged to pledge to continue to take steps throughout the year to recruit, hire, retain, and advance individuals with disabilities and work to pursue the goals of opportunity, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and independent living for people with disabilities. Employers know that hiring a diverse workforce, including people with disabilities, creates a culture of belonging for all of their talent and pays dividends back to the company and all of Colorado;

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2023, as

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

in the State of Colorado.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of October, 2023



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor