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Protect Civil Rights Immigration Status - SB25-276

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April 8, 2025

Thank you Chair and members of the committee. My name is Joshua Mantell and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Bell Policy Center. The Bell Policy Center provides policymakers, advocates, and the public with reliable resources to create a practical policy agenda that promotes economic mobility for every Coloradan.

I am here to testify in support of SB-276 and want to thank Sens Gonzalez and Weissman for bringing this hugely important bill forward.

The Bell Policy Center supports this legislation because we know how crucial immigrants of all types are to the economic success of the state, and the people that reside within it. People who live in fear cannot realize their true economic potential. If kids are afraid to go to school, they cannot achieve success necessary to get a good job and support their family. That will not lead to economic mobility. If people are afraid to go to their jobs, they cannot support their families and communities. For the sake of economic mobility, we need to ensure that immigrants are safe and able to go about their lives for themselves, their families, and their communities.

It is important to put on the record that immigrants, including those that are undocumented, contribute greatly to our economy. We put together some research in 2021 to demonstrate this fact, and while the exact numbers may be slightly out of date, they still paint a clear picture of how important immigrants are to the economic health of our state. More than 160,700 immigrants without documentation live in Colorado and collectively contribute [to \\$156.5 million in state and local taxes and \\$272.8 million](#) in federal taxes each year. Even when excluding the limited public

services available to undocumented immigrants, their net annual impact on [Colorado's economy is more than \\$1 billion.](#)

We cannot have a thriving economy in our state if our friends and neighbors are living in the shadows. This bill will protect some of our most vulnerable communities in Colorado, allowing them to live their lives and help make our state the dynamic, diverse, and welcoming place that we know it can, and should, be. We ask for your yes vote on SB-276 to help strengthen our economy, keep our residents safe, and show the rest of the country that it is possible to be both strong and compassionate.

Thank you, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.