

GOV. RITTER VETO MESSAGE ON HOUSE BILL 08-1150

June 5, 2008

Honorable Colorado House of Representatives
66th General Assembly
Second Regular Session
State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am filing with the Secretary of State House Bill 08-1150, "Concerning a program providing additional therapies to persons with disabilities who are eligible to receive Medicaid." I vetoed this bill as of 10:24 a.m., and this letter sets forth my reasons for doing so.

House Bill 08-1150 directs the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to implement a three-year pilot program to provide chiropractic care, massage therapy and acupuncture to Medicaid clients with spinal cord injuries. There was no appropriation made to implement this legislation.

We have taken great strides over the last 18 months to make Medicaid more efficient and effective. Specifically, we have implemented a Preferred Drug List to reduce pharmaceutical expenses in Medicaid, we have launched a Medical Home initiative to ensure all children served by public insurance are receiving high quality, cost-effective care and we've taken steps to rebuild an effective managed care system for Medicaid. That said, much more can and will be done to improve efficiency and quality for clients served by public programs. Until we have made more progress in ensuring high quality, efficient delivery of traditional services for all clients in Medicaid, I cannot support a program to offer alternative therapies to a limited population.

Furthermore, putting in place the pilot program outlined in this legislation would be a major undertaking. The process to simply seek federal approval for such a program would be labor and time intensive. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing put a fiscal note on the bill to ensure they would have the resources needed to implement the legislation, but the General Assembly elected to pass the bill with no resources to implement it. Without the necessary resources to dedicate, I believe the likelihood of success for such an undertaking is significantly limited.

Accordingly, I have vetoed this bill.

Sincerely,

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor