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January 21, 2016

To: Secretary of State Wayne Williams

From: 9to5 Colorado, by State Director Neha Mahajan

Subject: Rule 7.2.6 Ballot Envelope Language Requirement

Please accept this written testimony in opposition to the proposed rule requiring a voter to write the name and address on the ballot envelope when they give their voted ballot to someone else for delivery.

9to5 Colorado is a 20 year old statewide membership organization of women in low-wage jobs, organizing to improve policy on the issues that directly affect them. 9to5 members want to ensure their voices are heard, and voting is one way they do that.

However, the working women who are our members and constituents often face obstacles to participating in the electoral process, including working multiple jobs, family and personal responsibilities that fill up their lives, reliance on public transportation, etc.

Colorado has done a good job in recent years to give eligible voters all the options to vote – by mail, drop off ballots and in-person voting. And allowing someone else to drop off a ballot gives working women one more option in their already busy lives.

Requiring that a voter must write the name and address of the person on the envelope just presents one more potential obstacle to Coloradans who want to be engaged in their communities.

Colorado law allows one person to collect up to 10 ballots for delivery – so that people who have disabilities, personal circumstances or just wait until the last minute to vote can still have their ballot counted. When a child gets sick, your car breaks down, there's a snowstorm or you have to work overtime to make ends meet, a little extra help getting your ballot delivered is critical.

Last year, a rule almost identical to this one - proposed by then Secretary of State Scott Gessler - was ruled to be beyond his authority. We would argue that this rule is also outside the Secretary's authority and, on behalf of Colorado working women, ask that efforts to enforce it be abandoned.