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**Community Organizations Call for Retraction/Correction of CPR's
Inaccurate & Misleading Coverage of Caring For Denver**

The false impression left by CPR's shoddy investigative series threatens the reputation of Caring for Denver Foundation and the role of community efforts to address mental health and substance misuse in Denver.

Denver, Colorado — Today a coalition of 50 community organizations [submitted a letter](#) to Colorado Public Radio demanding retraction and correction of their recent series that presented an inaccurate, unbalanced, and unfairly negative portrayal of the Caring for Denver Foundation's grantmaking, and stewardship of public funds. Especially egregious was the ignorant mischaracterization of the important role that people with lived experience are playing in helping others achieve recovery and the value of grassroots organization led by people of color who are confronting the longstanding lack of equity in access to behavioral health care in Denver.

Over two hundred community leaders showed up in force to the December 9th City Council meeting to push back on CPR's reporting. The Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition [sent this letter](#) to City Council based on years of participating as a grant reviewer for CFD and close relationships with community partners unfairly critiqued in CPR's reporting.

"Casting doubt on the qualifications and expertise of BIPOC people has a long and racist history," says CCJRC Executive Director Christie Donner, in the letter. "[T]hese articles fail to meet the journalistic standards of fair, accurate, thorough, and objective reporting. This has done a great disservice to the city of Denver, City Council, C4D, the grantees, and the residents of Denver—who now have the mistaken impression that their tax dollars are being misspent."

"CPR should offer a retraction and correction," said Donner, "and other media outlets should stop reporting on this series without doing their own homework to avoid being part of the misinformation echo chamber."

Breeah Kinsella, Executive Director of the Colorado Provider's Association, the professional organization that oversees the certification of the Peer Support Workforce, also criticizes CPR.

“We take issue with the characterization that millions of Denver taxpayer dollars were wasted by nonprofits ‘run by unlicensed directors’, with, quote, ‘long criminal histories’”, said Kinsella. “The reputation of the entire peer support workforce—and the substance-use recovery field, violence-prevention projects, and re-entry programs where peers do their critical work—has been unfairly tarnished.”

Communities of color have long been underrepresented and underserved in Colorado's mental health system. “The implication that funding organizations led by people of color is undermining the integrity of mental health services is deeply problematic,” said Kenneth Crowley, CEO of the Crowley Foundation, which has served youth of color in Denver for over fifteen years. “Communities of color have the right to design and deliver services that reflect their lived realities, and the Caring for Denver Foundation's commitment to funding such organizations is a step toward correcting long-standing disparities.”

“Community is activating around this because we can't let the false narrative in CPR's investigative series go unchecked and allow these ignorant and unfair perceptions to solidify in people's minds, ” said Donner. “The work of the Caring for Denver Foundation and community grantees is too important.”

About the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC):

CCJRC is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 whose mission is to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety. The organization advocates and organizes for public safety strategies that are holistic, effective, and just. For more information visit: www.ccjrc.org

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