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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Protection of Families Policy

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order establishing a policy that protects families from government.

1. Background & Need

The family is the backbone of American society; strong, healthy families are good. Families are the first to take care of a sick relative. Families come to the rescue when a member is in need. They take care of children, and look after the elderly. They ask for no special favors—families do these things naturally out of love, loyalty and a commitment to the future. They are the bedrock of our society in Colorado, and government should support and reaffirm families—not undermine and be hostile to them or merely send a message of neutrality.

Families play a vital role in our free society. But all too often, government proposals have hastened the destruction of the family unit and the transfer of authority from parents to government. Government policy on family should follow the Hippocratic oath: “First of all, do no harm.”

The economic and social costs of family breakdown—increased poverty, crime, substance abuse, adolescent promiscuity and teen-age pregnancies—are huge. Countless studies have shown that those who grow up in loving and nurturing family environments, with both maternal and paternal role models, have a greatly reduced risk of dropping out of school, becoming juvenile delinquents and using drugs. These children also have the best chance of completing their education, finding meaningful employment and establishing their own stable marriages and families.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Executive Order is to ensure that government action does not interfere with the formation and maintenance of healthy, nurturing families but instead strengthens and supports families. This policy does not require or encourage any subdivision of state government to promulgate rules or regulations or to generate

bureaucracy in any form. Rather, the policy requires that agencies, commissions, boards and other subdivisions of the State consider families as a factor in their decision-making.

3. Protection of Families

Before any action is taken by a state agency, board, commission or other subdivision of the State, it should informally seek to answer the following questions:

- A. Does this action by government strengthen or erode the stability of the family and the marriage commitment, in particular?
- B. Does this action strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurture and supervision of their children?
- C. Does this action increase or decrease family earnings? Do the proposed benefits of this action justify the impact on the family budget?
- D. Can this activity be carried out at a lower level of government, by civic and faith-based organizations or by the family itself?
- E. What message, intended or otherwise, does this program send to the public concerning the status of the family?
- F. What message, implicit or explicit, does this action send concerning the behavior and personal responsibility of youth and the norms of our society?

4. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in force until further modification or rescission by the Governor.

GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado, this 6th day of
January, 2000.

Bill Owens
Governor