NEWS RELEASE
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Colorado Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to Hold
Briefing on the Blaine Amendment:
Colorado Constitution’s No Aid Clause and Its Impact in Colorado

WHAT: Public Briefing: Colorado Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on
Civil Rights
WHEN: Tuesday, July 18, 2017, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
WHERE: University of Denver, Sturm Hall (Building 26), Lindsey Auditorium,
Room 281, 2000 E. Asbury Ave, Denver, CO 80208

On July 18, 2017, in Denver, the Colorado Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on
Civil Rights will hold a public briefing to examine the issue of the Blaine Amendment.

In 1875, Congressman James Blaine proposed an amendment (Blaine Amendment) to the U.S.
Constitution. The Amendment was intended to exclude from government funding schools that
taught “sectarian” faiths (mainly Catholicism), while allowing those funds to “common
schools,” which taught the “common” or “nonsectarian” faith (i.e. non-denominational
Protestantism). Although this amendment failed to pass the Congress, 38 states, including
Colorado, adopted some form of the Blaine Amendment in their constitutions.

In June 2015, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled that a Douglas County Scholarship program
would violate the state’s Blaine Amendment (also known as the "No Aid" Clause), which bars
“public moneys” from being allocated “in aid of any church or sectarian society.”

The Committee will hear from individuals with expertise on Colorado’s No Aid Clause. It will
examine the history of the Blaine Amendment, as well as arguments for and against its
continued use. The Committee will hear testimony on the effects of the Amendment on the
civil rights of a wide range of families in Colorado’s schools. The public is invited to the
meeting and encouraged to address the Committee following the presentations.

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with
advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing an annual federal civil
rights enforcement report. For information about the Commission and its Advisory Committees,
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