John W. Hickenlooper, Governor

136 State Capitol

Denver, CO 80203-1792

Dear Governor Hickenlooper:

As a Coloradoan and as a member of the yoga community in this state, I write to express my serious concerns with the Division of Private Occupational Schools’ (“DPOS”) attempt to impose burdensome and expensive requirements on yoga teacher training schools (“YTTs”). For the reasons detailed below, I urge you to oppose DPOS’ harmful and unnecessary initiative.

**Regulating YTTs is Unnecessary and Arbitrary**

As you know, the DPOS’ regulatory authority extends only to schools “which offer [credentials or services] that constitute occupational education” or, “program[s] designed to fit individuals for *gainful employment*” in the state. Colo. Rev. Stat. §12-59-103(8.5),(11) (emphasis added). But, YTTs are not designed to prepare students for “gainful employment” because **the vast majority of students do not become yoga instructors**, and most who complete these programs do so to deepen their personal yoga practice. As such, YTTs programs are **avocational activities, not occupational education,** and regulation is unnecessary.

Further, the DPOS’ view that its authority stretches to **any** program that may enable an individual to make any amount of money (however insignificant) is an overly broad interpretation of the state law governing career education. Currently, DPOS only regulates approximately 100 occupational categories – this means it has **chosen to forgo** regulation of many potential occupations and avocations that could lead to an individual earning some money, making its determination to regulate YTTs arbitrary.

Finally, while the DPOS’ mission is consumer protection, we are unaware of any significant consumer complaints about YTTs in Colorado. In fact, it is our understanding that after many years of allowing YTTs to operate without undue interference, **consumer complaints were not the impetus for the DPOS’ recent initiative.**  This reality undermines the DPOS’ position that YTTs should be regulated for the benefit of consumers.

**Regulating YTTs is Harmful to the Yoga Community and the State**

Many YTTs in Colorado are small businesses with tight budgets. The fees imposed by the DPOS are burdensome (ranging into the thousands of dollars), and will have a detrimental effect on independent studios. We have already heard about **studios that may close their doors or move out of state** because of the DPOS’ efforts – costing Coloradoans jobs and access to preferred studios. Further,the extensive and expensive regulations set forth by DPOS unfairly favor large, established studios, **creating an unfair advantage** for larger studios and establishing a barrier to entry for small, independent yoga studio entrepreneurs.

Please support the yoga community and small businesses in Colorado by opposing the DPOS initiative.

Sincerely,