



Testimony in Support of HB 133 before Senate Health and Human Services Committee

May 19, 2021

Every Body Texas is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that every person in Texas can access safe, unbiased, high-quality sexual and reproductive healthcare. As the statewide recipient of the federal Title X Family Planning Program grant, Every Body Texas funds a diverse network of providers that serves over 180,000 clients each year. Title X providers also participate in Texas Medicaid and the state-funded women's health programs administered by HHSC, relying on these critical revenue sources to offer robust healthcare services to their clients and communities.

Every Body Texas strongly supports HB 133 by Rep. Toni Rose and we thank Chair Kolkhorst and this committee for considering legislation to improve continuity of care for postpartum Medicaid clients, thereby improving health outcomes for Texas families.

The health of Texans is very important to me and my organization. In addition to maternal mortality, pregnancy complications and other medical issues often come up months after pregnancy. For example, postpartum depression is one of the most common complications and often arises weeks and months after a baby's birth. Other issues like infection, eclampsia, or heart issues may lead to urgent hospital stays, extra medications, and follow-up medical procedures. It's in the state's interest—and all of our interest—to prevent issues before they come up or become life-threatening.

Under the state's current policy, which has been temporarily suspended during the pandemic, Texas terminates Medicaid health insurance for mothers two months after pregnancy. Many Texas moms then become uninsured because their jobs do not offer insurance benefits. Texas is one of the states that generally does not make low-wage adults eligible for Medicaid insurance, and subsidies on [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) are only available for people above the poverty line.

Losing health insurance two months after childbirth makes it much harder for moms to get the health care they need during a critical time for their health and their baby's health. In the end, children, their families, and our state pay the price.



HB 133 will address that problem by allowing mothers to remain enrolled in Medicaid coverage for up to 12 months after pregnancy, rather than 2 months.

This bill is good for families. This bill is good for combating maternal deaths. This bill is a key step in addressing health challenges facing new moms—building upon Chair Kolkhorst’s previous efforts to strengthen maternal health policy, including her leadership in expanding the scope of services offered within the Healthy Texas Women program.

This bill also has strong bipartisan support in the Texas House and the support of over 65 healthcare organizations across Texas.¹

Every Body Texas appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments. If you require additional information about the issues raised in this letter, please contact me using the information provided in my cover email.

Sincerely,

Kami Geoffray
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Statement of Support for HB 133 Signed by Every Body Texas and 65 Other Organizations, available at https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5728d34462cd94b84dc567ed/t/6093ecaaf88ff24fb5016e69/1620307115826/HB133_Statement_66groups_May5.pdf