



**House Human Services Committee**  
**Support for HB133 – Expanding Medicaid Coverage for Pregnant Women**  
**Testimony by Lisa Hollier, MD**  
**Tuesday, March 23, 2021**

Good morning Chair Frank and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 133 by Representative Rose. My name is Dr. Lisa Holler and I am the Chief Medical Officer for Texas Children’s Health Plan and a Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Baylor College of Medicine. I am a Past President of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and serve as the Chair of Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee.

I am here representing Texas Children’s Health Plan, Texas Children’s Hospital, the Children’s Hospital Association of Texas, the Texas Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Texas District and the Texas Hospital Association, all of which are aligned in strong support of extending Medicaid postpartum coverage for twelve months after delivery. We also applaud Representative Rose for her leadership on maternal health.

As you are aware, Texas women face high rates of maternal death and severe complications and there is significant disparity by race and ethnicity. African American women are two to three times more likely to die during or following a pregnancy than are Caucasian women. In the December 2020 report, the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee noted that 31% of reviewed pregnancy-related deaths in 2013 occurred between 43 days and 1 year following the end of pregnancy. Deaths due to cardiovascular and coronary conditions, cardiomyopathy, embolism, and mental disorders were more likely to occur 43 days to 1 year. Further, 89% of pregnancy-related deaths reviewed from the 2013 cohort had a least some chance of preventability.

Over the past several years, Texas has taken important steps to advance maternal health. Not only did it establish the review committee, it also created the Healthy Texas Women’s program, known as HTW, and the Family Planning Program--programs that provide women basic preventive and primary care. Last session, lawmakers enacted SB750 by Sen. Kolkhorst to extend HTW to cover limited specialty care for the most common conditions that contribute to maternal death. The new program, HTW *Plus*, provides one year of coverage for perinatal mood disorders, substance abuse and cardiovascular disease. Our organizations strongly supported SB750.

At the same time, in both 2018 and 2020, the Review Committee recommended that Texas should “Increase access to *comprehensive* health services..., the year after pregnancy, and throughout the preconception and interpregnancy periods to facilitate continuity of care, enable effective care transitions, promote safe birth spacing, and improve lifelong health of women.”

HTW Plus provides a tremendous foundation on which to build. Quality patient care means treating the whole patient, so by enacting HB133, Texas will be able to truly optimize women’s health outcomes and reduce maternal deaths by providing coverage for a full array of postpartum services.

Thank you for your time and interest. I am happy to take any questions.