

PUBLIC COMMENTS

SB 1149

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

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Hearing Date: May 11, 2021 8:00 AM

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Although I will be unable to attend the House Human Services Committee hearing this morning, I wanted to provide some information on SB 1149 by Sen. Kolkhorst. We thank Rep. Noble and this committee for considering legislation to improve access to women's preventive health services, including contraception.

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.

SB 1149 directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to contract with Medicaid managed care organizations to provide Healthy Texas Women (HTW) services, building upon SB 750 by Sen. Kolkhorst passed during the 86th Texas Legislature.

Women's health in Texas has a long history of programmatic and administrative changes. Changes such as those proposed in SB 1149 will further reshape the program and to ensure providers and clients do not experience disruptions, we strongly advocate for significant stakeholder engagement—specifically those that represent providers participating in HTW and traditional HTW providers themselves in addition to the health plans—as a part of the bill's implementation process. To that end, Every Body Texas supports amending the bill to:

— Require HHSC to consult with the State Medicaid Managed Care Advisory Committee (SMMCAC) to provide critical opportunities for public and provider input.

— Direct HHSC to identify and implement options to reduce enrollment gaps stemming from forthcoming changes in eligibility and enrollment policies.

— Specify that current HTW and FPP Providers will be designated Significant Traditional Providers in the course of implementation and ensure that requirements apply statewide to Medicaid managed care organizations for providers serving individuals in the Healthy Texas Women program.

Every Body Texas believes that these amendments will help to reduce disruptions to provider and client participation in these critical programs. We are happy to provide any additional information and welcome the opportunity to schedule follow up conversations.