

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Health Care Reform, Select
For HB 12

Compiled on: Thursday, March 16, 2023 11:55 AM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: March 16, 2023 8:00 AM

Nicole Meitzen

self

Austin, TX

Hello. My name is Nicole Meitzen, and I'm writing in support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended by the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature and in the Governor's budget proposal. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Leah King, President & CEO
United Way of Tarrant County
Fort Worth, TX

I, Leah King, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill.

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Michael Floyd, The Rev. Dr.
Central Texas Interfaith
Austin, TX

Experience shows the desirability of this measure to foster maternal at minimal expense, and to strengthen families with newborns. Please support the passage of this bill.

Diane Duesterhoeft, Ms.
Texas IAF
San Antonio, TX

Other states, such as Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and South Carolina, have extended postpartum Medicaid insured care to 12 months. Certainly Texas should be able to do this, too.

Melinda Bilich, Ms.

Self

Austin, TX

I Melinda Bilich support HB 12 by Representative Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Kimberly Hickson Spaw

Self

Houston, TX

I Kimberly Hickson Spaw support HB 12 by Representative Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Kathy Dreyfus

self

Bellaire, TX

Maternal health care for new mothers on Medicaid needs to be extended from 2 - 12 months.

Kami Geoffray
Self, Independent Healthcare Consultant
Austin, TX

I, Kami Geoffray, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Terry Ford
self
DALLAS, TX

I, Terry N. Ford, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Peggy Harris
Self
The Woodlands, TX

I strongly support extending post partem care under Medicaid through 12 months. Poor women need this for their sakes and for their children.

Mary Favret
-self- retired
The Woodlands, TX

I believe this bill, HB12 would save Texas a good deal of money by covering any issues of healthcare to women. All women. As support for it has been expressed by the governor and the House Speaker, I believe it is wise to pass it now.

Diana Yee
Self
Houston, TX

I, Diana Yee, support HB 12 by Representative Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Sherry Elmer
Self / retired
Austin, TX

After greater than 20 years of maternal & newborn care delivering newborns I am keenly aware of the many issues that can arise in the initial post partum period and months following for both mother & infant. To extend health care to one year will help the family unit and our society at all levels. And most of all prevention is better than a problem allowed to develop from lack of care.

Sincerely
Sherry Elmer

Veronda Durden, CEO & President

Any Baby Can

Austin, TX

I, Veronda Durden, CEO and President of Any Baby Can, support HB 12 by Representative Rose and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

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We are encouraged that protecting the lives of Texas mothers is a bipartisan issue and look forward to your continued support in making informed health policy for our state. Texas should join the majority of other states, including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families.

Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue. I request that the committee vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Let's save the lives of Texas women and their babies!

Veronda L. Durden, MS

CEO and President, Any Baby Can

Donna Kreuzer

Self

Austin, TX

HB 12 by Rose will benefit so many Texan mothers and their families when finally passed! This Bill is significantly overdue, and I have been trying my best, as thousands of other Texans who care about Maternal Mental Health and Wellness, to help in getting it passed for many of the past Legislative Sessions. Thankfully, I'm grateful that this Legislation Session will project more confidence in passing HB 12 by Rose than those in the past! I sincerely thank each of you for voting in favor of this necessary bill for many Mothers in need!

Carolyn Mitchell, Rev

Texas Women for Justice

Conroe, TX

I encourage you to support HB 12 (Rose) that would extend Medicaid for eligible mothers to 12 months and vastly improve the healthcare of uninsured mothers following delivery. This will reduce the high mortality rates among poor women in the state of Texas.

Jane Chesney
Self, retired
The Woodlands, TX

Please vote for this bill. All mothers and their newborn babies deserve to have the best chance to be healthy.

Erica Lawrence
Self
Spring, TX

Thank you for putting forth HB-12. I appreciate and support this proposed legislation as it will expand Medicaid to improve healthcare outcomes for uninsured mothers. Extending Medicaid for eligible mothers to 12 months will vastly improve the healthcare of uninsured mothers following delivery. This will reduce the high mortality rates among poor women in the state of Texas. Furthermore, a strong majority of Texans support Medicaid expansion. Additionally, I believe it is worth noting that according to "Cover Texas Now", Governor Abbott and House Speaker Dade Phelan support this expansion of postpartum Medicaid. Thank you, Erica in 77386

Thomas Hedrick
Dillon Joyce Ltd
Austin, TX

Tom Hedrick supports HB 12, and thank you to the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Laura Weaver
Retired/self
Spring, TX

Let's give Texas babies and mothers the best possible chance to thrive in the 12 months following birth. By passing HB 12, you have the opportunity to decrease the infant mortality rate and improve the outlook for young families in Texas. Please support HB 12

Mary Branson
self/ retired
The Woodlands, TX

I strongly support extending crucial health care to postpartum mothers from 2 months to 12 months. The year after a birth is a vulnerable time for women- we should fully support their health care needs.

Carol Ortiz, Ms.
Self/retired
Montgomery, TX

A postpartum recovery period is not absolute and varies with each individual. Postpartum care must be extended for 12 months for the maximum benefit to mothers and their families. Please support HB 12.

Lindsay Espejel
self
Austin, TX

I, Lindsay Espejel, as a maternal/child health nurse support HB 12 by Representative Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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with gratitude,
Lindsay Epspejel, BSN, RN

Margaret Roscoe
Texas resident
Conroe, TX

I support the bill HB 12 by Rose, which would extend Medicaid for postpartum women to 12 months.

Diana Forester

Self

Austin, TX

I, Diana Forester, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

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Sydney Carter

Network of Behavioral Health Providers

Houston, TX

NBHP drops a card of support for this bill.

Brittany McAllister

The National Service Office for Nurse-Family Partnership and Child First
Houston, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this comment on behalf of Nurse-Family Partnership™ (NFP) in support of House Bill 133. Since 2006, NFP has partnered with Texas to provide a public health nursing intervention designed to improve outcomes for first-time, high risk pregnant women and their children. To date, NFP has served 17,743 families across the state.

Nurse-Family Partnership is a health program that pairs registered nurses with low-income, first-time mothers to provide home visits during pregnancy and through the first two years of the child's life.

During home visits, NFP nurses assess the health of the mother and child, screen for issues including substance use and domestic violence, monitor the child's developmental milestones, and more. NFP provides moms the care, support, and resources to have a healthy pregnancy, be a responsible and caring parent, and become more economically self-sufficient.

Texas Nurse-Family Partnership is funded through the Department of Family and Protective Services' (DFPS) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Division, and approximately 90% of the mothers we serve are eligible for Medicaid. We are intensely aware of the support our moms need during the postpartum care to become or remain healthy enough to care for themselves, their child, and seek or maintain employment.

Many health issues women deal with in the postpartum period may begin later than 60 days postpartum, the time at which Medicaid would typically cease coverage of the mom. During the current public health emergency, Medicaid postpartum coverage has been temporarily extended through 12 months postpartum. Many of NFP's mothers have benefited significantly from this temporary extension, and we believe a permanent extension of this provision would lead to better outcomes for the moms and babies we serve.

NFP moms who have benefited from the current extension have reported:

- the ability to obtain diagnosis and treatment for a sleep disorder that was preventing the mom from working and caring for her child;
- that the Medicaid extension led them to continue breastfeeding their infant because they felt confident that they could seek health care if a physical issue arose from lactation;
- not going into financial ruin when they needed emergency gallbladder surgery a few months postpartum;
- the ability to seek mental health care when faced with postpartum depression; and more.

NFP supports the continuation of Medicaid coverage during the postpartum period to 12 months so that babies can receive the supported start from a healthy mother that they need to thrive.

We empower vulnerable first-time moms to transform their lives and create better futures for themselves and their babies. We believe this Medicaid postpartum extension will aid us in this effort.

Sylvia Campbell

self, retired

The Woodlands, TX

Dear Select Health Care Reform Committee,

What a great opportunity we have to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage to women in Texas! This change from 2 months to 12 months is HUGE! I am convinced it will not only help every woman and baby get a good, healthy start, but it will save lives. New mothers need the care. New babies need the care. Let's not drop the ball on this.

Thanks so much,

Sylvia Campbell

Lorena McGill

Self, I am a lawyer
The Woodlands, TX

Postpartum care is pivotal for the mom as well as for the baby (and siblings, if any). Let's keep it. Thanks.

Penny Bradshaw, N/A

Retired
Spring, TX

Medicaid eligibility for women during and following a pregnancy is crucial to the health of both the mother and the baby. Women who lose their health insurance just months after giving birth leads to worse health outcomes and problems accessing postpartum care. Now that women no longer have reproductive choices, Texas needs to step up to help offset the cost of healthcare by extending Medicaid to 12 months post-partum.

Please vote yes for HB 12 and give mothers and babies access to the healthcare they so desperately need following delivery.

Penny Bradshaw

RON COOKSTON

Self
Houston, TX

Texas should take action to extend Medicaid coverage for mother to 12 months postpartum. This makes sense both from a financial perspective and because it is the right thing to do.

Brittney Taylor-Ross

TexProtects

Dallas, TX

TexProtects supports HB 12 by Rep. Rose and thanks the committee for hearing this bill today.

TexProtects is the only statewide organization in Texas focused primarily on the issue of child abuse and neglect prevention and the aftermath in its absence. We are also proud to be the Texas Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and a lead advocacy organization for the statewide Prenatal-to-Three Collaborative. Our mission is to protect Texas children from the trauma of abuse and neglect and make it possible for families to thrive through advocacy, research, partnerships and public awareness.

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Mike Phillips

Texas IAF Leader

San Antonio, TX

This bill is a good idea because it would extend Medicaid coverage to low-income women from 2 months to 12 months after pregnancy.

Naomi Cruz Ojeda
Young Invinicibles
Austin, TX

Dear Representative Harless and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Naomi Cruz. I am currently a Policy Fellow at Young Invincibles (YI), a national, non-partisan, non profit research and advocacy organization focused on critical economic issues facing young people ages 18 to 34, I am writing in support of House Bill 12. We are based out of Houston, East Texas and Austin but we work with young people throughout the state, one of core issues being access to affordable health care. It is an honor to submit this letter, and thank you Representative Harless and Members of the Committee for your time.

The care that follows childbirth is critical to the well-being of women and their children, and it's important this health care is comprehensive. One-third of maternal deaths occur 43 days to one year after pregnancy. Texas' Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee found that nine out of ten pregnancy related deaths were preventable. While the current 60 days of coverage is beneficial, it doesn't cover women to the extent that they need. Having these services for 12 months would drastically reduce the state's maternal mortality rate and save lives. Furthermore, this coverage would set women and children up for successful healthy futures.

Continuous coverage for 12 months postpartum is critical for parenting students. In Texas, one-in-four students enrolled in postsecondary education are also a parent. Being a parent in school on top of the already present financial stress education causes along with stressing to find access to affordable health care is a significant barrier for texas students. Katran, a parenting student we spoke with, shared that she had no insurance after pregnancy, and that she "could fall and break a leg and that would be it."

Mental health care is a crucial part of postpartum care. Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, PMADs, "affect up to 20 percent of women during pregnancy and in the first 3 months postpartum," and access to proper treatment drastically increases the wellbeing of women and their children. Many people are unaware of postpartum depression and how to receive proper care for their mental health during the first year postpartum. Maternal mental health conditions such as postpartum depression are one of the most common complications of pregnancy, affecting 1-in-7 Texas moms. Extending continuous coverage for 12 months helps women, but especially impacts parenting students who need this support and access to care during such a pivotal time in their lives.

In conclusion, this policy will directly connect Texans to continuity of care. Please reach out with any questions.

Thank you greatly for your time.

Eddie Clark

Central Texas Interfaith & Texas IAF

Red Rock, TX

My name is Eddie Clark, and I am a Leader with Central Texas Interfaith and the Texas IAF, from Wildflower Church. I strongly support HB12.

Texas has an alarming maternal mortality rate that is higher than the national average, 18.4 per 1000 births, according to the most recent data, and even higher for women of color. These are deaths that are preventable with good medical care during the prenatal and postpartum period. And yet in Texas, Medicaid currently is only providing postpartum medical care for 2 months after a woman gives birth. Expanding Medicaid postpartum coverage will significantly reduce these tragic and preventable pregnancy related deaths. Moreover, extending postpartum Medicaid coverage to 12 months will lead to healthier outcomes for both mothers and babies, providing crucial medical care for low income working mothers at a difficult time in their lives. Extending postpartum care allows for time for families to bond with their infants, and more time to establish breastfeeding, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. In addition, women need more than 6 months to address their own medical conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and more, so that they are healthier and more prepared when they re enter the workforce. When my own daughter was pregnant at age 19, it was a difficult time. She was an hourly worker, without health insurance, and didn't know how she would ever be able to afford medical care for herself and her baby. Medicaid coverage was life saving during her pregnancy, birth and postpartum care. However the 2 months allowed was much too short, and she had to wean my granddaughter and go back to work much too soon, when she had barely recovered from the birth, and before breastfeeding was well established. My granddaughter proved to be unable to tolerate formula, and needed additional medical care for reflux. Healthy mothers are better able to care for their babies, which leads to healthier babies, who are more likely to become healthy children who have more success in school. Healthy mothers are better prepared to balance the demands of work and family responsibilities when they do re enter the workforce, which benefits our economy. We all benefit. I urge you to support HB12.

Catherine Maxwell

League of Women Voters of Texas

Buda, TX

The League of Women Voters of Texas support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Roland Gonzales Jr
Central Texas Interfaith
Austin, TX

I was born in 1981. My mother was nineteen years old at the time, as was my father. As a young mother working retail she was fortunate enough to have Medicaid and access to food stamps. As long as I was on Medicaid she was receiving care as well. This enabled her to finish school and get a job with insurance. Some how the system has abandoned low-income mothers over the past forty years. Extending this care will expand the commitment to life this State holds on to so closely.

Elsa Rivera
Central Texas Interfaith
Austin, TX

My sister got pregnant her last year at UT back in 2004. She was a full time student with a part time job and her partner was stationed with the Army in Kosovo. She qualified for Medicaid and was able to get the healthcare services she needed to give birth and the after care. The services were limited, though, and the process was slow. During the pregnancy and after, she did not have an assigned obgyn and had to see whoever was available. This can be difficult since you are not able to build that patient/doctor relationship. During childbirth, there was a delay in getting her an epidural. The after care visits for her daughter were difficult to schedule due to not being able to do things in advance. There were limitations to the services that were offered and some things had to be paid out of pocket. The positive was she was able to have Medicaid when she needed it for as long as she needed. Could the healthcare services being provided be better? Absolutely. The type of healthcare treatment and coverage that she got when she had her second daughter almost 2 years later was completely different because she had insurance through her husband who was in the military.

Lindsay Liggett
Self, Engineer
Austin, TX

I, Lindsay Liggett, fully support HB 12 by Representative Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidity and deaths by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Arlis Olson
COPS/METRO
San Antonio, TX

in favor of extending Medicaid coverage to low-income women. Desperately need to lower our infant mortality rate.

Eric Mata
Texas Organizing Project
Dallas, TX

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed legislation extending Medicaid coverage for low-income women from 2 months to 12 months after pregnancy.

Many low-income women in Texas lose their Medicaid coverage just 2 months after giving birth. This is a critical time when new mothers need access to healthcare services to ensure their health and the health of their newborns. However, without Medicaid coverage, many women cannot receive the care they need, leading to serious health complications and increased healthcare costs in the long run.

By extending Medicaid coverage for low-income women from 2 months to 12 months after pregnancy, the proposed legislation would help ensure that new mothers have access to the care they need to recover and care for their newborns. This includes access to prenatal care, postpartum care, family planning services, mental health services, and other critical healthcare services that can improve the health outcomes for both mothers and their children.

In addition, extending Medicaid coverage for low-income women would have significant economic benefits for Texas. Providing healthcare coverage for new mothers can help reduce healthcare costs in the long run by preventing health complications and reducing the need for emergency care. It can also improve maternal and child health outcomes, providing families with better educational and economic opportunities.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to support the proposed legislation extending Medicaid coverage for low-income women from 2 months to 12 months after pregnancy. This is a critical step in ensuring that all Texans have access to the healthcare services they need to live healthy, productive lives.

Carol Collins
Retired
San Antonio, TX

I am very much in favor of this bill! Texas has an atrocious maternal mortality rate. For people who want women to stay pregnant rather than terminate a pregnancy, the need for bill is obvious.

Judith McCullough
Dominican Family
Richmond, TX

I want Medicaid to be expanded from two to twelve months for expectant mothers.

Cindy Fountain
TXUUJM TX Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
Cleburne, TX

I support this bill wholeheartedly. It is common sense economically for the mother and for all Texans that the mother receives this care. It is an act of faith in the most human sense to support this bill. Thank you for accepting my comment. Please do the right thing!

Ana Cummings
Self, retired
Houston, TX

I write on behalf of the many poor mothers who are often overwhelmed by the lack of medical services available to them after they give birth to their child. Often, these women are single mothers and have other children and must take care of themselves and the baby as well any other other children. This bill would be crucial to their health since the 12 month period of care would give them time to recover from the birth of their child and from any other consequences of the birth, as well as take care of the baby. This bill has my wholehearted support.

Maria Person
self, Director
Austin, TX

I support HB 12, extending medical assistance for 12 months after the end of a pregnancy. The most effective way to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity is to improve access to quality health care. Extending medical assistance to 12 months post-partum will directly address this lack of access and demonstrate that Texas cares about mothers and infants. Texas would join most other states in providing 12 months of post-partum coverage, including southern states like Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. 12 month coverage is supported by Governor Abbott and it is the top recommendation of the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee. Over 160 organizations have signed on in support of this bill; it is time to pass this bill to extend Texas mothers' health care to 12 months.

Robbie Ausley
Self
Austin, TX

I believe the best way to improve Texas' high percentage of maternal mortality and morbidity problem is to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage to 12 months.

Tom Ausley
Self
Austin, TX

Extending postpartum Medicaid from 2 months to 12 months will save lives.

Alison Beam
Self
San Antonio, TX

The House Committee on Healthcare Reform has an incredible opportunity to support pregnant women who need the most help -- I urge all committee members to endorse HB 12 and expand post-pregnancy Medicaid healthcare coverage for Texas women for a minimum of 12 months. In doing so, you not only support the new mother, but also her new baby and family during an extremely critical time period, but in addition invest in the future of that mom, baby, and family as well as the future of Texas. It will pay back exceptional dividends via much healthier lives lived and subsequently more prosperous contributions to the community and the state of Texas!

Dede Fox
Dede Fox
The Woodlands, TX

I'm in favor of extending Medicaid for eligible mothers to 12 months and vastly improve the healthcare of uninsured mothers following delivery. This will reduce the high mortality rates among poor women in the state of Texas. These services are genuinely pro-life for mothers and their offspring.

Tim Gibson
Self - Retired
Dallas, TX

I strongly support HB12. It is long overdue to take action to drive the maternal mortality rate down in Texas. The statistics show that people of color are seeing death rates of almost twice over the white population. The passage of this bill is a move in the right direction.

Linda Hanratty
TX Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
FORT WORTH, TX

I strongly support this bill that would expand postpartum care under Medicaid from two months to twelve months. The Texas Legislature in 2021 approved a six-month extension, but the Federal Government required a full twelve-month coverage. Since approximately 50% of all babies born in Texas are under Medicaid, it is imperative that their mother's have the health care to survive and thrive.

Alice Barnett
Temple Emanu-El, Dallas Texas
Dallas, TX

Temple Emanu-El in Dallas is a large, vibrant Reform Jewish congregation with over 2500 families drawn from many zip codes in North Texas. We emphasize the ethical ideals of social justice at the core of our tradition to make the world a better place. Our values, traceable to the Bible and especially the teachings of the prophets, lead us to urge this committee to vote favorably on HB-12 that would extend Medicaid coverage to women for 12 months following pregnancy.

The Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee released its report in December 2022, and recommended that women on Medicaid have their pregnancy benefits extended to 12 months postpartum. The study found that about one-fourth of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy and that there would be a reduction in mortality and reduced complications following pregnancy if women received reliable, continuous medical care for one year after pregnancy.

Last session, the Texas House passed a one-year extension of Medicaid coverage, but the Senate reduced the extension to 6-months, and the House acceded to that amendment. The Federal Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) back in 2021 indicated that a 12-month extension was required by the Medicaid program and that HHS may not cover the funding for only a 6-month extension without a waiver. However, due to the Covid health emergency declaration, no further administrative action was taken. The Covid health emergency declaration will be lifted on March 31, 2023, and there is concern that Medicaid coverage will revert to the 60-days of postpartum coverage that pre-dates the passage of the 6-month extension because no waiver has been granted by HHS. This makes it even more imperative to pass HB 12. The medical complications that can arise post pregnancy are significant. It should be clear that severe illness or death of a mother has a profound impact on her baby, family, and community.

Our common Judeo-Christian traditions place the highest value on the preservation of human life. There can be no higher calling than providing poor women with needed health care during the 12-months after pregnancy. Our faith tradition makes it a moral imperative to ensure that women in that critical year following pregnancy have access to health care. Therefore, we urge the Committee to vote in favor of HB-12 and work as expeditiously as possible to have the entire House vote in favor of this Bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments.
Alice Barnett, Co-Chair for Advocacy at Temple Emanu-El

Ruthine Raley
Self
Austin, TX

I strongly support extending medicaid coverage to 12 months after pregnancy. Keeping mothers and their children health benefits all of Texas.

Morgan Miles, Doula and Executive Director
Self and Giving Austin Labor Support
Austin, TX

Thank you, committee members, for hearing HB 12.

I, Morgan Miles, ask for your support of HB 12 by Rose.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers and birthing people to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care for those that have given birth, and improves health outcomes for the whole family.

One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications in the postpartum period. For those who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is already available to those who are low-income and pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than other races/ethnicities, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texans to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should extend coverage for new parents. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Marla Parvey
TXUUJM, TX Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
Fort Worth, TX

Please pass this to extend Medicaid coverage for low-income women after pregnancy.

Marie Pousson
TMO Houston
Houston, TX

Women of low income need an extension of Medicaid to 12 months following a pregnancy. If we are truly a state that values life, then health care for mothers and their babies in the postpartum period is critical. I support HB12, and expansion of Medicaid in general. Texas is leaving our federal tax dollars on the table, and to the detriment of its people who need the program. HB12 would at least extend Medicaid for women who need it following a pregnancy.

Marie Pousson
TMO Houston
voter in 77018

Stanley Yoder
Self, retired
Lake Worth, TX

Please expedite passage of this common-sense bill.

Maria Burdick

PAVE nonpartisan political action group

Houston, TX

I am strongly in favor of HB 12, extending Medicaid coverage to low-income women from 2 to 12 months after pregnancy.

Sydney Carter

Network of Behavioral Health Providers

Houston, TX

I Sydney Carter support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today. Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant. The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage. Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Darin Cote, MR

TX Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry

Weatherford, TX

HB 12 is doing a good thing - attempting to reduce the incidence of mortality for post-partum mothers, particularly those without the ability to afford health insurance. Please pass HB 12.

Katherine Strandberg
Every Body Texas
Austin, TX

Dear Chair Harless, Vice Chair Howard and committee members,
Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 12, an incredibly important bill to expand Medicaid for Pregnant Women to twelve months after a Texas mom gives birth. We are deeply grateful to Representative Rose for her hard work on this legislation and extend our thanks to the Speaker for championing 12 months of coverage as a priority this session.

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 Title X Family Planning Program grantee for Texas, Every Body Texas funds a diverse network of over 30 agencies—including federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), public health departments, hospital-based clinics, and free-standing family planning clinics—that serve nearly 200,000 clients at more than 150 service sites throughout Texas.

The first year of a child's life is critically important for a healthy start. It's also important for mom's recovery from birth and the health of the whole family. Medicaid for Pregnant Women gives full healthcare coverage to low-income women during their pregnancies but ends just 60 days after they give birth.

One out of every four Texas women of childbearing age are uninsured. A full year of healthcare coverage after giving birth means Texas moms have access to comprehensive healthcare. During the 12 months after giving birth—a critical period for the health of new moms—this coverage would allow them to see a doctor for any illness, access contraception, and get preventive health services to help them stay healthy.

Twelve months of coverage is the number one recommendation of the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee to prevent maternal deaths, ninety percent of which are preventable. As our colleagues at Texans Care for Children have noted in their testimony on this important legislation, the burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

We look forward to joining the growing majority of US states, including Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, in passing this life saving legislation for Texas families. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any additional question on this matter.

Sincerely,
Katherine Strandberg
Policy Director
Every Body Texas
Katherine.strandberg@everybodytexas.org

Judy Schockling
Self/retired
Sugar Land, TX

Please support HB 12 by Representative Toni Rose. This bill will extend Medicaid coverage (so important!) to low income women after pregnancy.

Ann Schwartz
Self
Round Rock, TX

I, Ann Schwartz, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Uduak Nkanga
The Afiya Center
Dallas, TX

I, Uduak Nkanga, on behalf of The Afiya Center are in support of HB12 by Representative Toni Rose, and we want to thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with expanding Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who may not have health insurance, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and 365 days after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage. Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms.

HB12 will save lives and protect families and I ask to please vote HB12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Kathryn Earle

Myself

Houston, TX

It is very important that women have support for themselves after the delivery of a child. It will improve the outcome for both the mother and the child. Please support This bill.

Noel Denison, Reverend

The Metropolitan Organization

Houston, TX

I support extending Medicaid coverage for new mothers from 6 months to 12 months to insure optimal care for the newborn and the mother and better health outcomes

Doris Marshall

self

Garland, TX

I support HB 12 by Rose and thank the committee for hearing this bill on March 16.

As a retired social worker and pregnancy/adoption specialist, I have worked with many women who were low income and only had Medicaid available to them during their pregnancy and shortly afterward. Maternal mortality was always a concern of my clients because they did not have the money or insurance to pay bills for issues arising in the months after birth of their children. I have seen physical issues arise as well as mental health crises in the form of post-partum depression which went untreated.

This is certainly a racial equity issue too as I am aware of the greater incidence of preventable problems arising with women of color who do not have the availability of medical care.

Thank you to Rep. Rose for writing this bill. I know it will save lives, provide safety to women and help families have a better first year. Please vote this bill out of committee as soon as possible.

Doris Marshall

Phyllis Roberts

PAVE nonpartisan political action group

Houston, TX

Please support this bill, as post-partum depression and other issues are very critical and should be covered under Medicaid.

Judy Ward

Self and Wilshire Baptist Church Christian Advocacy Committee

Richardson, TX

Please join with the many other states in our country to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage for new moms to 12 months from the 6 month limit that exists now. Too many medical difficulties still develop after the 6 month limit now in place; not having medical coverage should those develop after 6 months leaves new mothers at serious risk. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal difficulties and deaths by allowing new moms to access a medical or mental health professional before problems get worse--such as postpartum depression, hemorrhage, infection, etc. Truly, you cannot protect our children if you won't protect their mothers.

Please vote HB 12 out of committee ASAP. Thanks to Rep. Rose for bringing this issue forward; also thanks to all of you working to better support Texas citizens.

Adrienne Lloyd
Children's Defense Fund-Texas
Austin, TX

My name is Adrienne Lloyd and I am the Health Policy Manager at the Children's Defense Fund-Texas. The Children's Defense Fund-Texas enthusiastically supports HB 12 by Rose, and thanks the committee for hearing this bill today. We urge Texas to move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black moms and their families, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would dramatically reduce maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, a cardiac event, infection, or extreme blood loss or hemorrhage. To complement the extension of Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, and to further promote healthy and safe births and strengthen maternal and infant health across the state, we also urge Texas to expand Medicaid coverage. The research is clear that births are far healthier and safer when women of reproductive age can access healthcare to manage common chronic conditions that can put both mother and baby at risk— such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiac conditions – long before pregnancy. However, currently in Texas, the first opportunity for most low-wage women of reproductive age with incomes below 100% of the FPL to access healthcare does not come until after they become pregnant. The state should expand Medicaid so that Texas mothers will no longer be left in a lurch, forced to forgo critical chronic disease management care preconception, and delay prenatal care until they can successfully enroll in pregnancy Medicaid. HB 12 will save lives and protect families; Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue.

Sherry Everitt
Self caregiver
Cleburne, TX

I support passing HB12, thank you

Penny Appleby
First United Methodist Church
Austin, TX

I support this bill.

Bobbi Jones, Rev.
United Methodist Church
Austin, TX

I support.

Khadijah Chatman

The Network of Behavioral Health Providers

Houston, TX

I 'Khadijah Chatman' support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today. Texas should move forward with expanding Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Sally Watkins

SELF

Austin, TX

I plead for the passage of this bill! I have been present for presentations regarding the probability of maternal death - especially for black women - in the year following a birth. It was shocking to me, an 82 year old grandmother to learn. Passage of the bill can help prevent children growing up without a mom.

Thank you.

Sally M. Watkins

Teresa Lord

self

Austin, TX

Please support Texas mothers!!!!

Jenny Lord

Self, nurse

Austin, TX

This is essential to make strides toward better health for low-income mothers.

Katy Civins

Self

Austin, TX

It so important for Texas women to have Medicaid postpartum care for a year after giving birth. Please protect these Texas women.

Sharon Watkins Jones, Chief Equity Officer

Children at Risk

Houston, TX

Texas children and babies deserve our best efforts to keep their moms healthy. Families need the embrace of preventative care throughout the duration of pregnancy and through the first year after birth.

Over one-fourth of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. Too often, women must rely on hospital emergency rooms for care that could have been prevented — or treated earlier and more cost-efficiently — by a doctor or clinic. The 2022 Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) report found that nearly all – 90% – of maternal deaths could have been prevented.

HB 12 would allow mothers to keep Medicaid insurance for one year after pregnancy instead of just two months. Options are limited for low income, uninsured moms. This bill allows new moms to access needed medications, get consistent health care, and continue seeing their doctor, specialist, or other professional without disruption. HB 12 would offer comprehensive care for new moms, leverage Texas' existing provider network, and allow the state to draw down federal funds. In contrast to last session, 12-month postpartum coverage has now been implemented by most states, including other Southern states such as Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and South Carolina.

Children at Risk supports the top recommendation of the Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee, and asks that HB 12 be voted favorably out of committee. We stand with Texas moms and as always,

For Children.

Sharon Watkins Jones (She/Her)

Chief Equity Officer

Director, Texas Racial Equity Collaborative

Children at Risk

Virginia McCarroll

First United Methodist Church

Austin, TX

Maternal health care is vital. Texas is lagging in this department. We desperately need to provide care for a year following pregnancy. Our maternal death rate is much too high.

Kay Sterling, Retired RN

Self, retired RN

Austin, TX

Please extend Medicaid coverage at least to one year after delivery.

Kristen Lenau, Policy Director
Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition
San Antonio, TX

House Committee on Health Care Reform
Testimony of the Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition
In Support of House Bill 12
March 16, 2023

The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition (TWHC) is a partnership of 88 healthcare, faith, and community-based organizations - dedicated to promoting access to preventative healthcare for women all across the state. We strive to ensure the health and wellbeing of Texas women, their babies, and their families - as we believe that giving women access to contraceptive services, prenatal care, breast cancer screenings, and so much more, will keep Texas families intact. In alignment with this mission, we are strongly in support of HB12.

HB 12 will allow new mothers to receive one full year of postpartum Medicaid coverage. This change is small, but it would have a powerful impact. It will improve continuity of care for postpartum women, help reduce instances of maternal death, improve health outcomes for Texas mothers and babies, and benefit taxpayers all across the state.

Texas is facing a perfect storm in terms of maternal health. The state is facing alarmingly high rates of maternal death and pregnancy-related medical complications. At the same time, Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured women of childbearing age in the nation. According to a report released by Texas' Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) in December of 2022 - the majority of pregnancy-related 2019 deaths in the state were preventable. And 27% of these deaths occurred between 43 days and 1 year postpartum. The number of severe medical complications from pregnancy and childbirth also increased significantly between 2018 and 2020 - rising from 58.2 to 72.7 cases per 10,000 deliveries in Texas. Various factors contributed to these deaths, with chronic disease being a top patient-related factor. The MMMRC identifies the lack of access to care or financial resources as contributing factors to inadequate control of chronic disease.

A 2019 study conducted by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families found that, nationwide, 12.3 percent of women aged 18-44 do not have insurance. Yet in Texas, this rate stands significantly higher - at 25.5 percent. That is one in four women, sisters, and mothers, of childbearing age. Passing House Bill 12 would give Texas families a fighting chance against these obstacles, by giving low-income women the time and comprehensive resources they need in one of the most vulnerable periods of their life.

Providing only 2 months of postpartum comprehensive healthcare coverage is not enough time for a woman to realize all of her needs, access care, and ultimately make a full recovery. By passing House Bill 12, this committee would affirm that Texas wants to support mothers, protect babies, and keep families all across the state intact. TWHC is eager to help with these issues and we are happy to provide any additional information on topics relating to women's preventative health.

Kelly Ausley-Flores, Ms.

Self
Elgin, TX

Support this bill.

Ursula Jackson

Self
Austin, TX

It is essential to provide healthcare for new mothers for a year after birth.

Kay Pruett, Dr.

self - special education teacher

Austin, TX

I urge you to pass HB 12 to extend medicaid coverage to 12 months after the birth of a child. I see so many children in special educations whose difficulties became evident later in the first year of their life. Extended Medicaid coverage would increase the likelihood of these problems being identified and potentially remediated very early in the child's life leading to very different outcomes with the child who receives the early intervention doing significantly better.

Jan Demetri

Circle Up

Austin, TX

Please pass

Linda Litzinger

Texas Parent to Parent - Public Policy Specialist

Austin, TX

Thank you for allowing this public comment. I am Linda Litzinger representing Texas Parent to Parent. We serve 14,000 families of children with disabilities. We are FOR HB12, because mothers need to stay healthy, in order to raise healthy developing children. Please vote to pass this bill.

Cathy Elmore, Ms

self

Houston, TX

I am Cathy Elmore, a voter of faith and I support HB 12 by Rose. I want to thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Diana Marin, Senior Manager, State Government Affairs

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Dallas, TX

We support HB 12 by Rose.

Erin Stangland
March of Dimes
Austin, TX

The mission of March of Dimes is to lead the fight for the health of all moms and babies. I am writing today in support of HB 12, which seeks to continue to provide comprehensive medical assistance to a woman who is eligible for medical assistance for pregnant women for a period of not less than 12 months following the date the woman delivers or experiences a miscarriage.

Texas Medicaid provides critical health care services for eligible pregnant women, but “pregnancy-related” Medicaid ends 60 days after the mother gives birth. Traditionally, women receive only one postpartum checkup at 4-6 weeks post-delivery. Typically, these routine visits provide a limited array of services, such as a physical exam and contraception counseling. Texas has one of the highest number of uninsured women in the country. While programs like Healthy Texas Women, including the new Healthy Texas Women Plus program, are trying to close that gap, these programs only provide a limited array of women’s health services.

In Texas, the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee’s most recent report found that 32% of maternal deaths occurred between 43 days to 1 year from the end of pregnancy. The need for postpartum services exists well beyond 60 days and is a critical time to help women who intend to have more children get and stay healthy.

Causes of maternal deaths include cardiovascular conditions, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (preeclampsia/ eclampsia), infection, hemorrhage, suicide and drug overdose. Identifying and treating medical conditions before, during and after pregnancy is essential to preventing maternal morbidity and maternal mortality, as part of the continuum of care for all women of childbearing age. This requires a commitment to high-quality clinical care and enhanced maternal quality improvement and safety initiatives in hospitals, particularly those that address disparities, structural barriers to care, differential care experienced by women of color, and provider implicit racial bias.

We urge the committee’s support of HB 12 to extend the Medicaid eligibility of certain women after a pregnancy or involuntary miscarriage. March of Dimes looks forward to continuing its work with the Texas Legislature and members of this committee to ensure that Texas women are healthy before, during and after pregnancy.

Kathy Helfert
self
Austin, TX

Pass this bill for the well being of our Texas moms and their children.

Laura Velez
Self
Austin, TX

I support this bill.

Lisa Stone
self, educator
HOUSTON, TX

I join all those Texans asking you to support this bill.
It makes good financial sense because more and earlier preventive care saves money.
It makes excellent health care sense because it will save lives and improve health outcomes for vulnerable people.
We want and need more healthy women/mothers who can care for children, keeping them healthier.
Again, this bill will lead to great savings of money and lives.

Kelli Washington

Self / Doula

Houston, TX

I Kelli Washington support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Kamille Washington

Self/social worker

Houston, TX

I Kamille Washington support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

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Kourtney Wasy
Self / self employed
Houston, TX

I Kourtney Washington support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

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Braylon Young
Self/Self employed
Houston, TX

I Braylon Young support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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Bill Kelly
Mayor's Office, City of Houston
Houston, TX

March 16, 2023

The Honorable Sam Harless
Chairman, House Select Committee on Health Reform
P.O. Box 2919
Austin, TX 78768

Re: Support for House Bill 12

Dear Chairman Harless and members of House Select Committee on Health Reform,
As Director of Government Relations for Mayor Sylvester Turner, I can tell you the passage of this bill is one of the highest priorities for the City of Houston. I am not alone in that assessment. State Representative Toni Rose, the only mental health professional serving in the Texas Legislature, has a large coalition supporting her House Bill 12. The City of Houston joins the 162 other organizations in supporting its passage. The Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity taskforce's top recommendation in its September 2018 report was "increasing access to health services during the year after pregnancy." Patient advocacy organizations note this policy would be the single most effective step the State of Texas can take to combat Post-Partum Depression. In 2021, the Texas Legislature took the first step in expanding the coverage period for new mothers from 60 days to 6 months. The Legislature should continue its commitment to Texas families by extending the existing maternal Medicaid benefit to one year to reduce healthcare costs, uncompensated emergency room visits, and preventable deaths. Mayor Turner recently joined other Big City Mayors throughout Texas to support this legislative change, and specifically thanked Speaker Dade Phelan for prioritizing this item. We thank the Chairman, Rep. Rose, and Speaker Phelan for the opportunity to support this critical legislation. Very appreciative,

Bill Kelly
Director of Government Relations
Mayor's Office, City of Houston

Janice Berger
Self-retired
Austin, TX

This bill is critical for the health, safety and well-being of new mothers. Please pass this bill as quickly as possible. These protections for new moms are long over due.

Joyce L. Beck
Self - Retired Teacher
Fort Worth, TX

Passage of HB 12 is greatly needed by mothers and children in Texas since It will extend Medicaid postpartum care from 60 days to 12 months. Given the high mortality rate for childbirth and the lack of affordable childcare in Texas, not to pass this would be a disgrace. We who could pay for such care and were grateful to have it know how much extending Medicaid postpartum assistance is needed for those who cannot afford it. Such care should be available to all mothers and babies in Texas in order to insure good health and well-being for all. Please pass this bill.

Susan Burek, Ms.

Self: I am Parent and advocate

Austin, TX

Thank you for allowing me to testify regarding HB 12. My name is Sue Burek and I live in Austin, Texas. I am a parent, advocate for people with disabilities, and a member of several advocacy organizations that serve families with children with disabilities, including Texas Parent to Parent, Protect Texas Fragile Kids, and Loving Hearts for All.

I am testifying IN SUPPORT OF HB 12. Access to medical care is very important for pregnant women in Texas, and access to 12 months of post-partum care is essential to ensuring that women have access to medical care for 12 months after their delivery or miscarriage date to address any medical issues that might occur or develop during or after their pregnancy to ensure that they are healthy and to improve the health outcomes of both the women and their children. Healthy women are better able to care for and support themselves and their children, which provides lasting economic benefits for their families and for the Texas economy.

Please APPROVE HB 12 vote to provide 12 months of post-partum medical assistance for pregnant women who are eligible for medical assistance in Texas.

Alec Puente

American Heart Association/American Stroke Association

Austin, TX

The American Heart Association strongly supports the expansion of Medicaid coverage for mothers in Texas to 12 months postpartum. This critical measure, which is available to states through a straightforward Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA), has been endorsed by the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. Extending postpartum coverage to a full year will provide new mothers with essential access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. In Texas, one in four women of childbearing age (26 percent) are without health insurance, a factor that contributes to maternal mortality and severe postpartum complications. For many women without employer-provided or spousal insurance, Medicaid is the only available option during pregnancy.

Texas' Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee discovered that 27 percent of maternal deaths in the state occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. Furthermore, approximately 90 percent of these tragic incidents are preventable. The devastating impact of maternal mortality disproportionately affects Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes, regardless of education or socioeconomic factors. By extending coverage to 12 months postpartum, Texas can significantly reduce maternal morbidities and mortalities. This extension will enable more mothers to receive timely medical and mental health care for conditions such as postpartum depression, infections, hemorrhages, or heart disease, which is the #1 cause of maternal mortality nationwide.

We urge Texas to join numerous other states by extending Medicaid coverage to new mothers. Passing HB 12 is a crucial step towards saving lives and safeguarding families. We commend Representative Rose for her leadership on this vital issue and encourage a swift vote in favor of HB 12 out of committee.

Emily George

Self

Austin, TX

I, Emily George, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Lynn Bunton

Self

Austin, TX

I, Lynn Bunton, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

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Lucius Bunton

Self

Austin, TX

I 'Lucius Bunton' support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

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KATHERINE MCGHEE

SELF/Retired teacher

Austin, TX

Please support maternal health by extending postpartum healthcare coverage under Medicaid. New mothers need your support.

Jonathan George

Self

Austin, TX

I 'Jonathan George' support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

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Rebecca Montgomery
North Texas Commission
Irving, TX

March 16, 2023

To: The Honorable Sam Harless
Re: House Bill 12
Position: Support

Chairman Harless and Members of the House Health Care Reform Committee:

The North Texas Commission (NTC) is a public-private partnership representing stakeholders who advance the economic success of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Our members include midsize to large employers, cities, counties, and education institutions throughout our 13-county region. North Texas is home to more than 150 municipalities that account for nearly 8 million Texans.

We are the fourth largest region in the United States, growing by one person every three minutes. North Texas is undoubtedly a popular place to live and conduct business. Our region alone is the 23rd largest economy in the world.

The NTC supports HB 12. Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women.

Texas has taken a significant step by passing HB 133 (87th Regular Session), which would allow new mothers to keep Medicaid for six months postpartum rather than just two months. However, this law has not been implemented and the state landscape on postpartum coverage has changed enormously in the last two years. In contrast to last session, 12 months postpartum coverage has been adopted in most states (35 states), including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. HB12 is good for mothers and protects our most vulnerable Texans.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Young Montgomery
Health Care Public Policy Advisor
North Texas Commission

Leading The Region's Advocacy. 8445 Freeport Parkway, Suite 640, Irving, Texas 7 5063 MAILING: P.O. Box 610246, DFW Airport, Texas 75261-0246
PHONE: 972-621-0400
WEBSITE: www.ntc-dfw.org

Jim Elmore, Mr
self
Houston, TX

I, Jim D Elmore, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Thanks for your faithful advocacy, and please let me know if you have any questions.

P.S. I am 75 years old. My Mother died in KY during childbirth of my sister in 1956. I was only 9 years old. My sister had to be adopted. My Mother had no resources for prenatal care or family planning. Surely we must be able to support our new Mothers in TX better than KY does!

Jim Elmore

Laura Atlas Kravitz, Director of Advocacy
Texas Women's Foundation (TXWF)
Austin, TX

Texas Women's Foundation Supports HB 12

House Committee on Healthcare Reform, Select
Testimony of Texas Women's Foundation
In support of HB 12 by Rose
March 16, 2023

Texas Women's Foundation supports initiatives that ensure Texas women have access to quality and affordable healthcare. Access to a full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures that new mothers will have comprehensive health coverage and medical care.

Texas Women's Foundation acknowledges the tireless work that went into passing House Bill 133 in 2021, which extended postpartum Medicaid coverage for new mothers from two months to six months. However, six months of postpartum coverage is still not enough and new mothers will soon receive only two months of care. Though Texas women with low incomes can get Medicaid coverage while they are pregnant, after March 2023, the state will resume cutting off coverage 60 months after pregnancy.

The Texas Department of State Health Services has determined that almost one in three pregnancy-related deaths occur between 43 days and one year after the end of pregnancy. Overall, the Texas Department of State Health Services has found that nearly 90% percent of pregnancy-related deaths were preventable. Since most pregnancy-related deaths happen after childbirth, greater focus must be placed on postpartum care. HB 12 would allow mothers to keep Medicaid insurance for one year after pregnancy instead of just two months.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 12, which would offer comprehensive and consistent health care to new mothers, leverage existing provider networks in Texas and allow the state to draw down federal funds.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Texas Women's Foundation,

Laura Atlas Kravitz, JD
Director of Advocacy and Policy
Texas Women's Foundation
LAtlasKravitz@txwf.org

Sarah Skinner
private citizen
Fort Worth, TX

I ask for support of this bill. These services are critical to support healthy mothers and healthy babies.

Neita Huffman, Me.

Self
Austin, TX

I am in favor of this bill! Women who are Medicaid be the protection of up to a year of postpartum care! Please vote for it!

Gina Reese
Self. Homemaker
Austin, TX

Please vote yes

Cecile Roeger

self Promoter of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation for the Dominican Sisters of Houston
Houston, TX

It is important the babies and mothers receive the best health care during the first year after birth. This bill will help babies to thrive. Please support this bill for Texas children and babies and their moms.

Angela Ott

Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
Austin, TX

The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health thanks the House Select Committee on Healthcare Reform for bringing forth the needed awareness for postpartum Medicaid coverage for new mothers. We know that Texas women greatly benefit from extended access to comprehensive health coverage, including mental health and substance use services. We, along with many other stakeholders and Texans, urge the Legislature to acknowledge the continued need for extended insurance coverage up to a full year after birth for new mothers. ?

HB 12 (Rose) provides 12 months of continued Medicaid coverage for mothers following the birth of their child to better support both mom and baby. Postpartum depression is an incredibly common side effect of pregnancy and can severely impact the wellbeing of both mother and child.i When access to needed services runs out, postpartum depression can interfere with the mother's ability to properly care for their infant.ii Untreated postpartum depression in mothers can result in long-lasting effects in children such as developmental delays and failure to thrive.iii Additionally, mental health conditions and overdoses are leading causes of pregnancy-related death in new mothers and can occur up to one year postpartum.iv While the Healthy Texas Women (HTW) program provides some essential health care services, it is focused mostly on physical healthcare with very limited mental health and substance use services. The HTW program does not have as robust of a mental health and substance use provider network as Medicaid. Further, the automatic transition from Medicaid postpartum after the current 60 days to HTW can still result in new mothers being left behind. The Hogg Foundation recommends the House Committee on Healthcare Reform to consider the further extension of Medicaid coverage to 12 months postpartum to ensure that mothers can address any health issues that may arise following the birth of their child, including mental health and substance use issues.

For more information, please contact:

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Martha Rogers

self

Austin, TX

I, Martha Myrick Rogers, support HB 12 by Rose, and thank the committee for hearing this bill today.

Texas should move forward with extending Medicaid coverage for mothers to 12 months postpartum, an option available to states through a simple Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA). Extending coverage to 12 months postpartum is recommended in the Governor's budget proposal, the Texas GOP platform, and the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee report to the Legislature. A full year of coverage after pregnancy ensures new mothers have access to comprehensive health coverage and medical care. One in four Texas women of childbearing age do not have health insurance (26 percent), which Texas' own data show contributes to maternal deaths and severe complications for postpartum women. For women who do not get health insurance through their job or their spouse, many times the only coverage option is Medicaid, which is available to low-income women while they are pregnant.

The Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee found that 27 percent of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy. And the vast majority (about 90 percent) of maternal deaths are preventable. The burden of maternal mortality weighs heaviest on Black women, who are more than twice as likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than the average for all women, regardless of education level or other socioeconomic factors. A full year of coverage after pregnancy would prevent maternal morbidities and mortalities by allowing more Texas mothers to see a medical or mental health professional to manage medical issues and complications before they get worse — such as postpartum depression, cardiac event, infection, and extreme blood loss or hemorrhage.

Texas should join the majority of other states including Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and Tennessee, among others, in extending coverage to new moms. HB 12 will save lives and protect families. Thank you to Representative Rose for championing this issue, and please vote HB 12 out of committee as soon as possible.

Mary Margaret Raley

self, volunteer for St. Vincent de Paul Society

Austin, TX

Please support the extension of Medicaid benefits to mothers for at least 12 months after their pregnancy ends. Let's give these babies a good start with as much support as possible for their mothers. It is a good investment in their futures.