



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 1, 2021

Contact: Emma DeNard

Elizabeth Christian Public Relations

EDenard@echristinpr.com

713.829.8364

Children's Hospital Association of Texas applauds passage of critical health care legislation for children and women

Austin, TX – The Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT) applauds the Texas Legislature's passing three key healthcare bills that will support children and women's health and well-being through telehealth and telemedicine and more consistent Medicaid coverage for children and postpartum women.

A bipartisan plan from Speaker Dade Phelan (R-Beaumont) and a coalition of Texas House members, Healthy Families, Healthy Texas, included legislation that increases access to care—including behavioral healthcare—for many patients, particularly children and women and those living in rural and underserved areas.

"The Children's Hospital Association of Texas applauds the Texas House and Senate for passing critical legislation ensuring both children and women have access to the highest quality health care through telehealth and telemedicine, ensuring six months of Medicaid coverage to postpartum women, and providing for two six-month periods of Medicaid eligibility for children," Stacy Wilson, president of CHAT, said. "We thank Speaker Dade Phelan for his leadership, and Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, Representatives Four Price, Toni Rose, Philip Cortez, James Frank, and Senators Lois Kolkhorst and Dawn Buckingham for their work to improve health care for all Texans, especially kids and women who rely on Medicaid."

House Bill 4, authored by Rep. Four Price (R-Amarillo) and sponsored by Sen. Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway), is a landmark telehealth bill that continues many of the

telemedicine and telehealth flexibilities that began as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill not only increases access to health care, but also reduces the number of missed appointments and unnecessary hospitalizations and lets kids and their families stay in their communities rather than having to make long trips to children's hospitals.

House Bill 133, authored by Rep. Toni Rose (D-Dallas) and sponsored by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham), with bipartisan support from more than 50 legislators, provides Medicaid coverage to women for six months postpartum, a four-month increase from the current two-months of postpartum coverage. Ensuring that moms are healthy helps kids stay healthy.

House Bill 2658, authored by Rep. James Frank (R-Wichita Falls) and sponsored by Sen. Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham), was amended during conference committee negotiations to include language from House Bill 290 by Rep. Philip Cortez (D-San Antonio) that provides for two six-month periods of Medicaid eligibility for kids. Providing two consecutive six-month periods of Medicaid eligibility will reduce administrative barriers to kids remaining covered and help ensure that kids continue to have access to high-quality, life-sustaining and life-saving care.

###

About the Children's Hospital Association of Texas

The Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT) is a non-profit association whose mission is to advance children's health and well-being by advocating for policies and funding that promote children's access to high-quality, comprehensive health care. Learn more about CHAT at chatexas.com or follow CHAT on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ChildHospAssnTX>.