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ECPR Texas

Children's Hospital Association of Texas celebrates inaugural Children's Hospital Day, generates support on Texas House and Senate floors

Children's Hospital Association of Texas hosts legislative briefing for lawmakers at the state capitol

AUSTIN, TEXAS – The Children's Hospital Association of Texas held its inaugural Children's Hospital Day advocacy event Wednesday, Jan. 25, at the Texas State Capitol. CHAT hosted legislators and their staff, as well as representatives from CHAT member hospitals across the state, for a legislative briefing on policy priorities this session. This comes at a time when more children in Texas are experiencing mental health issues without adequate resources to serve them.

"Children across the state depend on the specialized care that only a children's hospital can provide." Stacy Wilson, President of the Children's Hospital Association of Texas, said. "The purpose of Children's Hospital Day is to provide recognition and visibility of the lifesaving work that our member hospitals provide every day so that our elected officials understand the importance of these facilities. We also wanted to educate them on the unmet mental health needs of children in the state and how our members can address those needs so that no child is turned away."

Senator Sarah Eckhardt and Representative Toni Rose filed resolutions to commemorate Children's Hospital Day and commend the children's hospitals for their important work. . Senator Eckhardt and Representative Donna Howard recognized their constituents, the Andrews family, who were in attendance in the gallery, and their two children who continue to be treated at Dell Children's Medical Center at Ascension Seton in Austin.

"We were elated to hear support from lawmakers on the house and senate floor. This session we hope to bolster support from elected officials that will lead to the passage of legislation that will benefit every child in Texas." Wilson said.

During the legislative briefing, CHAT also unveiled the three requests they intend to make during the 88th Texas legislative session:

- Create a statewide pediatric mental health plan and conduct a needs assessment.
- Invest \$300 million in children's hospitals to increase access to mental health services.
- Maintain the children's hospital class definition for Medicaid reimbursement.

In Texas, more than 4 million children are enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program, which is more than half of the total population of children living in Texas. CHAT remains committed to advancing children's health and well-being by advocating for policies and funding that promote children's access to high-quality, comprehensive health care.

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About the Children's Hospital Association of Texas

The Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT) is a nonprofit association with the mission 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>.