

Vote YES on HB 290 (Rep. Cortez) and HB 133 (Rep. Rose)

These two bills promote healthy kids and mothers and are part of Speaker Phelan's *Healthy Families, Healthy Texas* bipartisan health care package.

April 14, 2021

CSHB 290 by Rep. Cortez would reduce mistakes and keep eligible children enrolled in Medicaid insurance.

Texas has an effective, accurate system for determining eligibility for Children's Medicaid when kids first apply and during the annual renewal process. But the current system for mid-year reviews of children's Medicaid eligibility — at 5, 6, 7, and 8 months after approving initial applications — takes shortcuts, makes mistakes, and leads to eligible kids losing health coverage. Children cycling on and off of health coverage due to the messy, frequent, mid-year reviews have negative consequences: worse health outcomes for kids, higher uninsured rate, and extra administrative burden on HHSC and doctors.

CSHB 290 replaces the four mid-year income reviews with a single mid-year review, providing children with two six-month periods of coverage. The bill maintains the same Medicaid eligibility criteria that are currently in place in Texas. Passing this bill will help kids attend their appointments for check-ups, mental health services, speech therapy, and more. **CSHB 290 has zero fiscal note and was unanimously voted out of committee.**

HB 133 by Rep. Rose promotes health for mothers and babies during the critical first year of a child's life.

For Texas mothers with newborns, many medical issues and complications arise in the year following pregnancy. Pregnancy complications — such as postpartum depression, hemorrhage, and cardiac event — remain a concern in Texas, leading to extra hospital stays, long-term health effects for mother and baby, and higher costs to Medicaid and the state. Texas women with low incomes can get Medicaid coverage while they are pregnant, but it cuts off 60 days after pregnancy, leaving new moms uninsured at a pivotal time for their health and their baby's healthy development. This is especially worrisome because one-third of maternal deaths in Texas occur between 43 days and one year after pregnancy.

HB 133 would allow mothers to keep Medicaid insurance for one year after pregnancy instead of just two months. This step is the top recommendation of Texas' Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee. In contrast to the limited options when women become uninsured, this bill allows new moms to get needed medications, access consistent health care, and continue seeing their doctor, specialist, or other professional without disruption. **This bill has bipartisan support and is part of Speaker Phelan's *Health Families, Healthy Texas* bipartisan package of health priorities.**