



Texas Children and the 2021 Legislative Session

What the Texas Legislature
accomplished for children
and where it fell short

July 06, 2021



The background of the page features a photograph of the Texas State Capitol building. The top portion shows the iconic dome with the Statue of Liberty on top, set against a clear sky. The bottom portion shows the classical facade of the building with its columns and windows, partially obscured by green trees in the foreground. A solid blue vertical bar is positioned on the left side of the page, behind the table of contents text.

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Introduction

The 2021 Texas legislative session left advocates, legislators, staffers, and other Texans absolutely drained. We battled through a pandemic, a blackout, bills ranging from disturbing to distracting, and some real disappointments from the Legislature. But we also made real progress for kids. And given all we've been through — and all we've accomplished together — I couldn't be more proud of our team, our partners, and our legislative allies.

In the following pages, we present the highlights and low points from the legislative session, as well as key next steps, in four children's policy issues: Children's Mental Health, Early Education (including child care), Maternal and Child Health, and Child Protection. For each of those issue areas, we also present a list of key bills — good and not-so-good — that passed and those that didn't pass.

I encourage you to dive into the full report or the sections that most interest you, but first let's take a look at some of the big news from the session, starting with a few victories.

I'm particularly proud of the hard work of our team, as well as our partners, to help legislators achieve the following victories for Texas kids this session:

- Ensure moms have six months of health coverage after childbirth instead of just two months;
- Cut down on eligible kids losing their health insurance — and missing doctor's appointments — due to inaccurate eligibility reviews;
- Stop a concerning budget cut — initially passed by the Senate — to Early Childhood

Intervention (ECI) funding for toddlers with disabilities and delays;

- Limit the size of pre-k classes so more kids become strong readers by third grade, a bill that had languished at the Legislature for over a decade;
- Equip teachers to support English Learners in special education and develop a state strategic plan to support bilingualism, both recommendations of our new Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative;
- Improve support for students' social-emotional learning (SEL) by incorporating key SEL skills into school curricula and programs and by opening up a funding stream for districts to provide SEL programs;
- Prevent youth suicide by improving practices in foster care facilities and ensuring data-informed suicide prevention strategies are included in state interagency coordination and strategic planning efforts;
- Support kids in foster care by moving children with high needs from group facilities to loving families as quickly as possible, improving support for older youth in foster care, and developing more foster care placements for unique populations, such as pregnant and parenting youth and trafficking survivors;
- Take big budget cuts for kids and families off the table from day one of the legislative session after last year's warnings of major cuts.

We also played a supporting role in a number of victories for kids and families this session.

One of the most exciting was the bipartisan package of child care bills. For example, legislators passed a landmark bill to improve

the quality of child care that kids receive from providers in the subsidy system and a bill to create a plan to support the child care workforce. The Legislature also passed important legislation to let school counselors focus more on counseling instead of administrative duties. As lawmakers quietly passed major bills to rework the child protection system, we appreciate that legislators incorporated many of our suggestions throughout the session. We're also pleased to see the defeat of harmful legislation, such as bills targeting transgender children and their parents.

There were also real disappointments in some of the issues we work on. The biggest blunder was state leaders' failure to take any action to draw down federal Medicaid expansion funding to cover 1.4 million uninsured adults. There was a lot of talk about the impact of the pandemic on student mental health, yet the Legislature did little to ensure schools are prepared to respond to the effects of trauma and grief on student learning and behavior. In the midst of a disturbing shortage of foster care homes and services, we're concerned that the Legislature failed to boost funding for foster care reimbursement rates or for the child abuse and neglect prevention services that keep kids safe and out of foster care. Similarly, while we were glad to avoid cuts to women's health programs and ECI for toddlers with disabilities, the flat funding approved by the Legislature falls short of Texans' needs.

Looking ahead, there's a lot more work to do to support Texas kids and families. We encourage federal and state officials to work together to quickly implement HB 133 to extend moms' health coverage after pregnancy. We are also urging state leaders' to submit an 1115 Medicaid waiver funding request to the

federal government that continues hospital funding to cover the bills of uninsured Texans who end up in the hospital; expands health coverage so currently uninsured Texans can get healthy and stay out of the hospital; and supports community mental health services. This summer and into the fall, we'll be working with our partners and state agencies on the implementation of bills that passed this session. We'll evaluate how well the scaled back version of HB 290 keeps eligible kids enrolled in their health insurance and monitor the impact of other bills. As Texas officials develop a state strategic plan to support emergent bilingual students, we'll work to shape the plan and then support its recommendations. We will continue working to address racial disparities and promote equity through public policy and through the important discussions that must continue in the Legislature, state agencies, and our communities. And in the coming weeks and months, we'll be working with policymakers to tackle the allocation of federal COVID relief funding.

In closing, I want to express our deep gratitude. Pursuing smart and equitable policy change is a team effort that takes months and often years of working together in partnership. We appreciate the hard work of so many state legislators who championed key bills supporting kids this session. We're also grateful for the dedicated and exceptional staff at the Legislature. I also want to thank all of you who contributed in so many different ways this session — collaborating with us and sharing your expertise, lifting our spirits when we were down, or making a donation to keep our work going. Thank you for all your support!

— *Stephanie Rubin, CEO*

Review of Children's Mental Health Policy Progress During the 2021 Texas Legislative Session

This session we were pleased to see legislators pass bills in support of social-emotional learning (SEL), school counseling, and suicide prevention, but the Legislature failed to take other steps to adequately support student mental health and address the trauma of the pandemic. After years of effort by our staff and partners to highlight the importance of SEL, the Legislature passed bills to allow districts to use an existing funding stream to provide SEL programs and to ensure key SEL skills are incorporated into school curricula and programs. Lawmakers also passed a bill to ensure school counselors can spend more of their time counseling students. Unfortunately, the Legislature failed to dedicate funding for schools or the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to address learning loss rooted in the social-emotional effects of the pandemic or to prevent students whose behaviors are rooted in trauma from being pushed out of their classrooms. Additionally, we worked closely with legislators and our Texas Suicide Prevention Council partners on proposals to help reduce the rising rates of youth suicide in Texas. We appreciate the Legislature passing bills to require student IDs to include contact information for suicide prevention crisis services; improve suicide prevention practices in foster care facilities; and continue the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council work to improve suicide prevention efforts across state agencies.

There was frequent discussion this legislative session about the impact of the pandemic on student mental health, and we were glad to see the Legislature pass two bills that support student SEL within schools. HB 332 by Rep. James Talarico and Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. allows school districts to use compensatory education funds to provide programs that build skills related to managing emotions, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions. The bill ultimately passed as an amendment to HB 1525 by Rep. Dan Huberty and Sen. Larry Taylor. Additionally, the Legislature passed SB 123 by Sen. Nathan Johnson and Rep. John Turner to ensure SEL

skills are integrated within state curriculum standards and character education programs. Over the past several sessions, our team and partners have consistently called on legislators to address the important link between social-emotional development, mental health, and student learning — something that has become even more critical in the wake of the pandemic. We appreciate these legislators working to pass these bills and collaborating with our team and partners.

The Legislature also passed SB 179 by Sen. Lucio and Rep. Dan Huberty, giving school counselors more time to focus on what they

are trained to do — counsel students — and reducing the time they spend on administrative duties, such as overseeing standardized testing. The bill required years of effort by legislators and stakeholders, with the Texas Counseling Association leading the advocacy efforts. The Legislature also provided targeted increases in funding for programs to help connect students with mental health services in school or in the community through the Texas Child Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT) program and Communities in Schools.

We were also pleased to see the Legislature pass bills aimed directly at preventing youth suicide. SB 279 by Sen. Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa

and Rep. John Bucy requires student ID cards in grades 6-12 and higher education to include the contact information for suicide prevention crisis services. The Legislature also passed HB 4041 by Rep. Victoria Neave as an amendment to SB 1896 (an omnibus foster care bill by Senator Lois Kolkhorst and Rep. James Frank) to require residential child care facilities and foster care child placing agencies to have evidence-based suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention policies in place. Additionally, the Legislature passed HB 4074 by Rep. Todd Hunter and Sen. José Menéndez to require the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council to prioritize data-informed suicide prevention efforts in its strategic planning and



interagency coordinating efforts. A rider in the state budget bill also requires the Council to provide an update to a report on suicide and suicide prevention in Texas that was required by HB 3980 from the 2019 session, with additional data and recommendations specific to suicides among youth in foster care. HB 1144 by Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos was scheduled for a House vote but unfortunately did not come up before the deadline to pass. The bill would have ensured school districts provide educators with suicide prevention training at least once every two years. Our team helped lead advocacy efforts on these bills in coordination with the Texas Suicide Prevention Council.

Children and youth with mental health concerns need access to treatment and support services to keep them as connected as possible to their families, schools, and communities. With the passage of SB 642 by Sen. Royce West and Rep. Gina Hinojosa, families will be able to access residential treatment services for their children through HHSC's relinquishment avoidance program without DFPS first conducting a child abuse or neglect investigation. Unfortunately, the Legislature failed to pass other bills that would have improved access to treatment and recovery services for young people. For example, the clock ran out on HB 240 by Rep. Senfronia Thompson after it was scheduled for a vote of the full House. The bill, and its Senate companion, SB 51 by Sen. Judith Zaffirini, would have required private health plans to cover treatment of serious emotional disorders among children. The Legislature also failed to pass bills that aimed to improve access to youth and family peer support services that help keep children and youth with significant mental health concerns in their homes and communities and out of more restrictive and costly settings, like hospitals, foster care, and the justice system.

Despite the positive steps outlined above, the Legislature largely fell short of ensuring that schools are equipped to support students' mental health. The Legislature failed to dedicate either state or federal funding to help schools implement multi-tiered systems of support to address learning loss rooted in the social-emotional effects of the pandemic. The House passed a budget rider that would have dedicated funding in the School Safety Allotment to social, emotional, mental health, and school climate strategies, but the conference committee removed the rider from the budget. We will monitor implementation of the budget to determine if a last-minute budget rider will allow TEA to use federal COVID relief funding to provide meaningful support to SEL and student mental health strategies allowable under the federal law. During the upcoming special session, the Legislature should work to ensure that federal relief funding is available to school districts to address this challenge.

The Legislature also neglected to pass important bills to help ensure schools respond to student trauma and other mental health concerns in ways that support students' education, health, and safety. For example, the Senate did not hold a hearing on two key bills by Sen. Menéndez: SB 406 would have required school boards and superintendents to receive training in trauma-informed schoolwide practices and SB 2063 would have provided alternatives to suspension or expulsion for lower-level student conduct related to substance use. These bills would have helped ensure that behaviors rooted in trauma and other mental health concerns don't contribute to educational gaps and the school-to-prison pipeline. The Legislature did pass a bill requiring school boards to receive training on school safety, HB 690 by Rep. Metcalf and Sen. Zaffirini, so we will work to ensure trauma-informed training is included as the bill is implemented.

Outcomes for Key Children's Mental Health Legislation

PASSED

Support Children in School

HB 159 by Rep. M. González

Similar to SB 180 by Sen. Lucio

This bill improves training and staff development for educators to enable them to more effectively serve all students, including requirements related to mental health, substance abuse, youth suicide, multi-tiered systems of support, and positive behavior intervention strategies.

HB 332 by Rep. Talarico

Similar to SB 2004 by Sen. Lucio;
Passed as a provision of HB 1525
by Rep. Huberty

This bill allows school districts to use compensatory education funds to help students develop social and emotional skills.

SB 123 by Sen. Johnson

This bill integrates social emotional learning skills into state curriculum standards and character education programs.

SB 168 by Sen. Blanco

Similar to HB 1016 by Rep. Perez

This bill requires school districts to take steps to support the social emotional wellness and mental health of students when conducting active shooter drills on school campuses.

SB 179 by Sen. Lucio

Similar to HB 589 by Rep. Gonzalez

This bill supports school counselors being able to focus their time on core counseling duties.

SB 279 by Sen. Hinojosa

Similar to HB 1745 by Rep. Hernandez
and HB 1014 by Rep. Bucy

This bill adds suicide prevention information to student identification cards in grades 6-12 and higher education.

SB 2050 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill emphasizes positive school climates, healthy relationships, and student health and wellness initiatives as part of school district bullying prevention efforts.

Support Children in their Community

HB 3121 by Rep. J. Turner

Similar to SB 1218 by Sen. Johnson

This bill creates a voluntary certification process for psychiatric residential care facilities serving youth to encourage heightened quality of care standards.

Support Children in their Community (continued)

HB 4041 by Rep. Neave

Passed as a provision of SB 1896
by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill requires residential child care facilities and child-placing agencies serving children and youth in foster care to have evidence-based suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention policies in place.

HB 4074 by Rep. Hunter

Similar to SB 2068 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill requires the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council to prioritize data-informed suicide prevention efforts in its strategic planning and interagency coordinating efforts.

SB 642 by Sen. West

This bill enables a child to access residential treatment services through HHSC's relinquishment avoidance program without having DFPS first conduct a child abuse or neglect investigation.

DID NOT PASS

Support Children in School

HB 62 by Rep. Talarico

Similar to HB 1201 by Rep. Wu

This bill would have supported the use of preventative and restorative discipline practices that teach students skills needed to manage conflict and build relationships while keeping all students safe and connected within their school community.

HB 1144 by Rep. Ramos

This bill would have required districts to provide educators with training in suicide prevention at least once every two years.

HB 2975 by Rep. Hull

This bill would have prohibited law enforcement or school security from using handcuffs or chemical irritant spray on a student 10 years of age or younger while on school grounds.

SB 406 by Sen. Menéndez

Similar to HB 4249 by Rep. Talarico

This bill would have required school boards and superintendents to receive training in trauma-informed schoolwide practices.

SB 980 by Sen. Powell

Similar to HB 2954 by Rep. S. Thompson

This bill would have assisted districts in addressing suicide prevention in elementary school campuses.

SB 2063 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill would have promoted district practices to address substance use among students in ways that keep all students safe and help those who need targeted support.

Support Children in their Community

HB 240 by Rep. S. Thompson

Similar to SB 51 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill would have required private health plans to cover treatment of serious emotional disorders among children.

HB 1432 by Rep. Romero

Similar to SB 662 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have increased access to peer support services for youth who are over age 13.

HB 4265 by Rep. Rose

Similar to SB 2104 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill would have increased access to peer support services for youth and the families that care for them.

SB 2068 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill would have improved suicide-related data collection and information sharing to assist in statewide suicide prevention efforts.

SB 2070 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill would have required state agencies serving on the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordination Council, including child-serving agencies, to adopt model suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention policies.

Review of Child Protection Policy Progress During the 2021 Texas Legislative Session

During the 2021 legislative session, lawmakers passed bills to make significant improvements to the child protection system, but there is much more work to do. Our team and our partners from the Child Protection Roundtable worked closely with legislators to pass bills that will help more children move more quickly from group facilities to loving families, develop more foster homes equipped to serve pregnant and parenting youth, support older youth in foster care, and leverage the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) to keep more children safe with their families and out of foster care. We appreciate the work by Senator Lois Kolkhorst, Rep. James Frank, Rep. Jarvis Johnson, and others on these bills. We are also pleased to see that several proposals that we opposed did not pass. We are disappointed that the Legislature failed to increase funding for Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) at DFPS and neglected to increase reimbursement rates to ease the shortage of safe and effective foster care homes and services. And we are concerned that the Legislature may be pinning too much hope on Community-Based Care, especially in light of inadequate funding for providers. There are significant challenges ahead for the Texas child protection system. Nonetheless, we're cautiously optimistic that Texas is largely pointed in the right direction: working to keep children safe with their families and out of foster care when possible and working to ensure that kids who do enter foster care can heal and thrive.

Our team worked with legislators to successfully pass several important bills this session. For example, SB 1575 by Sen. Kolkhorst and Rep. Tom Oliverson will boost judicial oversight to ensure that kids with significant behavior challenges staying in foster care group facilities designated as "Qualified Residential Treatment Programs" (QRTPs) will be transferred to homes with families as soon as possible. The move is a key step for helping children and for complying with the FFPSA. The bill also directs the Children's Commission to conduct a study that could expand these best practices

to children in Residential Treatment Centers. Additionally, thanks to a funding boost via Rider 48 in the state budget, Texas will have an opportunity through a DFPS pilot to develop more QRTPs to serve children in foster care with the most significant behavioral health challenges. QRTPs are facilities certified as meeting certain best practices outlined in the FFPSA — such as trauma-informed care, family engagement, and aftercare services — that will help each child successfully transition from an institutional setting and remain stable with a family in the community.

The Legislature also passed SB 1896 by Sen. Kolkhorst and Rep. Frank, an omnibus bill to improve the safety and quality of the foster care system. The bill includes two priorities championed by our staff. The first directs DFPS to develop foster care homes prepared to serve unique populations in foster care, including pregnant and parenting youth, trafficking survivors, young adults, and others. (Similarly, Rider 29 in the state budget directs DFPS to report on the availability of these placements.) Our second priority included in the bill addresses Treatment Foster Care, a proven model where a professional foster family receiving additional training and support takes care of a child with significant behavioral health challenges in a home instead of an institution. At the beginning of session, DFPS expanded Treatment Foster Care to include children over age 10. SB 1896 codified that change and added flexibility so the model can serve even more children.

Additionally, lawmakers passed other important bills to support older youth in foster care, working closely with our team and coalition partners. For example, HB 700 by Rep. Jarvis Johnson and Sen. Judith Zaffirini helps youth take advantage of their college tuition waiver, allows 17-year-olds to administer — and therefore better understand — their own medication when it's safe, updates Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) classes and curriculum, helps youth establish a rental history, improves transition planning by starting sooner and strengthening communication with youth, removes barriers that prevent youth from staying in extended care, and prevents youth with significant behavioral health challenges from aging out of a Residential Treatment Center when they turn 18 so they are not forced to fend for themselves. Rep. Johnson also passed HB 1315 with Sen. Beverly Powell to ensure continuous legal representation for youth in foster care and HB 80 with Sen. John

Whitmire to help youth in foster care stay out of the adult justice system by eliminating fines as a punishment for minor mistakes. Many youth are often unable to pay those fines, resulting in arrest when a youth turns 17.

The Legislature also approved HB 567 by Rep. Frank and Sen. Bryan Hughes, making it harder for the courts to remove children from their families. We support keeping more children with their families and appreciate that the authors and stakeholders worked to incorporate our input into the legislation. However, to ensure that children are not endangered, it will be important to monitor how CPS interprets and implements the bill's provision changing the definition of child neglect from exposure to "substantial risk" to exposure to "immediate danger."

While legislators took steps to improve foster care and make it harder to remove children from their families, the Legislature did little — with one notable exception — to strengthen support for families when children are at risk of removal by CPS. For example, we are disappointed the Legislature turned down DFPS' request for additional funding for PEI services that prevent abuse and neglect. The main exception to this trend was HB 3041 by Rep. Frank and Sen. Kolkhorst. Leveraging the federal FFPSA, the Legislature passed this important bill to establish two pilot programs to work with families that are already involved with CPS, aiming to keep kids safe with their families and out of foster care. After CPS investigates a case and determines that it needs court intervention, children may become eligible for these pilots. Courts will decide whether to connect families with prevention services while a child stays with their biological parents instead of removing the child. It will be important to monitor these pilots to see whether certain families are inadvertently excluded from receiving prevention services

as an alternative to removal due to the bill's narrow definition of "foster care candidacy." Rider 48 in the state budget provides funding to implement HB 3041 and other FFPSA efforts.

We are also concerned that the Legislature may be pinning too much hope on Community-Based Care (CBC) as the answer to all the system's problems when the evidence on outcomes for children is mixed at best. Under CBC, a local organization, rather than state officials, takes the lead on foster care in a particular region. We expect CBC contractors to continue to struggle to meet children's needs, especially in light of the Legislature's failure to increase reimbursement rates for foster care providers.

While the legislative session was noteworthy for all the legislation that passed regarding the child protection system, we were glad to see that some harmful bills did not pass, such as proposals to eliminate anonymous reporting to CPS, criminalize traumatized youth who are resistant to their foster care placements, and separate transgender youth from loving parents, potentially driving them into foster care.

Unfortunately, some good child protection bills failed to pass as well, including two that were approved by the House but never referred to a Senate committee: HB 2333 by Rep. Donna Howard to scale up evidence-based, voluntary nurse home visits for caregivers with newborns, such as visits conducted through Family Connects, and HB 1237 by Rep. James White to reduce racial disproportionality and disparities in the CPS system. These bills would have helped Texas safely reduce the number of children entering foster care.

The main child protection disappointment of the session was the Legislature's failure to increase funding for reimbursement rates for foster care providers. The foster care system relies on nonprofits and other providers to operate homes for children with complex needs, recruit foster parents, offer mental health treatment, and deliver other services. One of the big reasons there is a shortage of safe and effective homes and services is the inadequate payments offered to these providers. To avoid exacerbating the current shortage and undermining good bills that passed this session, we urge the Governor and Legislature to address reimbursement rates in a special legislative session.



Outcomes for Key Child Protection Legislation

PASSED

Support Children

HB 80 by Rep. Jarvis Johnson

This bill replaces fines and fees for youth in foster care who commit class C misdemeanors with community services.

HB 567 by Rep. Frank

Similar to SB 190 by Sen. Hughes

This bill establishes important procedural guardrails for CPS and court-ordered services cases to create urgency around reunifying children with their parents.

HB 607 by Rep. Howard

Similar to SB 2607 by Sen. Menéndez;
Passed as a provision of SB 1896

This bill supports children in foster care, including pregnant and parenting youth, by conducting a foster care needs assessment.

HB 700 by Rep. Jarvis Johnson

Includes provisions similar to SB 1084
by Sen. Powell

This bill requires CPS to ensure youth receive college credit for participating in PAL classes.

HB 1315 by Rep. Jarvis Johnson

This bill requires the appointment of a CASA, guardian ad litem, or attorney ad litem after a parent's rights are terminated in a CPS case and the child enters permanent foster care.

HB 2926 by Rep. Parker

This bill allows for the reinstatement of parental rights following termination of parental rights.

HB 3041 by Rep. Frank

Similar to SB 1576 by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill creates two pilot programs in which courts would decide whether to connect families with prevention services while a child stays with their biological parents instead of removing the child and placing that child in foster care.

HB 4041 by Rep. Neave

Passed as a provision of SB 1896
by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill aims to prevent suicide in foster care.

SB 263 by Sen. Menéndez

Similar to HB 116 by Rep. Minjarez

This bill provides financial support for grandparents and other kinship caregivers who are informally caring for a child at risk of entering foster care.

SB 642 by Sen. West

This bill improves mental health services for children at risk of relinquishment.

Support Children (continued)

SB 863 by Sen. Blanco

Similar to HB 2985 by Rep. Hull

This bill authorizes the temporary relocation of children in foster care facilities during a declared state of disaster.

SB 910 by Sen. Schwertner

This bill helps DFPS plan for incorporating prevention services funding through the Family First Prevention Services Act into Community Based Care.

SB 1059 by Sen. Paxton

Similar to HB 2963 by Rep. Klick

This bill ensures continuous health care coverage for young adults aging out of foster care.

SB 1079 by Sen. Campbell

Passed as a provision of the state budget

This bill strengthens accountability and transparency long-term by codifying recent improvements to the CPS monthly reporting system.

SB 1084 by Sen. Powell

Similar to HB 2632 by Rep. Minjarez;
Passed as a provision of HB 700
by Rep. Jarvis Johnson

This bill requires CPS to begin transition planning earlier, removes barriers to extended care, and ensures older youth have more skills and resources to become independent.

SB 1575 by Sen. Kolkhorst

Similar to HB 4476 by Rep. Oliverson

This bill ensures that children in foster care only remain in "QRTP" facilities when necessary and that a plan is developed to move each child into a family-based setting when appropriate.

SB 1896 by Sen. Kolkhorst

Includes provisions similar to HB 607
by Rep. Howard and SB 2067
by Sen. Menéndez

This omnibus CPS bill makes numerous changes, including implementing recommendations to identify and address gaps in foster care for serving pregnant and parenting youth.

SB 2049 by Sen. Menéndez

Similar to HB 3895 by Rep. Wu

This bill clarifies the role of guardians ad litem for children who are in the juvenile justice system and the CPS system.

SB 2054 by Sen. Menéndez

Similar to HB 2286 by Rep. White

This bill helps youth in foster care access drivers education and safety courses so they can get their driver's licenses.

Impact Children

HB 2536 by Rep. Krause

Similar to SB 2015 by Sen. Buckingham

This bill excludes a parent seeking more than one medical opinion on a child's health conditions from the definition of neglect and as a reason to terminate the parent-child relationship.

HB 3379 by Rep. Leman

This bill changes the standard for reporting child abuse and neglect from "cause for concern" to "reasonable cause for concern."

Impact Children (continued)

HB 3820 by Rep. Klick

Passed as a provision of SB 1578 by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill changes processes related to Child Abuse Pediatricians involved in CPS cases.

SB 1578 by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill requires the children's commission to study the use of opinions from medical professionals in making determinations related to the abuse or neglect of a child.

DID NOT PASS

Support Children

HB 542 by Rep. White

This bill would have established guidelines for placing a child in a foster care facility where a preventable death has occurred and prevented a facility that has caused a child's death from reopening if HHSC terminated a contract with that facility for that reason.

HB 1237 by Rep. White

Similar to HB 155 by Rep. Rose and SB 75 by Sen. Miles

This bill would have required DFPS to address disproportionality and disparities in the CPS system.

HB 1790 by Rep. Darby

This bill would have kept relatives involved in CPS cases and increased opportunities to keep children in foster care connected to their biological families.

HB 2333 by Rep. Howard

Similar to SB 1520 by Sen. Seliger

This bill would have scaled up evidence-based voluntary nurse home visits for caregivers with newborns, such as visits conducted through Family Connects.

HB 2308 by Rep. Gates

This bill would have increased the use of parental child safety placements, allowed orders that would remove an alleged perpetrator from the home, and strengthened accountability for reasonable efforts to keep a child in their home as opposed to removal.

HB 2490 by Rep. Howard

Similar to SB 1200 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have allowed minors to consent for home visiting services designed to serve pregnant women.

HB 2650 by Rep. Jarvis Johnson

This bill would have prevented unnecessary law enforcement reports to CPS when parents are arrested for a reason unrelated to child maltreatment.

HB 2821 by Rep. White

Similar to SB 2085 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill would have instructed juvenile boards to develop policies that divert youth in foster care facilities from the juvenile justice system.

Support Children (continued)

HB 3493 by Rep. Parker

This bill would have strengthened Prevention and Early Intervention services at DFPS by incorporating services to prevent or address adverse childhood experiences into the array of services provided in communities across Texas.

HB 3815 by Rep. Hunter

This bill would have expanded eligibility for extended foster care and education and training vouchers consistent with the Family First Prevention Services Act.

HB 4055 by Rep. Meza

This bill would have clarified that pregnant women with substance use disorders who are seeking treatment should not be reported to CPS.

Impact Children

HB 2055 by Rep. Klick

Similar to HB 1190 by Rep. Krause, SB 1603 by Sen. Kolkhorst, and SB 1672 by Sen. Hall.

This bill would have changed the procedures related to adding a person to the central registry of child abuse and neglect.

HB 2298 by Rep. Cason

Similar to HB 2737 by Rep. Minjarez

This bill would have delineated the rights of parents in CPS cases and added required procedures to ensure CPS gives parents notice of those rights.

HB 3691 by Rep. Frank

This bill would have remodeled statewide implementation of Community-Based Care.

Raise Concerns

HB 1098 by Rep. Gates

This bill would have prohibited anonymous reports to DFPS regarding suspected child abuse or neglect.

HB 2550 by Rep. Dutton

This bill would have limited the services that CPS may contract for and provide to families.

HB 2551 by Rep. Dutton

This bill would have limited kinship caregiver options and disrupted foster care placements by requiring parental consent for kinship placement and allowing parents to revoke their consent at any time.

HB 2983 by Rep. Hull

This bill would have eliminated the initial medical examination currently required for certain children entering foster care.

SB 1646 by Sen. Perry

Similar to HB 68 by Rep. Toth and HB 4014 by Rep. Hefner

This bill would have led to CPS potentially removing transgender children from their homes if the children receive medically recommended gender-affirming care.

Review of Early Education Policy Progress During the 2021 Texas Legislative Session

This session, the Legislature made important progress supporting young children in both pre-k and child care so they are ready to succeed in school and supporting young emergent bilingual students so they become strong readers by third grade and master both English and their home language. The launch of the bipartisan Texas House Early Childhood Caucus this session by Reps. Diego Bernal, Angie Chen Button, James Talarico, and Julie Johnson set the tone. On the child care front, it was a particularly big year at the Legislature. The most significant child care bill that passed will, over time, boost the quality of care offered by providers who participate in the subsidy system. On the school front, the Legislature passed four of the bills recommended by the Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative that we launched last year with our partners. One of the bills from that package will set a pre-k class size limit of 22 students, a proposal that had languished for years at the Legislature. Despite concerns early in session, the Legislature also maintained full funding for schools.

Early in the legislative session, Rep. Angie Chen Button chaired an important hearing on a package of child care bills in the House International Relations and Economic Development Committee, providing a launching pad for greater attention in the Legislature to how to improve access to quality child care. Our staff worked in coalition to push these bills, with partners like Children at Risk and the Dallas Early Education Alliance leading the effort to support the bill authors. These bills were also priorities for the Texas Prenatal to Three Collaborative, a partnership that we co-lead with our partners to ensure state policy supports infants, toddlers, and their parents during the critical years of early childhood.

The most significant bill to pass from the child care package was HB 2607 by Rep. Talarico and Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. The bill will improve the experience of children in child care by requiring providers who receive subsidies to also participate in Texas Rising Star, the state's program for measuring and improving the quality of child care. Other key child care legislation from that hearing that went on to pass were HB 1792 by Rep. Button and Sen. Judith Zaffirini, which standardizes Texas Rising Star assessments; SB 1555 by Sen. Zaffirini and Rep. John Raney, which sets equitable reimbursement rates for child care providers serving infants and toddlers; and HB 619 by Rep. Senfronia Thompson and Sen. Carol Alvarado, which directs the Texas Workforce Commission to develop a strategic plan to improve the

effectiveness of the child care workforce by increasing compensation, expanding professional development opportunities, and more.

The Legislature also passed several important bills proposed by the Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative that we launched last year with our partners. We appreciate Senators José Menéndez, Eddie Lucio, Jr., and Brandon Creighton and Reps. Bobby Guerra, James Talarico, and Harold Dutton for their leadership on these bills. Following the recommendations of the Initiative, the Legislature passed HB 2256 to establish a teaching certificate in bilingual special education. The bill will equip teachers to more quickly and accurately identify emergent bilingual students who need additional assistance and provide that support more effectively. The Legislature also passed SB 560 to establish a State Strategic Plan for Bilingual Education. This plan will include tangible goals and timelines to increase the number of educators certified in bilingual education, increase the number of one-way

and two-way dual language programs, educate families and school districts on the importance of bilingual education, adopt a uniform process for identifying emergent bilingual students in pre-k through 12th grade, and increase the number of bilingual and multilingual high school graduates. Additionally, the Legislature passed SB 2066, updating the Education Code to change the term "limited English proficient" to "emergent bilingual," a term that better reflects students' bilingual potential and strengths. Alongside our staff, our partners in the Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative, particularly IDRA, played a critical role developing and supporting these bills in collaboration with the legislators and their staff.

The Legislature also passed a recommendation by the Initiative to finally establish a pre-k class size limit. SB 2081 will limit pre-k classes in public schools to a maximum of 22 students, the limit already in place for kindergarten through fourth grade. By ensuring that pre-k students no longer have to compete with 25



or 30 other four-year-olds for the attention of a single teacher, the bill will ensure more children are on a path to become strong readers by third grade. Another good pre-k bill that passed this session, HB 725 by Rep. Jared Patterson and Sen. Zaffirini, makes Texas children eligible for public school pre-k if they were in foster care in other states.

While there were some concerns about potential funding cuts for pre-k and other education investments heading into the legislative session, the Legislature largely kept its commitment to education funding. An essential component to these efforts was ensuring that attendance-based funding in pre-k and Kindergarten was not jeopardized due to enrollment declines from COVID-19. Our team joined a chorus of education advocates, educators, administrators, and legislators who successfully secured a full “hold-harmless” for the entirety of the 2020-21 school year.

In addition to state funds, Texas has an opportunity to bolster education through the massive influx of federal funds that have been allocated through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Key to this strategy will be how the state allocates the \$12.4 billion Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds designed to address COVID-19’s impact on schools, as well as the \$4.4 billion available to support child care programs. It will be critical to ensure these funds do not supplant any state dollars and support the students and families most impacted by the pandemic, including emergent bilingual children, children from families with low incomes, and people of color.

Advocates and other Texans will need to monitor and be engaged in state efforts to allocate federal funds as well as the significant work ahead to implement the bills passed by the Legislature. For example, as Texas

officials develop a state strategic plan to support emergent bilingual students, we’ll work to shape the plan and then build on its recommendations. Although lawmakers took substantial steps to bolster the effectiveness of early childhood education, there remains significant work ahead to ensure all children have access to early childhood education opportunities that can help give them a strong start.



Outcomes for Key Early Education Legislation

PASSED

Support Children in School

HB 5 by Rep. Ashby

This bill expands access to broadband internet access in the state.

HB 725 by Rep. Patterson

This bill makes Texas children eligible for public school pre-k if they were in foster care in other states.

HB 2256 by Rep. Guerra

Similar to SB 1101 by Sen. Creighton

This bill creates a certification in Bilingual Special Education to build a pipeline of school leaders who are equipped to serve the specific needs of English Learner children with disabilities and developmental delays.

SB 560 by Sen. Lucio

Similar to HB 2258 by Rep. Guerra

This bill creates a state strategic plan to cultivate bilingualism across all early learning systems and set clear benchmarks to increase the number of bilingually certified teachers, the number of students who are bilingual or multilingual, and the availability of high-quality dual language immersion classes in pre-k through 12th grade.

SB 2066 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill replaces the terms Limited English Proficient and English Learner in the Education Code with the term Emergent Bilingual to identify students by their positive bilingual potential, rather than from a deficit perspective.

SB 2081 by Sen. Menéndez

Similar to HB 41 by Rep. Talarico

This bill establishes a 22 student class size limit for public school pre-k programs, in line with kindergarten through 4th grade.

Support Children in Child Care

HB 619 by Rep. S. Thompson

This bill directs state officials to develop a strategic plan to support the child care workforce.

HB 1792 by Rep. Button

Similar to SB 694 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill standardizes Texas Rising Star assessments.

HB 2607 by Rep. Talarico

Similar to SB 2087 by Sen. Lucio

This bill improves child care quality by requiring providers that participate in the Texas Workforce Commission subsidy program to also take part in Texas Rising Star through a phased approach.

Support Children in Child Care (continued)

SB 225 by Sen. Paxton

This bill expands the child care searchable database and improves transparency around child care licensing deficiencies.

SB 764 by Sen. Huffman

This bill prohibits a person from operating a child care facility or family home during an appeal of a suspension or denial of an applicable license, certification, registration, or listing.

SB 1061 by Sen. Zaffirini

Similar to SB 1153 by Sen. Kolkhorst

This bill requires child care facilities and employees to submit a complete set of fingerprints to the Health and Human Services Commission for the purpose of conducting a robust criminal history check.

SB 1555 by Sen. Zaffirini

Similar to HB 1695 by Rep. Raney

This bill sets equitable reimbursement rates for child care providers serving infants and toddlers.

Impact Children

SB 1697 by Sen. Paxton

Similar to HB 3557 by Rep. King

This bill permits a parent or guardian to elect for a student to repeat a grade or a course from the 2021-2022 school year.

DID NOT PASS

Support Children in School

HB 1744 by Rep. Guerra

This bill would have created a Career and Technical Education program for bilingual education, ESL, and Spanish.

HB 4105 by Rep. Talarico

This bill would have expanded public pre-k eligibility to include the children of essential workers.

SB 37 by Sen. Zaffirini

Similar to HB 1621 by Rep. Guillen and HB 2231 by Rep. Bucy

This bill would have expanded pre-k eligibility to include all four-year-olds.

SB 2065 by Sen. Menéndez

This bill would have protected and increased state financial support for bilingual education and ESL programs in schools through per-pupil funding.

Support Children in School (continued)

SB 2215 by Sen. Blanco

Similar to HB 4421 by Rep. Meza

This bill would have required school districts to update their literacy plans to include information on dual language programs and report data in both program languages, rather than just English outcomes.

Support Children in Child Care

HB 168 by Rep. M. González

Similar to SB 1140 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill would have prevented discrimination in child care based on disability and ensured that more children in child care with disabilities receive Early Childhood Intervention services.

HB 1364 by Rep. Romero

Similar to SB 971 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill would have increased the supply of child care through contracts.

HB 1761 by Rep. Julie Johnson

This bill would have created a task force to study and make recommendations to improve access and affordability of child care.

HB 1964 by Rep. Lopez

This bill would have directed state officials to study the cost of providing quality child care in comparison to family income.

HB 2729 by Rep. Lopez

This bill would have required any state agency that provides child care assistance to post on its website and provide printed materials information related to child care services available to veterans and their families.

Impact Children

HB 51 by Rep. Talarico

This bill would have established an Office of Early Childhood to coordinate, consolidate, and integrate early childhood programs.

HB 495 by Rep. Wu

This bill would have clarified that a child care facility may provide notice of the percentage of children attending a program who are immunized, the percentage of adults employed who are immunized, and the facility's handwashing policy to prevent the spread of infection.

SB 139 by Sen. Johnson

This bill would have clarified that a child care facility may provide notice of the percentage of children attending a program who are immunized.

Review of Maternal and Child Health Policy Progress During the 2021 Texas Legislative Session

In 2021, the Legislature passed two significant health care bills after years of advocacy, HB 133 and HB 290, but our greatest disappointment of the session was that the Legislature took no action to draw down federal Medicaid expansion funding to cover 1.4 million uninsured Texas adults — by far the biggest tool available in the Legislature’s toolkit to improve access to health care. Our team helped spearhead efforts to successfully pass HB 133, which will allow moms to keep their Medicaid health coverage for six months after childbirth rather than the current two months, and a scaled down version of HB 290, which will prevent children from losing their Medicaid health coverage due to inaccurate midyear eligibility reviews. Additionally, our coalition worked with legislators to successfully stop a planned cut to funding for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays. However, the Legislature failed to increase funding for ECI, women’s health, and other programs to keep up with the state’s needs. HB 133, HB 290, and ECI funding were all priorities for the Texas Prenatal to Three Collaborative, an initiative to ensure that state policies support infants, toddlers, and their parents during the critical years of early childhood.

After years of effort on the issue by families, coalition partners, and legislators, the Legislature passed HB 133 to allow moms to keep their Medicaid health insurance for six months after pregnancy rather than the current two months. The original version of the bill, which passed the House, would have provided for 12 months of postpartum health coverage. While we agree with the state’s Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee that moms need a full 12 months of comprehensive health care after pregnancy, we are very pleased to see the extension to six months. We greatly appreciate the efforts of Speaker Dade Phelan, Rep. Toni Rose, and Sen. Lois Kolkhorst to pass the bill. Texas must now

seek a federal Medicaid waiver to implement the legislation using federal funds. We urge state and federal officials to work together to quickly implement HB 133 while also working on solutions to ensure that moms have health coverage before their pregnancy and after the six months of coverage included in HB 133.

Similar to HB 133, the passage of HB 290 to help children keep their health coverage was the result of years of work by a number of advocates in the Children’s Health Coverage Coalition. We appreciate Speaker Dade Phelan, Sen. Lois Kolkhorst, Rep. James Frank, and Rep. Philip Cortez working together to pass it this session. Currently, children who receive

their health insurance through Medicaid are subject to as many as four midyear eligibility reviews that often mistakenly remove children from health coverage. The version of HB 290 that passed (as a last-minute amendment to HB 2658) will allow only one midyear eligibility review and provide families with 30 days — rather than 10 days — to gather and submit the requested documentation. It will be important to monitor the implementation of the bill to ensure that it achieves the Legislature’s goal of ensuring that eligible children remain enrolled in their health coverage and continue to receive uninterrupted health care.

Other important health care legislation to pass this session includes HB 4 by Rep. Four Price and Sen. Dawn Buckingham to expand access to telehealth; SB 1059 by Sen. Angela Paxton and Rep. Stephanie Klick to streamline Medicaid enrollment and renewal process for former foster youth so they have consistent access to health care; and SB 672 by Sen.

Buckingham and Rep. Greg Bonnen to make collaborative care a Medicaid-reimbursable service so mental health care can be better integrated into the primary care setting.

This session, our team also led the successful coalition effort to stop the budget cut that the Senate passed for ECI funding for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays. The Senate initially approved only \$315 million for ECI, a significant reduction from the current \$342 million. Ultimately, we were able to secure \$339 million for ECI — essentially maintaining level funding — when the House and Senate conference committee finalized the budget.

While we were pleased to stop the cut to ECI, in the future it will be important for the Legislature to continue the successful efforts made during the 2019 legislative session towards increasing ECI appropriations to restore funding to the same per-child level at which it was funded



from 2012 to 2015. Adequate funding for ECI is critical for ensuring that no more programs close, stabilizing and continuing to grow enrollment to reflect the growing population of Texas children, and rejuvenating outreach efforts to ensure that all eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities and delays receive ECI services in a timely manner.

The state budget was a mixed bag in other ways, too. Like ECI, Healthy Texas Women (HTW) and Family Planning Program (FPP) received flat funding compared to the amount appropriated last biennium — certainly better than a cut, but not enough funding to meet the state’s needs. On paper, the \$352.6 million funding total for women’s health programs increased slightly, but only because the Legislature funded two years of the recently launched HTW Plus postpartum benefits compared to the one year funded in the 2019 session. Additionally, a portion of that funding appropriated for the women’s health programs’ budget (about \$8 to \$10 million) will be devoted to implementation of HB 133 in FY 2023. In the future, the Legislature will need to ensure that funding for the women’s health programs keeps up with demand for the programs and anticipated caseload growth, particularly since FPP providers have routinely run out of funding needed to meet the high demand for their services. In other areas, the Legislature actually cut funding. For example, the Legislature cut funding for the state workforce that enrolls Texans in Healthy Texas Women, Medicaid, CHIP, and SNAP, potentially creating delays for children, pregnant women, and other Texans who need these services. However, we were pleased the Legislature continued \$16 million over the biennium for a \$500 Medicaid add-on payment for labor and delivery services provided by rural hospitals and maintained \$7 million over the biennium to continue maternal health initiatives at the Department of State Health Services, including

the TexasAIM initiative to better equip hospitals to prevent pregnancy and birth complications.

We were also disappointed that the Legislature failed to pass SB 1858 by Sen. Beverly Powell, which would have promoted group prenatal and group well-child care models, such as CenteringPregnancy and CenteringParenting, and HB 4139 by Rep. Garnet Coleman, which would have reinstated the state Office for Health Equity. Fortunately, after the legislative session, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) announced that it is using federal COVID relief funds to establish an office to address equity.

Our greatest disappointment of the legislative session is that the Legislature took no action to accept federal Medicaid expansion funding. The funding would provide a health insurance option to an estimated 1.4 million uninsured grocery store clerks, cooks, waiters and waitresses, construction workers, and other Texans who do not receive insurance from their jobs. For the first time, a majority of the Texas House officially endorsed a proposal to accept Medicaid expansion funding, signing onto HB 3871 by Rep. Julie Johnson, which would have directed state leaders to negotiate a Medicaid waiver with the federal government to draw down the funding and establish a Live Well Texas program to offer health insurance. However, the Legislature did not hold a hearing on this or any of the other bills filed to expand health coverage. The House and Senate both voted down floor amendments to accept the funding. As Texas continues to hold the distinction of the nation’s worst uninsured rate, state leaders will need to develop a plan to expand health coverage. The state’s current application to the federal government for funding to reimburse hospitals and mental health providers for uncompensated care should be expanded to include a health coverage plan.

Outcomes for Key Maternal and Child Health Legislation

PASSED

Support Children

HB 4 by Rep. Price

Similar to HB 974 by Price and SB 412 by Buckingham

This bill improves access to telehealth by making permanent the flexible policies that were initiated in response to COVID-19.

HB 290 by Rep. Cortez

Similar to SB 39 by Sen. Zaffirini; Passed as a provision of HB 2658

This bill allows eligible children to remain enrolled in Medicaid insurance by reducing inaccurate mid-year eligibility reviews.

HB 2658 by Rep. Frank

Includes provisions similar to SB 2028 by Sen. Kolkhorst and HB 290 by Rep. Cortez

This omnibus bill improves the administration and operation of the Medicaid managed care program including several programs that impact children.

SB 1911 by Sen. Blanco

Similar to HB 4343 by Rep. Rose; Passed as amendment to HB 4

This bill makes it easier for Medicaid Managed Care Organizations to communicate with applicants.

SB 1914 by Sen. Blanco

Similar to HB 1230 by Rep. Ortega and HB 1449 by Rep. Romero

This bill improves access to SNAP nutrition benefits by modernizing the way a vehicle's value is considered in the SNAP eligibility process.

SB 1059 by Sen. Paxton

Similar to HB 2963 by Rep. Klick

This bill directs HHSC to implement a streamlined enrollment and renewal process for former foster youth so that youth have consistent access to health care.

SB 1921 by Sen. Lucio

This bill ensures health providers are reimbursed for care delivered when a client first enters Medicaid coverage and is enrolling in a health insurance plan.

SB 1648 by Sen. Perry

Similar to HB 4040 by Rep. Krause

This bill enables kids who are medically fragile or have special health care needs to continue receiving care from a specialty provider even if they have private health insurance and Medicaid STAR Kids coverage.

Support Children by Supporting Maternal Health

HB 133 by Rep. Rose

Similar to HB 98 by Rep. Ortega,
HB 107 by Rep. S. Thompson,
HB 146 by Rep. Thierry,
HB 414 by Rep. Walle,
SB 141 by Sen. Johnson

This bill extends mothers' postpartum Medicaid insurance to cover six months rather than two months.

SB 1149 by Sen. Kolkhorst

Passed as a provision of HB 133
by Rep. Rose

This bill transitions the Healthy Texas Women program to a managed care model in order to better connect women with essential health services.

DID NOT PASS

Support Children

HB 105 by Rep. Ortega

Similar to SB 136 by Sen. Johnson

This bill would have promoted the use of promotoras and community health workers in Medicaid.

HB 168 by Rep. M. González

Similar to SB 1140 by Sen. Zaffirini

This bill would have prevented discrimination in child care based on disability and ensured that more children in child care with disabilities receive Early Childhood Intervention services.

HB 843 by Rep. Lopez

Similar to HB 908 by Rep. Julie Johnson

This bill would have required private insurance companies to cover Early Childhood Intervention services.

HB 1594 by Rep. Allen

This bill would have required school districts to create and institute recess policies that reflect best practice, consider recommendations from the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), and allow children the opportunity to be active and practice life skills.

HB 2333 by Rep. Howard

Similar to SB 1520 by Sen. Seliger

This bill would have scaled up evidence-based voluntary nurse home visits for caregivers with newborns, such as visits conducted through Family Connects.

HB 4139 by Rep. Coleman

This bill would have reinstated the state Office for Healthy Equity.

HB 4302 by Rep. Rose

Similar to SB 1199 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have reinstated the MEDCARES grant program and transferred administration of the program from DSHS to HHSC.

Support Children (continued)

HB 4334 by Rep. Minjarez

Similar to SB 2082 by Sen. Menendez

This bill would have required public schools to provide information regarding Medicaid, CHIP, and SNAP (formerly food stamp) eligibility to guardians when a student enrolls, transfers, or withdraws from a school district.

SB 1858 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have promoted group prenatal and group well-child care models by updating reimbursement and promoting value-based initiatives between providers and health plans.

Support Children by Supporting Maternal Health

HB 105 by Rep. Ortega

Similar to SB 136 by Sen. Johnson

This bill would have promoted the use of promotoras and community health workers in Medicaid.

HB 136 by Rep. Thierry

This bill would have improved data collection on maternal mortality and morbidity.

HB 158 by Rep. Thierry

This bill would have established a pilot program to cover doula services for pregnant women in Medicaid so more mothers have healthy pregnancies and childbirths.

HB 415 by Rep. Walle

Similar to HB 2685 by Rep. Thierry

This bill would have added doula services as a Medicaid benefit for pregnant women.

HB 1730 by Rep. Larson

Similar to numerous bills

This bill would have drawn down federal Medicaid expansion funding to provide insurance to uninsured Texas adults.

HB 1991 by Rep. Thierry

Similar to SB 147 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have created a maternal mental health peer support pilot program for perinatal mood and anxiety disorder.

HB 3871 by Rep. Julie Johnson

Similar to SB 117 by Sen. Johnson

This bill would have directed state officials to seek a waiver to draw down federal Medicaid expansion funding and create a Live Well Texas program to provide insurance to uninsured Texas adults.

SB 1858 by Sen. Powell

This bill would have promoted group prenatal and group well-child care models by updating reimbursement and promoting value-based initiatives between providers and health plans.



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