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**House Appropriations Committee Article II:
Health and Human Services Appropriations
FY 2022-2023
Testimony of the Texas Women’s Healthcare Coalition**

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to testify virtually. I am Evelyn Delgado, Chair of the Texas Women’s Healthcare Coalition.

TWHC and its 87 healthcare, faith, and community-based member organizations are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Texas women, babies, and families by ensuring access to preventive healthcare for all Texas women.

TWHC thanks legislators for your commitment to women’s preventive healthcare and rebuilding the women’s health programs. It has taken many years to stitch the safety-net back together after the budget cuts of 2011. As we have seen, divesting from women’s health results in higher costs to the state in the long run.

The **Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee** “recommends increasing access to health services during the year after pregnancy and throughout the interconception period to improve the health of women, facilitate continuity of care, enable effective care transitions, and promote safe birth spacing before, during, and after pregnancy.”¹ These health programs provide women with access to healthcare to improve their own health and are essential for healthy pregnancies and births.

We support prioritized funding for the Family Planning Program. This is a vital program for Texans who do not qualify for health coverage options or the Healthy Texas Women program. FPP serves women and men, and due to its eligibility criteria, has a wider potential client population when compared to HTW. Providers throughout the state report that FPP is consistently in high demand and program funds routinely run out before the end of the funding cycle.

We support prioritized funding for Healthy Texas Women. While HTW is not comprehensive healthcare, for those without access to other forms of healthcare coverage, it provides a limited scope of vital services and enables individuals to maintain a connection to the healthcare

system. We support the addition of HTW Plus postpartum services, but caution that this does not reduce capacity for HTW preventive and family planning services as a result.

We support prioritized funding for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Services program that helps fund clinics across the state to provide low-income women with quality, low-cost and accessible screening, and diagnostic services. Regular screening might find pre-cancer or cancers early when treatment is likely to work best.

Women’s Health Programs provide Cost Savings.

Investments in HTW and FPP save state dollars that are expended on other programs by averting unplanned pregnancies and births. Medicaid pays for more than half of Texas births, costing \$3.5 billion in 2016 for birth and delivery-related services for mothers and infants in the first year of life, which result in savings from eliminating labor and delivery costs through Medicaid and a year of infant healthcare.²

Across Texas, over **1.9 million women** need publicly-supported contraceptive services and supplies.³ In FY2019, Healthy Texas Women and the Family Planning Programs served about **15% of that or 291,056 clients**.⁴ Our goal is to reach more than 15% of women needing these services.

Thank you for your time.

² Ibid

³ Publicly Supported Family Planning Services in the United States: Likely Need, Availability and Impact, 2016 <https://www.guttmacher.org/report/publicly-supported-FP-services-us-2016>

⁴ Texas Health and Human Services. Women’s Health Programs Report Fiscal Year 2019. May 2020.