

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott,

We write to you regarding disturbing policies your administration has put into place during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic we are currently facing. Earlier this week, it was reported that your office has used this pandemic to block access to abortion.

We find it disconcerting that you are exploiting a global pandemic to push forward an agenda that strips away safe, essential and time-sensitive reproductive healthcare for Texas women. Our state has many more priorities that take precedence right now other than regulating who can and cannot access abortions. Texas should be focused on providing healthcare and support to the millions of Texans who are sick and rapidly losing jobs and income as a result of pandemic.

This policy is merely a pretext by your office to prevent women from receiving essentially needed health care--especially because we do not have definitive evidence of the effect of COVID-19 on pregnant women and fetuses. The CDC has stated in its literature they do not know whether COVID-19 will cause problems to pregnant women or unborn fetuses. In addition, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) guidance has stated, "Pregnant women should be considered an at-risk population for COVID-19"¹ It is well-established that the longer women must wait for abortion care it becomes increasingly difficult access. Given the dwindling number of women's reproductive healthcare providers in Texas, this policy will prove to be disastrous for Texas women.

The state of Texas should be focusing on expanding healthcare benefits right now, by taking up and approving Medicaid expansion to ensure the five million Texans who are currently uninsured will not suffer from lack of access to healthcare during this time. We should also remain laser focused on ensuring that all Texans are able to weather this economic storm and storms to come.

We respectfully request that your administration reconsider this ban on providing healthcare to all Texans and focus on expanding healthcare across the state to ensure we remain Texas strong at the end of this pandemic.

Sincerely

¹ ACOG, Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Practice Bulletin, <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/practice-advisory/articles/2020/03/novel-coronavirus-2019>

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