



# TEXAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP

*An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives*

## Members

Rep. Alma Allen  
 Rep. Rafael Anchía  
 Rep. Michelle Beckley  
 Rep. Diego Bernal  
 Rep. Rhetta Bowers  
 Rep. John Bucy III  
 Rep. Elizabeth Campos  
 Rep. Terry Canales  
 Rep. Sheryl Cole  
 Rep. Nicole Collier  
 Rep. Philip Cortez  
 Rep. Jasmine Crockett  
 Rep. Yvonne Davis  
 Rep. Joe Deshotel  
 Rep. Alex Dominguez  
 Rep. Harold Dutton  
 Rep. Art Fierro  
 Rep. Erin Gamez  
 Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins  
 Rep. Jessica González  
 Rep. Mary González  
 Rep. Vikki Goodwin  
 Rep. Bobby Guerra  
 Rep. Ryan Guillen  
 Rep. Ana Hernandez  
 Rep. Abel Herrero  
 Rep. Gina Hinojosa  
 Rep. Donna Howard  
 Rep. Celia Israel  
 Rep. Ann Johnson  
 Rep. Jarvis Johnson  
 Rep. Julie Johnson  
 Rep. Jolanda Jones  
 Rep. Tracy King  
 Rep. Oscar Longoria  
 Rep. Ray Lopez  
 Rep. Armando Martinez  
 Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer  
 Rep. Terry Meza  
 Rep. Ina Minjarez  
 Rep. Joseph Moody  
 Rep. Christina Morales  
 Rep. Eddie Morales  
 Rep. Penny Morales Shaw  
 Rep. Sergio Muñoz Jr.  
 Rep. Victoria Neave  
 Rep. Claudia Ordaz Perez  
 Rep. Evelina Ortega  
 Rep. Mary Ann Perez  
 Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos  
 Rep. Richard Peña Raymond  
 Rep. Ron Reynolds  
 Rep. Eddie Rodriguez  
 Rep. Ramon Romero  
 Rep. Toni Rose  
 Rep. Jon Rosenthal  
 Rep. Carl Sherman  
 Rep. James Talarico  
 Rep. Shawn Thierry  
 Rep. Senfronia Thompson  
 Rep. Chris Turner  
 Rep. John Turner  
 Rep. Hubert Vo  
 Rep. Armando Walle  
 Rep. Gene Wu  
 Rep. Erin Zwiener  
 Sen. Sarah Eckhardt  
 Sen. Royce West  
 Sen. John Whitmire  
 Sen. Judith Zaffirini

## LSG Policy Report: Maternal Mortality and Reproductive Health *State Must Act Now on Life and Death Matters*

September 28, 2022

### LSG Colleagues and Supporters,

Last June, the Texas Legislative Study Group published a policy report titled ‘[Texas Still Ranks Last in Healthcare Access](#).’ A portion of this report focused on how lacking access to health care is often dangerous to those who need reproductive or pregnancy care.

The abrupt decision announced by the Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS) to withhold the legally required (Section 34.015A, Texas Health and Safety Code) maternal death data report from the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) raised serious concerns among legislators and healthcare providers.

The reasons given for withholding the report were never, to our knowledge, stated publicly until after the agency missed its September 1 statutory deadline to produce the MMMRC’s biennial report. In a hearing this month with the MMMRC, DSHS Commissioner Hellerstedt said the agency wanted “to better align its methodology with that of other states, and that [there hadn’t been enough staff and money](#) to finish the review for a September 1 release.”

Those of us who serve on the Appropriations Committee would have welcomed DSHS if they had come to us months ago with concerns about “staff and money” and given us the opportunity to provide the funds needed to get the job done. Fortunately, we have five or six months before we start voting in the 88<sup>th</sup> legislative session, ample time to get past election year concerns and get the data we need instead of waiting until the 2025 legislative cycle. We cannot wait that long to address this life and death policy issue.

Thank you,

Rep. Armando L. Walle  
Chair, Texas Legislative Study Group

## LSG Policy Report: Maternal Mortality and Reproductive Health *State Must Act Now on Life and Death Matters*

### Maternal Mortality

The United States rate of maternal mortality is [double the rate of](#) any other developed nation. Making matters worse, the Texas Medical Association (TMA) points to a [study](#) that found Texas is the worst state in terms of access to prenatal and maternal health care.

- Dr. Rakhi Dimino, chair of the TMA Committee on Reproductive, Women’s and Perinatal Health, said one of the main reasons for the ranking is “the difficulties

The Legislative Study Group (LSG) is a bipartisan caucus in the Texas House of Representatives that is committed to developing sound public policy that benefits all Texans. Founded in 1993, the LSG has worked through thirteen regular sessions and numerous more special sessions of the Texas Legislature, becoming one of the leading policy shops in the Texas Capitol. Printed in house.



# TEXAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP

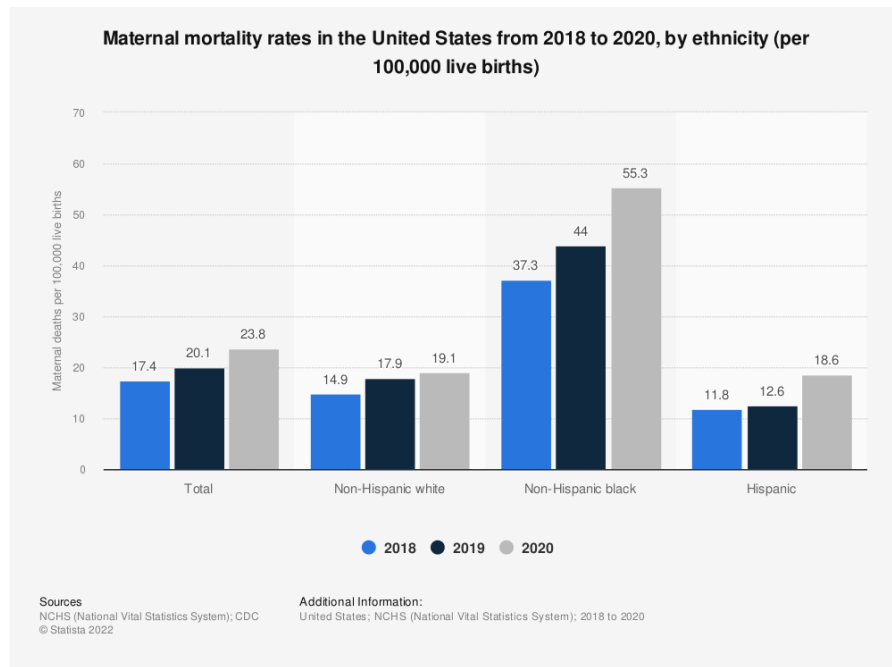
An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

## Members

- Rep. Alma Allen
- Rep. Rafael Anchía
- Rep. Michelle Beckley
- Rep. Diego Bernal
- Rep. Rhetta Bowers
- Rep. John Bucy III
- Rep. Elizabeth Campos
- Rep. Terry Canales
- Rep. Sheryl Cole
- Rep. Nicole Collier
- Rep. Philip Cortez
- Rep. Jasmine Crockett
- Rep. Yvonne Davis
- Rep. Joe Deshotel
- Rep. Alex Dominguez
- Rep. Harold Dutton
- Rep. Art Fierro
- Rep. Erin Gamez
- Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
- Rep. Jessica González
- Rep. Mary González
- Rep. Vikki Goodwin
- Rep. Bobby Guerra
- Rep. Ryan Guillen
- Rep. Ana Hernandez
- Rep. Abel Herrero
- Rep. Gina Hinojosa
- Rep. Donna Howard
- Rep. Celia Israel
- Rep. Ann Johnson
- Rep. Jarvis Johnson
- Rep. Julie Johnson
- Rep. Jolanda Jones
- Rep. Tracy King
- Rep. Oscar Longoria
- Rep. Ray Lopez
- Rep. Armando Martinez
- Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer
- Rep. Terry Meza
- Rep. Ina Minjarez
- Rep. Joseph Moody
- Rep. Christina Morales
- Rep. Eddie Morales
- Rep. Penny Morales Shaw
- Rep. Sergio Muñoz Jr.
- Rep. Victoria Neave
- Rep. Claudia Ordaz Perez
- Rep. Evelina Ortega
- Rep. Mary Ann Perez
- Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos
- Rep. Richard Peña Raymond
- Rep. Ron Reynolds
- Rep. Eddie Rodriguez
- Rep. Ramon Romero
- Rep. Toni Rose
- Rep. Jon Rosenthal
- Rep. Carl Sherman
- Rep. James Talarico
- Rep. Shawn Thierry
- Rep. Senfronia Thompson
- Rep. Chris Turner
- Rep. John Turner
- Rep. Hubert Vo
- Rep. Armando Walle
- Rep. Gene Wu
- Rep. Erin Zwiener
- Sen. Sarah Eckhardt
- Sen. Royce West
- Sen. John Whitmire
- Sen. Judith Zaffirini

women face in getting health care coverage both before and after their hospital stay to give birth.”

- The study concluded that “in addition to having the lowest percentage of women 18 to 44 with health care coverage and the lowest percentage of women with a primary care provider, Texas also has a high teen birth rate (22.4 births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19) and a high infant mortality rate (5.5 per 1,000 live births). Finally, the state has the fifth-highest cesarean - C-section - delivery rate in the country.”
- In 2020, non-Hispanic Black people who give birth had the highest rates of maternal mortality in the United States at [55 deaths per 100,000 live births](#). The total maternal mortality rate in the U.S. increased from 17.4% in 2018 to 23.8% in 2020, an even more alarming increase in the maternal mortality rates by ethnicity.



## The 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature, Action followed by State Leaders’ Inaction

As part of the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act, the federal government eased the application requirements for states that expanded Medicaid for 12 months postpartum. During the 87th regular session, the Texas House passed [HB133 by Representative Toni Rose](#). As passed out of the Texas House, HB133 provided Texans who give birth with Medicaid coverage for 12 months postpartum, as recommended by the [Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee](#), medical experts, and healthcare advocacy organizations. However, the Texas Senate only agreed to have a vote on HB133 with a reduction to six months of postpartum coverage. The Senate-approved version of the bill ultimately did not meet Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requirements and was not approved.

The Legislative Study Group (LSG) is a bipartisan caucus in the Texas House of Representatives that is committed to developing sound public policy that benefits all Texans. Founded in 1993, the LSG has worked through thirteen regular sessions and numerous more special sessions of the Texas Legislature, becoming one of the leading policy shops in the Texas Capitol. Printed in house.



# TEXAS LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP

An Official Caucus of the Texas House of Representatives

## Members

- Rep. Alma Allen
- Rep. Rafael Anchía
- Rep. Michelle Beckley
- Rep. Diego Bernal
- Rep. Rhetta Bowers
- Rep. John Bucy III
- Rep. Elizabeth Campos
- Rep. Terry Canales
- Rep. Sheryl Cole
- Rep. Nicole Collier
- Rep. Philip Cortez
- Rep. Jasmine Crockett
- Rep. Yvonne Davis
- Rep. Joe Deshotel
- Rep. Alex Dominguez
- Rep. Harold Dutton
- Rep. Art Fierro
- Rep. Erin Gamez
- Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
- Rep. Jessica González
- Rep. Mary González
- Rep. Vikki Goodwin
- Rep. Bobby Guerra
- Rep. Ryan Guillen
- Rep. Ana Hernandez
- Rep. Abel Herrero
- Rep. Gina Hinojosa
- Rep. Donna Howard
- Rep. Celia Israel
- Rep. Ann Johnson
- Rep. Jarvis Johnson
- Rep. Julie Johnson
- Rep. Jolanda Jones
- Rep. Tracy King
- Rep. Oscar Longoria
- Rep. Ray Lopez
- Rep. Armando Martinez
- Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer
- Rep. Terry Meza
- Rep. Ina Minjarez
- Rep. Joseph Moody
- Rep. Christina Morales
- Rep. Eddie Morales
- Rep. Penny Morales Shaw
- Rep. Sergio Muñoz Jr.
- Rep. Victoria Neave
- Rep. Claudia Ordaz Perez
- Rep. Evelina Ortega
- Rep. Mary Ann Perez
- Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos
- Rep. Richard Peña Raymond
- Rep. Ron Reynolds
- Rep. Eddie Rodriguez
- Rep. Ramon Romero
- Rep. Toni Rose
- Rep. Jon Rosenthal
- Rep. Carl Sherman
- Rep. James Talarico
- Rep. Shawn Thierry
- Rep. Senfronia Thompson
- Rep. Chris Turner
- Rep. John Turner
- Rep. Hubert Vo
- Rep. Armando Walle
- Rep. Gene Wu
- Rep. Erin Zwiener
- Sen. Sarah Eckhardt
- Sen. Royce West
- Sen. John Whitmire
- Sen. Judith Zaffirini

Fortunately, the Public Health Emergency (PHE) is still in affect and does not allow for the removal of individuals from the Medicaid program. This is providing Texans who give birth the extended coverage they need. However, Texas must act quickly in the event of an end to the PHE. During the next legislative session, the Governor could designate 12 months postpartum care as emergency legislation which would allow the bill to pass quickly. Currently, [there are 26 states](#) that have extended Medicaid coverage to 12 months postpartum, including Republican led states such as [North Carolina](#).

### Abortion Ban Impacts and Delays Lifesaving Treatment

The impact of the SCOTUS vote overturning Roe v. Wade is being felt by people with the capacity for pregnancy, healthcare providers, doctors, and their families here in Texas. Due to the passage of HB1280 during the 87<sup>th</sup> regular session, providing an abortion is now illegal in Texas, with the only exception being to end a pregnancy tMhat would kill or severely injure the pregnant person. This is especially unconscionable in Texas, given the state’s lack of healthcare access and inadequate resources to assist parents with raising a child.

- Texas provides minimal resources to those who are pregnant, their families, and children after they are born, and the impact of such extreme measures comes with extreme consequences. Absent significant additional state resources, Texans will continue to pay a steep price for such callous neglect.
- Texas has an unrealized need for affordable family planning services and our current system is inadequate. [About 2 million Texans](#) need publicly funded family planning, but only 291,000 Texans received these services through state family programs in 2019.
- Texas teenage birth rates far exceed the national average in teenage birth rates and [consistently ranks in the top 10 nationally](#). This can be partially attributed to the optional and sub-par sex education Texas students receive as well as the lack of access to contraceptives for Texas youth.

The negative effects of HB1280 and other restrictive abortion policies is egregious. Every situation that Democrats, abortion advocates and doctors warned Republicans about seems to have manifested itself in our state. ***Personal stories best communicate the cruelty of the Texas abortion ban and the reason a majority of Texans oppose the extremity of this law.***

- [Texas’ abortion laws led to 3-day delay for Houston woman’s pregnancy loss treatment.](#)
- [How Texas’ abortion laws turned a heartbreaking fetal diagnosis into a cross-country journey.](#)
- [Baylor College of Medicine says Texas Abortion law uncertainty is making doctors lost confidence and needs clarity.](#)
- [Texas Medical Association seeks action after hospitals delay care for pregnant patients.](#)

The Legislative Study Group (LSG) is a bipartisan caucus in the Texas House of Representatives that is committed to developing sound public policy that benefits all Texans. Founded in 1993, the LSG has worked through thirteen regular sessions and numerous more special sessions of the Texas Legislature, becoming one of the leading policy shops in the Texas Capitol. Printed in house.