



February 19, 2019

**Written testimony for the House Human Services Committee
in support of committee substitute for HB 25**

Good morning Chairman Frank and committee members. My name is Frank Dominguez, President and CEO of El Paso Health. I am testifying in support of the committee substitute for HB 25. I want to thank Representative Gonzalez for engaging El Paso Health in her efforts to improve medical transportation for women in the Medicaid program.

El Paso Health is the largest health plan providing Medicaid STAR and CHIP managed care services in the El Paso area. I am also the Board Chair for the Texas Association of Community Health Plans, which represents the 11 community health plans that are owned or affiliated with public and non-profit Texas health systems.

At El Paso Health, we design our operations to fit what is best for our Medicaid members. We have implemented a number of creative strategies to help our members, and this focus has led us to be one of the top performers in Texas on a number of key quality metrics.

El Paso Health would be willing to participate in the pilot that Representative Gonzalez laid out in the committee substitute. At El Paso Health, we do everything we can to make sure women schedule their prenatal and postpartum appointments, but know that transportation can be a barrier. Children may need to accompany their moms for it to be logistically possible to make their appointments.

Although HHSC's Medical Transportation Organizations provide transportation services, it is sometimes cumbersome for our members to use and requires at least two days advance notice. That isn't always practical, or even possible when a women needs to see her provider quickly. Women are also not allowed to bring their children.

El Paso Health currently offers what are called "value-added services" for medical transportation for pregnant and postpartum women. Value-added services are provided for free to the state of Texas, and as such, CMS prohibits states from requiring MCOs to provide value-added services, and MCOs can change the value-added services they offer to members from one year to the next. Only a subset of the MCOs even provide transportation value-added services, and they are not coordinated in conjunction with



HHSC's Medical Transportation Program.

The El Paso managed care service area would be a good place to test out a pilot because, although we cover one of the largest and most remote counties in the country, almost all of our membership is in the more urban and suburban areas around El Paso. El Paso Health would be willing to contract with HHSC on a pilot basis to provide these medical transportation services and to help with the transport of dependent children when mothers would otherwise not be able to make their medical appointments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on HB 25.

Frank Dominguez
President and CEO
El Paso Health
fdominguez@elpasohealth.com
915-298-7198 X1085

Kay Ghahremani
President and CEO
Texas Association of Community Health Plans
kay.ghahremani@tachp.org
512/744-3735