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## **Call Now to Expand Health Care for Uninsured Women: SB 747 Women's Health and Family Planning Waiver House Public Health Committee, Tuesday May 17**

On Tuesday, May 17, the House Committee on Public health will hear testimony on SB 747 by Senator John Carona, "Relating to establishing a demonstration project for women's health care services," also known as a Medicaid Women's Health and Family Planning "waiver". This is a rare opportunity to support a program expansion that could provide basic medical check-ups and birth control services to uninsured adult Texas women up to 185% of the poverty line (that's \$2,481 per month pre-tax income for a family of 3 in 2005). **Best of all, this program will actually save Texas money right away.** The federal government will pay 90 cents on every dollar of family planning care, and Texas Medicaid will save a projected \$135 million in 2006 and 2007 because of fewer pregnancies covered by Medicaid.

**PLEASE CALL THE HOUSE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOW AND TELL THEM TO PASS SB 747 FOR A VOTE BY THE FULL HOUSE. TEXAS NEEDS THESE MEDICAID SAVINGS!**

### House Public Health Committee:

Chairman Dianne White Delisi (512) 463-0630  
Vice-Chairman Jodie Laubenberg (512) 463-0186  
Rep. Vicki Truitt (512) 463-  
Rep. Garnet Coleman (512) 463-0524  
Rep. Glenda Dawson (512) 463-0707

Rep. Jim Jackson (512) 463-0468  
Rep. Jim McReynolds (512) 463-0490  
Rep. Jim Solis (512) 463-0606  
Rep. Bill Zedler (512) 463-0374  
Also: Speaker Tom Craddick (512) 463-1000

### Background and Talking Points:

- SB 747's Medicaid Waiver for Women's Health would allow Texas to provide subsidized family planning services to women between the ages of 18 and 64 in families earning up to 185% of the federal poverty level (FPL) by expanding the current eligibility level for these services (185% of the FPL is \$35,798 gross income for a family of four in 2005).
- Currently in Texas, working women must live at or below 23% of the FPL to qualify for Medicaid family planning services. (23% of poverty is an annual income less than \$3,700 for a family of three, or less than \$308 per month). Texas must apply to the federal Medicaid authorities for "waiver" to expand the income eligibility level for family planning.
- The federal/state match rate for family planning is 90/10. In other words, for every dollar Texas spends on these services, the federal government will contribute nine.
- Services covered by a Waiver would include well-woman exams, counseling and education on contraceptive methods, provision of contraception, screenings for diabetes, breast and cervical cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, hypertension, cholesterol and tuberculosis, risk assessment and referral of medical problems to appropriate providers. It is against federal and state law to use Medicaid funds for abortion.

- Every \$1 spent on preventive family planning saves \$3 in maternity and newborn care in Medicaid alone. The LBB projects this waiver will save Texas \$135 million state dollars in 2006 and 2007, and more than \$417 million state dollars over 5 years.
- In 2001, Texas spent \$31.1 million on Medicaid family planning; New York spent nearly twice as much, even though their population is smaller. California spent over \$260 million-- MORE THAN 8 TIMES AS MUCH AS TEXAS -- and their population is not even twice Texas'.
- According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas spent \$1.5 billion on Medicaid births in 2002.
- Without publicly-funded family planning, abortions are estimated to increase by 40%.
- Texas has the highest rate of uninsured women aged 18-64 - 28.3% - in the nation (US average is 17.7%).
- About 40% of ALL Texas women live below 200% of poverty, and 50% of them are uninsured.
- 19 states have Medicaid Waivers that allow them to provide family planning services to many more women, and get the 90% federal match for that care (AL, AZ, AK, CA, DE, FL, IL, MD, MN, MS, MI, NM, NY, OR, RI, SC, VA, WA, WI). A recent study of these waivers found that ALL of them have saved their states and the federal government significant amounts of money.

<b>Official Estimate of Savings from SB 747 Waiver</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Probable Net Positive (Savings) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds</b>
2006	\$44,403,928
2007	\$90,803,274
2008	\$92,490,636
2009	\$94,173,184
2010	\$95,954,705

Source: Legislative Budget Board

For more information about this *Policy Page* contact Anne Dunkelberg at: [dunkelberg@cphp.org](mailto:dunkelberg@cphp.org), or (512) 320-0222 X102.

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