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Shawn Thierry



The Legislature  
State of Texas

June 5, 2017

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
State Capitol  
Room 2S.1  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Governor Abbott,

The 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature regular session has adjourned and you should be commended for your steadfast service to our great State. While the House and the Senate successfully addressed a number of important issues, other critical matters remain unresolved.

Today, Texas experiences the highest incidence of pregnancy-related deaths in the nation. We believe that with clear legislative direction and proper research we can solve this public health crisis. While, SB 1, Article II, Rider 164, broadly directs HHSC to develop strategies to confront the top causes of pregnancy-related deaths in Texas, the rider was not able to make the necessary statutory changes to address the issue more comprehensively.

Considering these facts, we respectfully ask that you add maternal mortality to the call of any special session of the 85th Legislature. Specifically, to allow the Legislature to extend the statutory authority of the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force which will expire on September 1, 2019. Further, additional policy guidance and critical updates are needed in legislation to amend the Task Force's governing statute.

While many challenges face our State, we must to continue to make our families a priority. As women, mothers, and fellow Texans, we stand ready and willing to work in tandem with you and our colleagues in the Texas Legislature to find solutions to this issue. Our hope and purpose is that no woman in Texas who chooses to bear life, will do so in exchange for her own.

Most Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Lois Kolthorst in black ink.

Senator Lois Kolthorst

Handwritten signature of Shawn Thierry in black ink.

State Representative Shawn Thierry

cc: Lt. Governor Dan Patrick  
House Speaker Joe Straus  
Members of the Texas Legislature