

May 8, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott:

As representatives of the hundreds of thousands of frontline health care workers across the continuum of care, we ask you to continue to be aware of our need for ongoing flexibilities as we fight COVID-19 for the people of Texas. Given the ongoing pressure on the health care system, we must stay nimble as we learn how actions to reopen the economy impact the spread of disease in the coming weeks and months. Texas needs the flexibility be able to adapt and quickly change course if the need arises during this unprecedented emergency.

Texas health care providers appreciate the waivers and regulatory flexibilities that the Office of the Governor and state agencies quickly granted to help us respond to the COVID-19 disaster. Unfortunately, many of these waivers are set to expire in May. To ensure that hospitals and other health care facilities have adequate capacity and staffing, we respectfully request an extension of all waivers and regulatory flexibilities set to expire in the coming months through, at the very least, Nov. 1, 2020.

Specifically, we seek the extension of COVID-19-related waivers and flexibilities issued by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Texas Medical Board, the Texas Board of Nursing, the Texas State Board of Pharmacy, the Texas Office of Inspector General, the Texas Department of Insurance and the Texas Attorney General. They have been a critical part of our ability to successfully respond, and we ask that they be continued.

We thank you for your tremendous leadership and ongoing response to COVID-19. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to work with you and your staff on extending these much-needed flexibilities.

Sincerely,

Ted Shaw, Texas Hospital Association
Diana Fite, MD, Texas Medical Association
Cindy Zolnierek, PhD, Texas Nurses Association
Kevin Warren, Texas Health Care Association
Duc "Duke" M. Ho, DDS FAGD, Texas Dental Association
Jose Comacho, Texas Association of Community Health Centers
George Linial, LeadingAge Texas