



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY  
GOVERNOR

March 8, 2012

Mr. Thomas Suehs  
Executive Commissioner  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)  
4900 North Lamar Boulevard, 4th Floor  
Austin, Texas 78751-3247

RE: Women's Health Services

Dear Commissioner Suehs:

It is my understanding that the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has advised your office that it will soon deny the state's request to renew the Women's Health Program (WHP) waiver. The WHP is a cost-effective Texas solution that connects more than 100,000 low-income women to vital health and wellness services each year, and I will not let these services be denied by the Obama administration's politics.

Therefore, in keeping with our discussions over the past few weeks, I am directing you to begin working with legislative leadership to identify state funding so that we can continue to provide these services, in full compliance with Texas law, should the Obama administration make good on its threat to end this health care for Texas women.

It is unfortunate that the Obama Administration is once again violating states' rights under the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, this time by trying to require that Texas use health providers that are not qualified under Texas law. This push by this administration is nothing more than an effort to continue to financially support abortion providers like Planned Parenthood and their affiliates. Texans send a substantial amount of our tax dollars to Washington, D.C., and it is unacceptable that the Obama administration would deny Texas taxpayers the use of those dollars to fund this program simply because of the administration's pro-abortion agenda.

HHSC should prepare to submit a formal request to the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor for transfer authority, pursuant to the 2012-13 General Appropriations Act, H.B. 1, 82nd Legislature, Regular Session, 2011 (Article II, Special Provisions Relating to All Health and Human Services Agencies, Section 10), to transfer funding from HHSC to the Texas

Mr. Thomas Suehs  
March 8, 2012  
Page 2

Department of State Health Services for the purpose of continuing services provided to clients of the WHP consistent with the provider qualifications enacted by the Texas Legislature. This transfer should provide sufficient funding to continue these services from the time the Obama administration terminates the current program and lasting for the remainder of the biennium, or until the courts or Congress overturn the Obama administration's political decision.

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The cancer screenings, preventive health checks and other services provided by the WHP are vital to the well-being of thousands of Texas women. I know you and Attorney General Abbott will continue working diligently to reverse the Obama administration's impending decision to deny Texas' waiver renewal, whether through a negotiated resolution or litigation. While the Obama administration is willing to protect abortion providers and their affiliates over the needs of more than 100,000 Texas women, our actions will ensure that low-income women continue to receive essential preventive health care until this wrong is made right.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RICK PERRY" in a stylized, cursive font.

Rick Perry  
Governor

RP:trp

cc: The Honorable David Dewhurst  
The Honorable Joe Straus  
The Honorable Susan Combs  
The Honorable Greg Abbott