



# Dan Patrick

Lieutenant Governor of Texas  
President of the Senate

## Interim Charges

### Health and Human Services

- **Protecting the Unborn:**
  - **Part I:** Examine and make recommendations on the use of fetal tissue provided for research purposes and how related laws governing abortion procedures are interpreted and enforced.
  - **Part II:** Examine the cause of action known as “wrongful birth.” The study should examine **(1)** its history in Texas, **(2)** its effect on the practice of medicine, and **(3)** its effect on children with disabilities and their families. Examine related measures proposed or passed in other states.
  
- **Protection of Children**
  - **Part I: Reducing Recurrence of Child Abuse and Neglect:** Examine the current process that Child Protective Services uses to track recurrence of child abuse and neglect, and make recommendations to improve data tracking and the use of that data to assist in preventing recurrence. The study should examine the differences in recurrence among families who received services, families who received no services and had their cases closed, and families who had their children removed from the home.
  - **Part II: Addressing High-Acuity Needs of Foster Care Children:** Study the increase in higher acuity children with trauma and mental illness in the state foster care system, and recommend ways to ensure children have timely access to appropriate treatment and placement options.
  - **Part III: Strengthening Adoptions:** Examine the frequency, causes, and effects of disrupted foster care adoptions and make recommendations to improve the long-term success of adoptive placements. Study and make recommendations on ways to ensure a smooth transition for foster care children who are exiting the system.
  
- **Healthy Aging:**
  - **Part I:** Study and make recommendations on innovative methods and best practices to promote healthy aging for the state’s population and reduce chronic medical and behavioral health conditions. Identify opportunities for improved collaboration to promote healthy aging in the health and human services system at the state, regional and local levels.
  - **Part II:** Examine and recommend ways to improve quality and oversight in long-term care settings, including nursing homes and ICF/HCS programs. Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services during the 84th Regular Session

related to the revocation of nursing home licenses for repeated serious violations.

- **Medicaid Reform and State Innovation:** Study the impact of the Section 1115 Texas Healthcare Transformation and Quality Improvement Program Waiver on improving health outcomes, reducing costs, and providing access to health care for the uninsured, and monitor the renewal process of the waiver. Explore other mechanisms and make recommendations to control costs and increase quality and efficiency in the Medicaid program, including the pursuit of a block grant or a Section 1332 Medicaid State Innovation Waiver for the existing Medicaid program.
- **Inpatient Mental Health System Reform:** Study and make recommendations on establishing collaborative partnerships between state-owned mental health hospitals and university health science centers to improve inpatient state mental health services, maximize the state mental health workforce, and reduce healthcare costs.
- **Mental Health Diversion and Forensic Capacity:** Study the impact of recent efforts by the legislature to divert individuals with serious mental illness from criminal justice settings and prevent recidivism. Study and make recommendations to address the state's ongoing need for inpatient forensic capacity, including the impact of expanding community inpatient psychiatric beds.
- **Improving Access to Care through TeleHealth:** Study and make recommendations on the appropriate use, scope and application of tele-monitoring and telemedicine services to improve management and outcomes for adults and children with complex medical needs and for persons confined in correctional facilities. Examine barriers to implementation of these services and any impact on access to health care services in rural areas of the state.
- **Review of Refugee Resettlement Program:** Study the impact to the state of the increasing number of refugees relocating to Texas, including the range of health and human services provided. Examine the authority of the state to reduce its burden under the Refugee Resettlement Program, and any state-funded services.
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation and riders related to health and human services that were considered by the 84th Legislature, Regular Session and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation, including but not limited to:
  - The impact of changes made by the Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services on child safety, workforce retention, prevention, and permanency;
  - Initiatives to reduce Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse, and other cost containment strategies, including examining the processes and procedures used by managed care organizations to address Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse; and

- The consolidation and expansion of women's health programs at the Health and Human Services Commission.

### **Transportation**

- **TxDOT Funding:** Monitor any new and anticipated revenue appropriated to the Texas Department of Transportation and make recommendations that address project prioritization and selection, effectiveness of staffing levels and project delivery methods.
- **Vehicle Inspection System:** Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the state's Vehicle Inspection Program. Make recommendations on how to compress or otherwise reduce the number of required inspections.
- **Regional Mobility Authorities:** Review State Highway Fund grants and loans to Regional Mobility Authorities (RMA) and make recommendations if additional oversight procedures are needed to ensure the RMA's expenditures are a valid and accountable use of State Highway Funds.
- **Panama Canal:** Study the demand placed on the state's ports, roadways and railways resulting from the Panama Canal expansion and make recommendations to ensure transportation infrastructure is adequate to accommodate increases in imports and exports.
- **Driver Responsibility Program:** Evaluate the necessity of the Driver Responsibility Program and make recommendations for alternative methods of achieving the programs objectives.
- **Oversize/Overweight Vehicle Regulations, Penalties and Fines:** Review current state and federal regulations, penalties and fines related to oversize and overweight vehicles and make recommendations to minimize impacts on the state's roadways and bridges.
- **Monitoring Charge:** Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Transportation during the 84th Legislature, Regular Session and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance, and/or complete implementation. Specifically, monitor the following: **1)** Progress of the Texas Department of Transportation's efforts to propose a plan to eliminate toll roads; **2)** Removing eminent domain authority from private toll corporations; **3)** Ending the issuing of any new debt from the Texas Mobility Fund (TMF) and prohibiting future use of the TMF on toll projects; and **4)** The Sunset Advisory Commission's review of the Texas Department of Transportation.