



Physicians Caring for Texans

House Committee on Public Health
Texas Medical Association Testimony by Deborah Fuller, MD, in Support of
House Bill 44 by Rep. Charlie Geren
April 7, 2025

Good morning, Chair Van Deaver and Committee Members.

My name is Dr. Deborah Fuller, and I am testifying on behalf of the Texas Medical Association, with the support of the Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and myself. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 44 by Representative Geren, which will clarify our existing laws in regard to medical emergency care for mothers. I am testifying FOR this bill because I know this bill will help save women's lives.

I am a practicing obstetrician and gynecologist in private practice in Dallas. My undergraduate degree is from SMU. My medical school degree is from The University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. I then completed a four-year residency training program in obstetrics and gynecology at The University of Texas Health Sciences Center in San Antonio.

The Life of the Mother Act will bring much needed clarity to our existing laws to support physicians in providing the best evidence-based care for their patients. This bill presents a thoughtful, necessary step in protecting the health and well-being of women in Texas.

I also believe it will go a long way into making OB-gyns believe they can practice evidence-based medicine in Texas and thus improve our ability to keep and recruit high quality OB-gyns and to train and retain these residents in Texas. Retaining these professionals is essential for the health and safety of women in Texas, especially in rural areas where access to care is already limited.

HB 44 doesn't change the state's stance on elective abortion. It simply clarifies the law and provides additional protections when physicians exercise reasonable medical judgment to protect the life or the health of a pregnant patient. This should help to provide some comfort to physicians who have feared facing legal consequences for doing what their training and conscience demand.

This bill is directed at giving obstetrician-gynecologists and other emergency providers the confidence to do what we are trained to do: save lives, without delay and without fear. And most importantly, it helps ensure that women in Texas can receive timely, medically necessary care in the moments they need it most.

I also strongly support the education component that will help inform all our physicians, hospital systems and legal advisors about these changes, so informed decisions can be made swiftly, prioritizing women's health and safety.

This bill helps promote Texas as a state where both women and health care providers are supported, and where many more medical decisions remain in the hands of those best equipped to make them: patients and their health care professionals. The pathway for better communication of potentially difficult health care decisions will be facilitated by HB 44, thus improving the patient-physician relationship. Having the ability to communicate in a safer, more protected manner is essential in all aspects of life, especially in the patient-physician relationship.

I urge you to pass this bill to support our physicians in caring for the women of Texas.

I am happy to answer any questions.