

**House Committee on Public Health  
House Bill 2581 by Rep. Lacey Hull  
Testimony Submitted on Behalf of the Texas Medical Association  
April 14, 2025**

---

Honorable Chair VanDeaver, Vice Chair Campos, and committee members:

The Texas Medical Association (TMA), representing more than 59,000 physician and medical student members across the state, appreciates the opportunity to submit comments *in support* of House Bill 2581. We support Representative Hull's efforts to increase transparency and accountability in the Thriving Texas Families program.

The Thriving Texas Families program, funded by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), is a statewide support network that provides community outreach, consultation, and care coordination for women with an unexpected pregnancy.<sup>1</sup> Thriving Texas Families contractors, also known as crisis pregnancy centers, offer several services including counseling and mentoring on pregnancy and parenting skills; care coordination for prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal services; and provision of supplies for infant care and pregnancy.<sup>2</sup> According to the Thriving Texas Families Report for Fiscal Year 2024, the program's four contractors and 83 subcontractors provided services to over 150,000 unduplicated clients at 200 physical locations, two virtual clinics, and 12 mobile units.<sup>1</sup> In the 2024-25 biennium, the Thriving Texas Families program received \$140 million in general revenue funding. This session, the Texas House of Representatives approved a plan to move \$70 million of state Medicaid funds to Thriving Texas Families, increasing the program's budget to \$210 million for the next biennium.<sup>3</sup>

There have been several investigations into the lack of transparency and alleged misuse of state funds by Thriving Texas Families centers. In some instances, these centers allegedly sought and received HHSC reimbursement for distributing products they obtained for free through donations, such as diapers.<sup>4</sup> From 2020-21, one San Antonio subcontractor was reported to have used state funds to pay for vacations and a motorcycle, operate a smoke shop, and buy \$25,000 worth of land for hemp production.<sup>5,6</sup> It is crucial to increase the transparency of spending in this program to prevent future misuse of taxpayer dollars and ensure funds are used as intended by the program.

House Bill 1 that was passed last session requires HHSC to submit an annual report on the Thriving Texas Families program. The fiscal year 2024 report does not include a detailed breakdown of services provided. Services are only grouped into six categories:

1. Call center;
2. Classes;
3. Counseling and mentoring;
4. Educational materials;
5. Nonmedical material goods; and
6. Referrals to government assistance and social service programs.

This bill builds on current data reporting by requiring crisis pregnancy centers to report information on client interactions and provide an itemized list of each service, material item, or referral provided to clients, helping ensure state funds are not misused by contractors.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We appreciate this committee's efforts to ensure the appropriate use of taxpayer funds by Thriving Texas Families program contractors. For answers to further questions, please contact Amanda Tollett, TMA director of Public Affairs, [amanda.tollett@texmed.org](mailto:amanda.tollett@texmed.org).

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/hhs0015167\\_thriving\\_texas\\_families\\_rfa\\_final\\_12.19.24.pdf](https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/hhs0015167_thriving_texas_families_rfa_final_12.19.24.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/health/women-children/thriving-texas-families>

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.texastribune.org/2025/04/11/texas-house-budget-approval/?\\_bhlid=dbe93b8050f3de7629f34c92920276b0709840bd](https://www.texastribune.org/2025/04/11/texas-house-budget-approval/?_bhlid=dbe93b8050f3de7629f34c92920276b0709840bd)

<sup>4</sup><https://www.propublica.org/article/texas-funding-anti-abortion-crisis-pregnancy-centers>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/12/21/nonprofit-for-pregnant-women-young-parents-used-funds-on-smoke-shop-and-to-buy-land-for-hemp-production-records-show/>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/12/22/family-trips-limo-rides-motorcycle-paid-for-by-local-nonprofit-created-to-help-pregnant-women-young-parents/>