



**THE SENATE OF TEXAS**  
**TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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**Senator José Menéndez and Representative Jessica González Issue**  
**Statement on the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners**  
**Discriminatory Actions**

**San Antonio, Texas** – This Monday, the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners voted to change its code of conduct, which establishes when a social worker may refuse to serve someone. The newly adopted code would no longer prohibit social workers from turning away clients on the basis of disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. On October 27th, the Texas State Board of Social Workers and the Behavioral Health Executive Council have the opportunity to reconsider the discriminatory change in their code of conduct by reinstating the protections for the LGBTQIA community and individuals with disabilities.

**Senator José Menéndez released the following statement:**

"If the Board and Council fail to restore the original code, we will be filing legislation along side of Representative González that will restore it, and ensure that LGBTQIA and disabled communities in our state are protected. In addition to this, we will be filing legislation regarding our state and local suicide hotlines that will provide protections for our most vulnerable communities, including on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and individuals with disabilities. Medical professionals and their resources – especially mental health services – should not be granted a license to discriminate against a person based on who they are.

We invite all State Senators and State House Members to co-author this legislation with our office and ensure that our most vulnerable Texans have access to the proper and necessary mental health care. When it comes to the health of any Texan, we should be prioritizing their needs, not encouraging discrimination nor intolerance toward any community."

**Representative Jessica González released the following statement:**

"The recent changes approved by the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners and recommended by Governor Abbott are discriminatory against the LGBTQ+ community and disabled persons in Texas. The changes would allow social workers to deny services on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and disability. Mental health is incredibly important, especially during these difficult times, and no one should fear being denied service for being themselves. The Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners and Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council should reverse these changes and promote acceptance. I look forward to passing a comprehensive non-discrimination bill during the 87th legislative session that will protect all Texans from discrimination in public accommodations, employment, and housing. These policy changes show how important it is we update Texas statute to be inclusive of all."