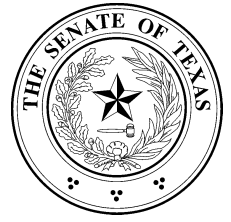




TEXAS STATE LEGISLATURE

RIO GRANDE VALLEY DELEGATION



September 18, 2018

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78741

Dear Governor Abbott,

Thank you for your decisive leadership in responding to one of the largest and worst natural disasters to affect Texas and the country as a whole. The enormity of Hurricane Harvey's destruction in the Gulf Coast is unparalleled. We are grateful that countless lives were saved because of critical support from an extensive regional trauma network in the Greater Houston area; rapid coordination by thousands of first responders; generosity of good Samaritans; and responsiveness of local, state, and federal officials.

The Texas Trauma Network is a crucial component of disaster preparedness and response. Although Texas has made great progress, we need to strengthen our regional trauma capabilities. Injuries and traumas are the leading cause of death for Texans from 1 to 44 years old. In fact, approximately 40 Texans, more than 14,600 annually, die every day because of traumatic injuries, and for every Texan who dies from a traumatic injury, at least six more are seriously injured (and saved). A robust trauma network is especially important in times of disaster, when existing facilities can be forced offline or quickly overwhelmed.

The extent of Hurricane Harvey's devastation highlighted the need to be better prepared. As you continue to help Texas recover, we urge you to support state investments in our trauma network before the next crisis. Strengthening our network by providing funding for critical infrastructure and increased capacity would save many additional lives.

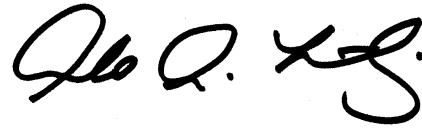
This issue is especially of interest to the Rio Grande Valley delegation given our location along the Gulf Coast. Of the top 9 most populated regions in the state, only the Rio Grande Valley lacks a Level I trauma center. While the Rio Grande Valley was spared the worst of Hurricane Harvey, the next big storm could hit our area. We owe it to our constituents to be ready and make the necessary investments in our trauma system before disaster strikes.

Your leadership is greatly needed to prepare the Texas trauma network to respond adequately when the next catastrophe strikes. We look forward to working with you to ensure all Texans have timely access to the highest level of trauma care in their moment of need.

Sincerely,



Senator Judith Zaffirini
Senate District 21



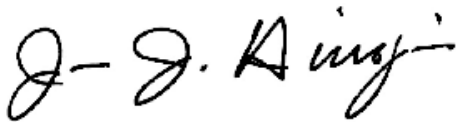
Representative Armando "Mando" Martinez
House District 39



Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senate District 27



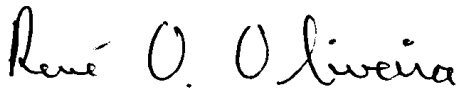
Representative Eddie Lucio III
House District 38



Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
Senate District 20



Representative Bobby Guerra
House District 41



Representative René Oliveira
House District 37



Representative Oscar Longoria
House District 35



Representative Ryan Guillen
House District 31



Representative Terry Canales
House District 40