

THE SENATE OF TEXAS

STATE CAPITOL, 3S.5
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
(512) 463-0127

1210 W. INTERSTATE 2, STE. 10
PHARR, TEXAS 78577
(956) 787-5227



7 NORTH PARK PLAZA
BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS 78521
(956) 548-0227

700 FM 3168
RAYMONDVILLE, TEXAS 78580
(956) 689-1860, EXT. 230

SENATOR
EDDIE LUCIO, JR.

May 19, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor, State of Texas
State Capitol, 2S.1
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott:

Last month, on April 14, I wrote an opinion editorial on how our state has asked much from Texans as it strived to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. Unfortunately, promulgated state public health orders requiring those not engaging in essential services to stay at home took a toll on our families and state economy. Thousands of "non-essential" businesses closed their doors which resulted in massive layoffs -- and as I argued on April 14 -- regrettably displaced workers lost their employer-based health insurance. As any compassionate Christian would agree, the historic layoffs that have left thousands of Texans to fend for themselves to stay healthy and to take care of their families is devastating and unacceptable. That is why, with the utmost respect, I reiterate today the public request I made a month ago and implore you to help displaced workers, who lost their employer-based health insurance, by expanding Medicaid coverage in our state.

Yesterday, during your May 18 press conference, you informed our constituents that "Texans have always faced adversity and Texans have always prevailed." I agree with you that the can-do spirit of Texans is relentless and that it is essential for us to overcome this public health crisis. I trust that you agree that it was inspiring to see so many Texans raise the standard and meet the call of our state to stay at home in order to flatten the COVID-19 curve. Now, as we are seeing historic unemployment and millions of Texans losing their employer-based health insurance, it is our state's turn to rise to the occasion. I hope you agree that our constituents should not be asked to shoulder more of the devastating consequences of having had a closed state. Especially when our state can take immediate action to lessen their pain. That is why, with the utmost respect, I implore you to use your executive power to answer the call of millions of our constituents who are suffering in these most perilous times. As the governor of the great State of Texas, you have the power to be the beacon of hope that our constituents need in these challenging times by providing them the critical help they so desperately need by expanding Medicaid coverage in our state.

As you argued during yesterday's press conference, being a Texan means being a good neighbor to those in need. I agree with you, "we are getting through this, but now, more than ever, we need to work together as one Texas." When one Texan is hurting, all of Texas is hurting. That is why during this state of emergency, I pray and implore you from the bottom of my heart to use your executive power as an act of kindness to the million plus Texans who are expected to lose their employer-based health insurance. I hope you agree that Texans have shouldered more than their fair share and that they should not be asked to bear any more collateral consequences resulting from having had a closed state. An executive order from your administration would be seen by thousands of our constituents who lack health care coverage as act of compassion, and by those who are sick and destitute as an act of salvation.

As our Governor, you have the power and ability to help inspire so many Texans as our economy struggles to rebound. By you expanding Medicaid coverage in our state, millions of Texans will know that our statewide leaders heard their cry and understand how much they have had to shoulder. Please reenergize the can-do spirit of Texans by showing our constituents that they have a governor who, with compassion, will do everything in his power to ensure that their resolve for a better tomorrow will not be broken, that their trust in government will not be weakened, and that their can-do spirit as Texans will not be diminished. Please help reaffirm the faith of our constituents in our state by showing them that they have a governor who has not given up in helping them lift their lives and improve their quality of life in these most trying times. A governor, a leader, a true Texan who will rise above divisive rhetoric, who will extend them a helping hand (like a good neighbor), and who will strengthen the Texas can-do spirit of all Texans by expanding Medicaid coverage in the Lone Star State.

Respectfully,


Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator, District 27

