Dear Commissioner Shuford,

On behalf of more than 30 member organizations of the Texas Public Health Coalition (TPHC), we thank you for leading the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and prioritizing Texas’ critical public health issues. As we champion immunization priorities, we would like to extend an invitation to you, Commissioner Shuford, to join our upcoming coalition meeting to hear your vision and strategic goals for public health over the interim.

We are especially grateful to DSHS’ Immunization Unit for their unwavering dedication to public health via the Adult Safety Net (ASN) Program, which has significantly contributed to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. We recognize the difficult decision to discontinue pneumococcal conjugate (PCV20), pneumococcal polysaccharide (PPSV23), varicella (VAR), and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines in alignment with the program’s funding assessment and vaccine demand.

As a collective force in public health, we understand the need to respond to evolving circumstances and re-evaluate intervention strategies. So that the department is not again put in the position of selecting vaccine access for one priority population over another, going forward, TPHC will support future DSHS legislative appropriation requests and advocate for increased funding from the Texas legislature to expand vaccine access as a critical public health intervention.

We thank the department’s dedication to public health. Commissioner Shuford, we look forward to your attendance at our upcoming TPHC meeting. DSHS’ insight and collaboration has been incredibly valuable as we collectively advocate for the health and safety of all Texans.

Thank you,

Maria Monge, MD
Chair of the Texas Public Health Coalition