



The Senate of Texas

CÉSAR J. BLANCO

TEXAS SENATOR
DISTRICT 29

Press Release

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Senator César J. Blanco Refiles The HEAL Texans Act for the 89th Texas Legislative Session

Austin, Texas - Today, Senator César J. Blanco, along with joint-authors Senate Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee Vice-Chair Charles Perry, Senator Angela Paxton, Senator Mayes Middleton, and Senator Bob Hall, has pre-filed Senate Bill 9-1-1, — the Healthcare Expanded and Accessed Locally for Texans Act (HEAL Texans Act)— for the 89th Texas Legislature.

According to the [Rural Health Information Hub](#), 224 counties across Texas—88% of the state—lack primary care providers. Over [6.1 million Texans](#) live in designated health professional shortage areas.

The HEAL Texans Act will eliminate barriers to care, expand local options across the state, particularly in rural and underserved communities, and most importantly, put patients first. Nurse practitioners would continue practicing the same way they already do, just without the administrative and financial barriers that are hampering their ability to provide care to people where they need it the most. The HEAL Texans Act will give Texans access and options to the quality healthcare they deserve.

In more than half the states in the United States, all branches of the U.S. military, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, APRNs practice without the burdensome delegation agreements required in Texas. Meanwhile, neighboring states like New Mexico and Arizona are actively recruiting Texas-trained APRNs by offering fewer regulatory barriers and lower costs, making it easier for them to serve patients. Under current barriers, Texas is the 7th-worst U.S. state for access to direct patient care with increasing wait times to medical appointments.

The HEAL Texans Act offers a safe and affordable solution to retain Texas-trained APRNs, eliminate unnecessary and costly pay-to-play delegation agreements, and ensure more Texans have access to the care they need. This legislation prioritizes patients, strengthens the healthcare workforce, and moves Texas toward a more accessible and equitable healthcare system.

Senator Blanco (El Paso) issued the following statement:

“Texas needs an all-hands on deck approach to dealing with our current healthcare access and primary care workforce crisis – the HEAL Texas Act is the solution we need.

“But the HEAL Texans Act isn’t just policy; it’s about people’s lives. It’s about the young mother, scared and exhausted, who has to drive hours just to see a prenatal provider. It’s about the child with a high fever whose family waits weeks for an appointment. And it’s about the grandparents forced to leave the community they’ve called home for decades because they can’t find a doctor nearby.

“The urgency of this legislation is reflected in its name. Like dialing 9-1-1 in a crisis, SB 9-1-1 represents an immediate call to action. Texans shouldn’t have to wait, travel, or pay more for the care they need. Healthcare delayed is often healthcare denied, and far too many Texans face that harsh reality. The HEAL Texas Act

prioritizes access and affordability, ensuring families in Texas, no matter where they live, can get affordable, quality healthcare when and where they need it.”

Senator Paxton (McKinney) issued the following statement:

"The HEAL Texans Act is a significant step in increasing access to healthcare in Texas. By removing inefficient restrictions on APRNs while ensuring people are practicing within their training and experience, these healthcare professionals can deliver the timely care that Texans need."

Senator Middleton (Galveston) issued the following statement:

"Texans are experiencing a shortage of healthcare workers. The HEAL Texans Act will empower qualified healthcare professionals, like advanced practice registered nurses, to increase access to medical care and lower medical costs to all Texans, especially in areas already underserved by doctors. I am proud to joint author Senator Blanco’s HEAL Texans Act in order to reduce governmental red tape and help Texans get the care they need."

Senator Hall (Edgewood) issued the following statement:

“The supervision requirement imposed by physicians places an unnecessary burden without improving the quality of care provided by highly trained and qualified Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). This legislation is a critical step toward enhancing access to care and improving health outcomes for Texans by eliminating outdated and unnecessary regulations.”

Dr. David Hackethorn, Internal Medicine Specialist and Texas Silver-Haired Legislature Member issued the following statement:

“There’s no doubt: nurse practitioners are already providing the quality care their community needs. With Texas facing a dire shortage of about 5,000 primary care providers, letting nurse practitioners use their full training and skills is a critical step toward solving Texas' access to healthcare crisis.”

Tom Aldred, Executive Director of Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute (TCCRI) issued the following statement:

"Out of the 254 counties in Texas, 224 are experiencing shortages in primary care professionals, making it difficult for many Texans to access healthcare services. Allowing APRNs to practice to the top of their license is an obvious part of the solution to this problem and could also reduce healthcare costs. Multiple studies have shown APRNs are highly qualified to serve patients in this role, given their extensive education and training. More than half of the country already utilizes full practice for APRNs, and a dozen more give them considerably more authority than Texas does. It is time for Texas to follow suit and better utilize qualified APRNs to improve access to healthcare."

Emily Brizzolara-Dove, Policy Advisor for Texas 2036 issued the following statement:

"APRNs provide safe, cost effective care to Texans in need. The current regulatory structure hampers these providers with an undue administrative and financial burden that does not provide value to patients. The HEAL Texans Act seeks to ease administrative pathways so that additional capacity can be added to the healthcare workforce in areas of Texas that desperately need it."

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