

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce 2009 Position Statement

Healthcare

POSITION

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce believes that affordable access to healthcare is a strong component in recruiting businesses to our area. Healthcare providers and health-related companies are large employers, and their services ensure the community maintains a vital, healthy workforce needed to attract economic development. The Chamber supports legislative efforts to reduce the number of uninsured and underinsured, and it is the position of the Chamber to encourage our legislators to:

- Support expansion of Medicaid eligibility from 6 months to 12 months and protect the current 12-month eligibility of recipients under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Support full funding of caseload projections under both programs to increase healthcare coverage and maximize federal funding.
- Support Medicaid and CHIP program integrity by expanding third-party liability collections, increasing cost avoidance and coordination of benefit activities and reducing provider and recipient fraud and abuse.
- Support a pilot program designed around moving healthcare delivery from a county-based model to a regional, multi-county approach in order to ensure the availability of appropriate funding and infrastructure in key areas including trauma, intensive and specialty care, burn and emergency preparedness.
- Support the availability of an adequate healthcare workforce by restoring state-funded graduate medical education (GME) for medical residents and by providing increased funding to nursing institutions.
- Support access to regional and statewide specialty care by increasing the children's hospital Upper Payment Limit (UPL) appropriation.

Background

The Fort Worth Chamber believes that the enhancement of health services throughout the state by decreasing our uninsured to reimbursing our providers at higher rates will improve the quality of lives and subsequently the quality of the workforce. Looking at healthcare regionally would provide a cost effective measure for metropolitan areas.

Adopted by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee on this the 20th day of November, 2008.

Ben Loughry
Chairman of the Board

William J. Thornton
President & CEO