

Resolution in Support of Trauma Care Funding

The Greater Houston Partnership supports legislation resulting in the appropriation of the full balance of funds accumulated in the Designated Trauma Facility (DTF) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Account, or General Revenue-Dedicated Account No. 5111, and its immediate distribution for purposes of enhancing the State of Texas' trauma network and bringing an infusion of funds to the Level I Trauma Centers at Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center and Ben Taub and the area trauma network.

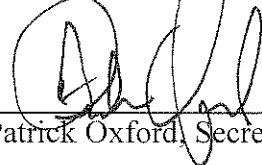
The Greater Houston Partnership acknowledges that:

- The Southeast Texas Coastal Region suffered devastating effects of Hurricane Ike in September 2008, resulting in the diminished capacity of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) and the UTMB Trauma Center, which treated approximately 2,500 trauma patients per year.
- The remaining two Level 1 Trauma Centers in the region – Memorial Herman and Ben Taub – have been overwhelmed by increasing and unsustainable admissions of trauma patients since the closure of the Level 1 Trauma Center at UTMB.

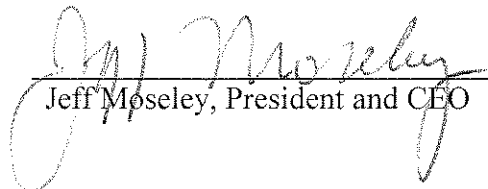
The Greater Houston Partnership urges lawmakers to support the appropriation of these funds to relieve the burden currently being borne by the area Level 1 Trauma Centers and the area trauma network.



Daniel G. Bellow, Chairman



Patrick Oxford, Secretary



Jeff Moseley, President and CEO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 1, 2009

TO: Greater Houston Partnership Executive Committee

FROM: Daniel J. Wolterman, Chairman
Health Care Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Resolution of the Executive Committee In Support of
Trauma Care Funding

RECOMMENDATION

The Greater Houston Partnership supports legislation resulting in the appropriation of the full balance of funds accumulated in the Designated Trauma Facility (DTF) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Account, or General Revenue-Dedicated Account No. 5111, and its immediate distribution for purposes of enhancing the State of Texas' trauma network and bringing an infusion of funds to the Level I Trauma Centers at Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center and Ben Taub and the area trauma network.

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- The remaining two Level 1 Trauma Centers in the region – Memorial Herman and Ben Taub – have been overwhelmed by increasing and unsustainable admissions of trauma patients since the closure of the Level 1 Trauma Center at UTMB.

The Greater Houston Partnership urges lawmakers to support the appropriation of these funds to relieve the burden currently being borne by the area Level 1 Trauma Centers and the area trauma network.

BACKGROUND

According to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), 30 Texans die every day and 10,000 Texans die every year from injuries. Trauma is the leading cause of death in individuals 44 years old and younger. Moreover, for every one fatality, there are six serious injuries.

Trauma centers are financially vulnerable because, in their role of providing critical care services to a community, they treat a disproportionate share of uninsured and underinsured patients.

In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 3588 authorizing reimbursement to designated trauma facilities for a portion of their costs related to providing uncompensated trauma care. Funding is through increased fines on motor vehicle violations and penalizing habitually bad drivers, thus linking a major cause of trauma with the funding of trauma care.

This legislation amends the Texas Health and Safety Code and authorizes DSHS to distribute up to 96% of funds in the DTF/EMS Account (3588 monies/Account 5111). To receive any reimbursement for uncompensated trauma care from these funds, a hospital must be designated as state trauma facility or meet “in active pursuit” requirements. In fiscal year 2008, \$52 million of the available \$220.1 million were disbursed to hospitals and \$168.1 million remains undisbursed. In addition, the Department of State Health Services projects growing ending balances of undisbursed funds in 2009, 2010 and 2100—\$216.7, \$265.9 and \$338.3 million for each year respectively.¹

Additionally, Texas Health and Safety Code authorizes DSHS to use at least 27 percent of funds from the Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Care System Account (911 Monies) and Emergency Medical Services, Trauma Facilities and Trauma Care System Fund (1131 Monies) to fund a portion of uncompensated care provided at hospitals designated as state trauma facilities.

LEGISLATION NEEDED

The Greater Houston Partnership requests legislative initiatives which require appropriation and distribution of all authorized uncompensated trauma and emergency health care funds to designated trauma centers in a timely and appropriate manner.

FISCAL IMPACT

General Revenue-Dedicated Account No. 5111, Trauma Fund and EMS is projected to generate approximately \$125 million per year of the biennium and is projected to have accumulated more than \$350 million by the end of the current state fiscal year. The 2009 Legislature plans to appropriate only \$75 million per year of the biennium for the purpose for which the fund was created in 2003, leaving a significant fund balance, which could

¹ Texas Department of State Health Services/Division of Regulatory Services/July 2008
Account 5111 Trauma Facility and EMS Account Summary.

be immediately distributed to trauma centers throughout the State of Texas most significantly affects the two remaining Level I Trauma centers in Southeast Texas which have borne the burden of significantly increased admissions of trauma patients since the closure of the Level I Trauma Center at UTMB.

KNOWN OPPOSITION:

There is no known opposition to this initiative.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

This recommendation can be implemented with available Greater Houston Partnership staff and within current operating budget resources.