



March 31, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott:

Representing the state's thousands of nurses and hospital workers, we applaud your actions during the COVID-19 emergency and believe you have shown tremendous leadership during this difficult, unprecedented time. We appreciate your quick work to share information, issue orders and keep Texans safe. We also are grateful for your work to prepare the health care infrastructure for widespread illness, and we have ramped up as quickly as possible to handle a potential surge of illness.

The Texas health care community is becoming increasingly concerned as Texas case counts continue to climb and frontline supplies continue to wane. Modeling projections for Texas plus experiences unfolding in New York are dire. While we applaud Texas' work to stand up additional capacity and provide the health care industry with regulatory flexibilities, the chief priority right now is preventing the spread of illness. The most effective way to do that is for people to stay at home.

The time has come for Texas to issue a statewide state-at-home order. We urge you to implement this strict measure to prevent widespread illness in Texas.

The faster and more consistently people stay at home, the safer we all will be and the sooner our economy can rebound from this disaster. With surging counts and projections – and news of community pockets that are not heeding the warning to distance – a statewide stay-at-home policy will send a clear message about the seriousness of the threat. Ultimately, it will save lives.

The undersigned, in addition to the Texas Medical Association, support science-based decision making when addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, including "shelter in place" as a method to control the spread of infectious disease such as COVID-19.

Again, we are extremely grateful for your actions so far to help the Texas health care industry be better positioned to handle COVID-19 illness surges. We all want to protect Texan lives. We look forward to continuing to work with you, and we stand by you as we respond to the health care needs of all Texans in the wake of the COVID-19 emergency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Shaw".

Ted Shaw  
President/CEO  
THA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy D. Zolnierok".

Cindy D. Zolnierok, PhD, RN  
CEO  
TNA