



TEXAS HOUSE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

August 4, 2016

Commissioner John Hellerstedt
Texas Department of State Health Services
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78751-2316

Dear Commissioner Hellerstedt:

We, the undersigned members of the Texas House of Representatives, write to express our full support of the proposed rule change to allow for the humane disposal of aborted babies' remains and strongly urge the Department of State Health Services ("DSHS") to implement modified guidelines.

This proposed change follows thousands of years of societal tradition, along with religious and even universal respect for the human body, thus it is time for us to ensure this type of dignified treatment becomes the standard in Texas immediately.

Through the years, the Texas House has heard testimony from countless women who testified with great pain and sorrow after undergoing the termination of a pregnancy, and our government should not exacerbate their suffering or that of other women by allowing the remains of babies to be disposed of through the current allowable method of "grinding and discharging" to a commercial garbage disposal.

Such abhorrent practices are contrary to fundamental human dignity and how we value human life, regardless of its developmental stage. This has become very evident in such situations as in 2005, when a woman working near an abortion facility in Houston observed tiny baby limbs and other body parts in the parking lot after a sewer break. In 2011, Whole Women's Health, an abortion facility, was cited and subsequently fined for improper disposal of human remains in a landfill. Both of these incidents are unacceptable and the direct result of the flawed rule now in place.

Opponents of the proposed rule change claim it will limit access. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many abortion providers already use medical waste disposal companies and every hospital has a facility for cremating human body parts with whom abortion facilities could enter into affordable agreements.

Finally, almost every state in the nation, including California, requires a more sensitive handling of these human remains. Now is the time that Texas needs to update its standard of practice to rightfully ensure every sacred human life is treated with the utmost care and respect.

As state lawmakers, we feel Texas must provide a respectful practice for what we all recognize to be human remains; and therefore, we today call upon the DSHS to act in support of this basic proposed rule change to the current Texas Administrative Code.

Respectfully,

Charles "Doc" Anderson	Todd Hunter	John Raney
Rodney Anderson	Jason Isaac	Debbie Riddle
Trent Ashby	Kyle Kacal	Matt Rinaldi
Cecil Bell, Jr.	Jim Keffer	Scott Sanford
Greg Bonnen	Mark Keough	Matt Schaefer
Dennis Bonnen	Ken King	Mike Schofield
Cindy Burkett	Phil King	Leighton Schubert
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Dustin Burrows	Stephanie Klick	Kenneth Sheets
Giovanni Capriglione	Linda Koop	Ron Simmons
Angie Chen Button	Matt Krause	David Simpson
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Dan Flynn	Andrew Murr	Paul Workman
James Frank	John Otto	John Wray
John Frullo	Chris Paddie	Bill Zedler
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