



For Immediate Release
February 22, 2011

Contact: Tim Graves, (512) 458-1257, tgraves@txhca.org
Rebecca Reid, (410) 212-3843, rreid@txhca.org

THCA: New UT/Texas Tribune Poll Showing 90% of Texans Oppose Nursing Home Cuts Demonstrates Depth of Opposition to Slashing Medicaid-Funded Care

Austin, TX – The Texas Health Care Association (THCA) today said a new University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll finding 90% of Texans expressing opposition to cutting state-funded nursing home care exemplifies the depth of public opposition to proposed 33% cuts to Medicaid-financed care contained in HB 1 and SB 1. The 90% opposition to nursing home cuts represents the highest level of opposition to all of the funding cut categories tested.

“This is a significant poll because it not only demonstrates the fact Texans overwhelmingly oppose the proposed 33% nursing home cuts, but that our message that care and jobs will be negatively impacted has significant salience across the state with all voter groups,” said THCA President Tim Graves.

“Rest assured these proposed cuts will severely decrease access to long term care services, particularly nursing home services, and as a consequence will increase the utilization of much higher cost acute care services, including hospital admissions and emergency room visits,” said Graves. “There are steep consequences to rate reductions and budget cuts – for patients, for jobs, and indeed our taxpayers.”

Graves noted that with the largest portions of provider costs being caregiver salaries and wages, the cuts proposed in HB 1 and SB 1 will force local facilities to significantly cut staffing levels, cut pay – or worse – go out of business, leaving local seniors and local workers to make do with no care and no jobs.

Concluded Graves: “We want to ensure that the lawmakers who ultimately decide the final details of the state budget know without a doubt that the proposed 33% cuts will displace elderly constituents, cost the jobs of local caregivers, and force the closure of many communities’ most significant local employer. Quality care, good local jobs and adequate Medicaid funding from Austin all go hand in hand.”

#

Founded in 1950, the Texas Health Care Association (THCA) is the largest long term care association in Texas. THCA represents a broad spectrum of long term care providers and professionals offering long term, rehabilitative and specialized health care services. Member facilities, owned by both for-profit and non-profit entities, include nursing facilities, specialized rehabilitation facilities, and assisted living facilities.