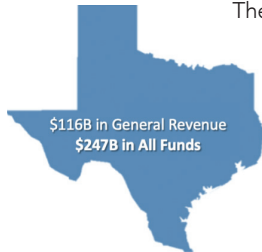


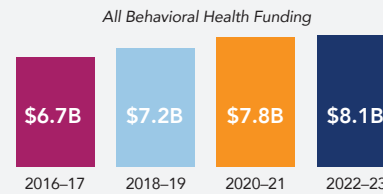
### Secured 2022-2023 Funding For Regional Budget Priorities



The successful passage of **Senate Bill 1:**

- Invests an additional \$661M in Health and Human Services
- Bolsters Texas healthcare workforce by appropriating an additional \$42M for Graduate Medical Education, maintaining \$19M in the loan repayment program to address the nursing shortage, and providing an additional \$48M for rural hospital Medicaid rate increases
- Allocates \$5M for the development of the State Broadband Plan
- Includes an additional \$77M to decrease community waiver waiting lists for individuals with intellectual, developmental, and physical disabilities
- Provides an additional \$30M for new community mental health beds in rural and urban areas
- Maintains level funding of \$10.5M for the Surplus Agricultural Products Grants to provide food banks with more than 10 million pounds a year of healthy fruits and vegetables

### Full Funding Secured For Mental Health Grants Programs



MHM worked to establish and maintain full funding for the state's mental health grant programs, including:

- \$60M – **Mental Health Grant Program Justice-Involved Individuals**
- \$40M – **Community Mental Health Grant Program**
- \$20M – **Texas Veterans + Family Alliance**
- \$25M – **Healthy Community Collaboratives**

The passage of **House Bill 3088** lowers the local funding match to help rural communities increase access to mental health grant programs and resources. To date, MHM has provided 15 key partners with the local matching funds to draw down over \$8.9M in state grant funding.

### Secured Final Funding Of \$154.2M To Complete The Construction Of A New San Antonio State Hospital



**House Bill 2** funds the completion of several state hospital construction projects, including a new 300-bed facility in San Antonio. Since 2017, MHM has led efforts to secure the \$344.5M needed to rebuild SASH. Anticipated completion date is January 2024. Work continues to develop a master plan for the SASH campus that will allow for specialty step-down community housing and services.

### Simplified SNAP Certification For Seniors And Individuals With Disabilities



In collaboration with the Texas Food Policy Roundtable, MHM secured the passage of **Senate Bill 224**, which removes major eligibility barriers for seniors and individuals with disabilities applying for SNAP benefits. This new law simplifies the SNAP form, waives interview requirements, and utilizes data

matching to identify unenrolled seniors who qualify for assistance. Texas currently ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the highest number of elderly residents who are food insecure.

### Extended Medicaid Postpartum Coverage For New Moms From 2 To 6 Months



**House Bill 133** improves continuity of care for postpartum women by increasing Medicaid coverage from two to six months, including much needed mental health care services. With one third of preventable maternal deaths occurring between 43 days and one year after giving birth,

comprehensive healthcare coverage for low income women is critical to improving health outcomes of both mothers and babies.

### Increased Children's Medicaid And CHIP Continuous Eligibility



**House Bill 2658** improves Medicaid program services, including making it easier for Medicaid and CHIP children to keep their health care coverage by reducing eligibility checks in a one year period, from four mid-year reviews to one. These computerized income checks are often inaccurate, flagging children

who are in fact eligible for services. The passage of HB 2658 prevents thousands of kids from inadvertently losing access to their pediatricians and medications.

## Expanded Guardians Eligible to Receive Supplemental Financial Assistance



**Senate Bill 263** expands the pool of relative caregivers eligible to receive supplemental financial benefits. This law lowers the age of eligibility to 25 years of age and in addition to parents, includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings as eligible guardians.

With over 250,000 children living in informal kinship care situations, expanding eligibility ensures children remain in the care of family members instead of state conservatorship.

## Strengthened the State's Behavioral Health Technology Services



**Senate Bill 640** requires the state to assess the technology readiness and interoperability needs of behavioral health service providers. While most mental health providers have electronic health records, they currently are not fully sharing electronic data with primary care providers, making it difficult to

promote the integration of behavioral health services in the delivery of care.

## Created a Parity Compliance Tracking System for Mental Health Conditions



**House Bill 2595** requires the Texas Department of Insurance to maintain a mental health parity complaint portal that allows the submission of suspected violations to identify and resolve behavioral health care access issues. The new law requires the development of educational materials aimed at

increasing compliance with mental health and substance use treatment parity law.

## Promoted The Expansion of the State's Broadband Infrastructure



**House Bill 5** creates a State Broadband Development Office to research the expansion, adoption, and affordability of deploying broadband services and programs to rural and underserved areas of the state. With nearly one million Texans living without access to broadband at home, the State

Broadband Development Office will work to release new broadband maps and develop the first State Broadband Plan, ensuring all Texans have the ability to visit a doctor remotely, attend school virtually or work from home.

## Secured Medicaid Reimbursement for Telehealth Services



**House Bill 4** promotes telehealth to improve access to care in rural and underserved areas by allowing telemedicine to be a reimbursable service for Medicaid patients. With recent growth in telehealth demands, this law removes barriers to health care and

addresses provider shortages by securing access to virtual services beyond the public health emergency declaration period. Creating flexibility for providers and patients will reduce gaps in care, improve appointment rates, promote referrals to specialty providers, reduce the stigma for patients seeking mental health services, and decrease emergency room visits.

## Expanded Services in Colonia Self-Help Centers



**House Bill 1301** aims at improving the living conditions of residents living in unincorporated low-income areas known as colonias. The bill expands the scope of services delivered by colonia self-help centers to assist families in securing employment, establish a small business, receive professional skills training and

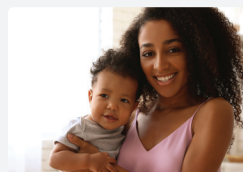
receive financial literacy education. A final report to the Texas Legislature will include an evaluation of current colonia initiatives and address the lack of services and infrastructure.

## Enhanced the Reporting of Immunization Inequity



**Senate Bill 1353** improves the equitable distribution of vaccines by requiring the state to capture and report data on immunization administration by race and geography. This requirement will help the state address inequities by identifying barriers to vaccine access in rural and minority communities.

## Improved Access to Quality Child Care for Families



**House Bill 619** ensures parents can access affordable, high-quality childcare by directing the state to develop a strategic plan that strengthens the childcare workforce. Childcare workers play a critical role in caring for and educating children. With 25 percent of childcare facilities closing their doors

since the beginning of the pandemic, childcare deserts have emerged, exaggerating existing health inequities, and limiting parents' abilities to return to work.

To receive additional information about MHM's policy & advocacy efforts sign up for our Legislative Update newsletter at [MHM.ORG](http://MHM.ORG) or email [POLICY@MHM.ORG](mailto:POLICY@MHM.ORG)