



## **Executive Leadership Team**

### **President**

George T. Roberts, Jr, FACHE  
Northeast Texas Public Health District

### **Vice-President**

Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH  
Harris County Public Health &  
Environmental Services

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Bonnie Scurzi, RN, BSN, WHNP-BC  
Bell County Public Health District

### **Members at Large (2016)**

#### **Small LHD**

Deb McCullough, DNP, FNP, RN  
Andrews County Health Department

#### **Medium LHD**

Sherry Williams, RNC, WHNP  
Waco-McLennan Public Health District

#### **Large LHD – Category 1**

Cathy Sbrusch, RN, BSN, CIC  
Brazoria County Health Department

#### **Large LHD – Category 2**

Shannon Jones  
Austin-Travis County Health & Human  
Services Department

### **Members at Large (2017)**

#### **Small LHD**

Vacant

#### **Medium LHD**

Zach Holbrooks, MA, RS, DR  
South Plains Public Health District

#### **Large LHD – Category 1**

Candy Blair, RN, CCM  
Collin County Health Care Services

#### **Large LHD**

Veerinder (Vinny) Taneja, MBBS,  
MPH  
Tarrant County Public Health

### **Immediate Past President**

Lou Kreidler  
Wichita Falls-Wichita County Public  
Health District

### **Executive Director**

Jennifer Smith, MSHP

January 21, 2016

Bennett Sandlin  
Executive Director  
Texas Municipal League  
1821 Rutherford Ln # 400  
Austin, TX 78754

Dear Mr. Sandlin:

On behalf of the Texas Association of City & County Health Officials (TACCHO) and the local health departments that TACCHO represents, we are writing to express our support for Medicaid expansion in Texas.

We believe it is in every community's best interest that our residents have access to affordable and quality health care, and that resources committed at any community level can be maximized to take advantage of state and federal health care dollars available for public health efforts. The federal funding available through a Medicaid Expansion (or private market-based solution to coverage expansion) presents an important opportunity to enhance public health structures and increase preventive health services that will reduce the burden of uncompensated care posed by high numbers of uninsured. Thus, the gap(s) in services and uncompensated care coverage would benefit greatly from Medicaid expansion.

If Texas were to accept a deal to expand Medicaid, health departments, especially in areas of severe disparities, would see a number of benefits to programs currently administered by communities. Funding from the 9:1 matching rate could be directed toward vaccination campaigns, outreach efforts, communicable disease control, hospitalization prevention services and crisis management resource development. In areas such as public safety and emergency transport, EMS services would be less exposed to the risk of uncompensated care. Lastly, the additional funding streams would allow current local budgets to invest in broader public health programs and physical infrastructure.

We strongly urge the Texas Legislature to negotiate with the Federal government to close the Coverage Gap, and focus on building a stronger public health infrastructure in Texas.

Respectfully,

George T. Roberts, Jr.

President

Mailing Address: TACCHO, P.O. Box 142343, Austin, Texas 78714  
512-809-7201