

---

# Genetic Counselor Licensure in Texas

Carla McGruder, MS, LCGC (Color Genomics)

Sayoni Lahiri, MS, CGC (UT Southwestern)

Jonathan Connors, BS (Delisi Communications)

# TSGC Licensure Committee Structure

---

## Legislative Affairs

### TSGC Licensure Committee

- Co-Chairs
- Committee Members
  - Membership Liaison
  - Physician Liaison
  - Institution Liaison
  - Event Coordinator
  - Materials and Resources Coordinator
  - Regional Representatives
  - Non- Texas State Liasion

# Previous Efforts

- **Historical Challenges to Licensure:**

- TMA & Scope of practice
- Right-to-life groups
- Anti-regulation sentiment

- **Timeline**

2017

2018

2019

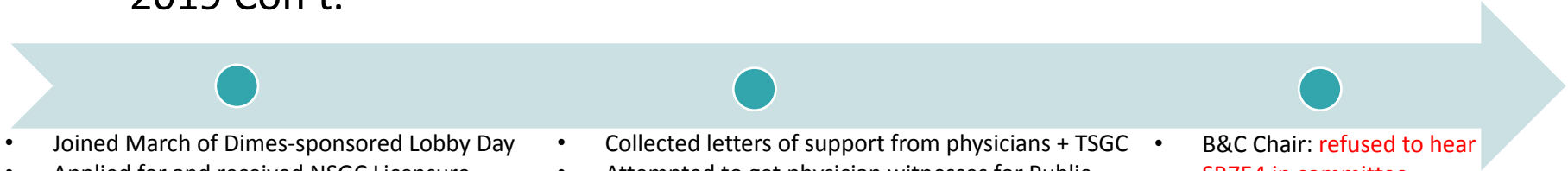
- Sen. Carlos Uresti, D sent bill to legislative council to be drafted (#85R- 4548)
- Changed advisory board to Texas Department of Licenses and Regulations (TDLR)
- Sen. Jane Nelson supported bill, but no bill sponsor was secured

- Committee members met with representatives to discuss licensure
- Reached out to John Richardson of NSGC to discuss strategies for upcoming session
- Had discussions with TMA: TMA would remain neutral
- Reached out to TX Right to Life: no response
- Met with other allied health professionals at TSAHP
- Discussed efforts with other states with concurrent licensure efforts

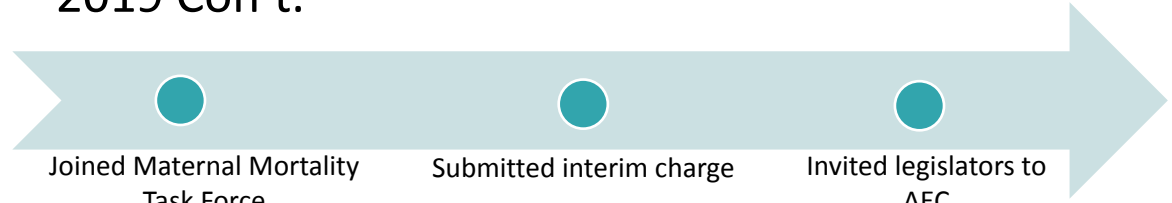
- Sen. Joan Huffman filed bill (Senate sponsor): SB754
  - Referred to Senate Business & Commerce Committee
- Co-authored by Rep. Stephanie Klick and Rep. Senfronia Thompson: HB2815
  - Referred to House Public Health Committee

# Previous Efforts

## 2019 Con't.

- 
- Joined March of Dimes-sponsored Lobby Day
  - Applied for and received NSGC Licensure Grant: \$23,000
  - Interviewed lobbyist firms; Collaborated with Delisi Communications (Lead: Jonathan Connors)
  - Collected letters of support from physicians + TSGC
  - Attempted to get physician witnesses for Public Health Committee hearing testimony
  - Phone campaign: membership called reps on Public Health Committee
  - Jonathan provided educational materials and GC literature to representatives' offices/ answered all questions
  - Public Health Committee Hearing:
    - Testimony provided by Carla McGruder
    - Bill passed unanimously; moved to Calendars Committee
  - Phone campaign: membership called reps on Calendars Committee; **not heard due to time and high volume of bills**
  - B&C Chair: **refused to hear SB754 in committee**
  - HB2815 language added as amendment to HB2667 (relating to licensing of certain occupations and activities) sponsored by Rep. Ryan Guillen
    - Passed full House vote
    - Referred to Senate B&C
    - Phone campaign: membership called senators on B&C
    - B&C Chair refused to hear bill in committee

## 2019 Con't.



Joined Maternal Mortality Task Force

Submitted interim charge

Invited legislators to AEC

# Navigating the Landscape of the Capitol

---

- ❑ The Big Picture
  - Timeline: 140 days every other year
  - Total bills filed: 7324
  - Total bills passed: 1429
  - Legislative Priorities: Budget, Property Taxes, Education, COVID, Energy
- ❑ The Issue: How Licensure is Viewed
  - Regulation – “No New Licensure”
  - Increased State Spending
- ❑ The Solution: Why is Licensure Necessary?
  - Patient Safety – Tie it to the Official’s District
  - Increased Healthcare Costs
  - Proper Reimbursement
  - COVID/ telehealth
  - Fraud

# Current Efforts– 87th Legislature Regular Session (HB 2053/ SB 557)



- Currently awaiting to be prioritized for Senate hearing and vote
  - Hoping for Committee hearing next Tuesday, May 18th
  - Committee would vote same week
- “Intent Calendar”, to be heard on Senate floor for vote
  - Sent to Governor
  - If signed or no action, BECOMES LAW (June 2021)
- Regular Session ends May 31st
  - Last day of Senate voting is May 25th

# How to help in the 2021 Session

---

Check TSGC Email Blast and Social Media

## ✓ Contacting Representatives on Spreadsheet

- Speaking with an staffer
- We have a script for you!
- Provide your info
- May ask questions (generally 1-2 mins)

- Collecting patient stories
- Physicians at your institution
- Institutional Support

# Resources on Website

---

- Templated letters of support
  - Physician
  - Patient
  - Institution
  - Patients (harmed)
- 1 Pager (with references)
- Talking points pocket guide
- House of Representatives:
  - <https://house.texas.gov/>
  - <https://house.texas.gov/members/find-your-representative/>
- Senate:
  - <https://www.senate.texas.gov/members.php>
  - <https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>



---

# Jonathan Connors, BS

Delisi Communications, TSGC Lobbyist

# Special Thanks

---

**Membership Liaison** Rebecca Littlejohn

**Institutional Liaison** Daniel Riconda

**Physician Liaison** Jamie Fong

**Physician Liaison** Anusha Vaidyanathan

**Non-Texas State Liaison** Callie Diamonstein

**Events Coordinator** Roa Sadat

**Events Coordinator** Maggie Clifford

**Materials & Resources Coordinator** Lauren Mills

**Austin Regional Representative** Camille Fisher

**Houston Regional Representative** Megan Hoenig

**Rural Regional Representative** Tripti Paudyal

**San Antonio Regional Representative** Rachel Wyatt

---

# Questions