



For Immediate Release

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## **Rep. Donna Howard Named TNP Nurse Practitioner Advocate of the Year**

**(Austin, Texas – September 24, 2020)** – Texas State Rep. Donna Howard of Austin was named the 2020 Texas Nurse Practitioners’ *Advocate of the Year*, an award given annually to an individual who has gone above and beyond in advocating for the profession and access to healthcare for Texans. Howard will receive the award on Friday, September 25, during TNP’s 32nd Annual Fall Conference.

“Rep. Howard personifies the informed, bold leadership Texas needs to ensure everyone in our state has access to quality healthcare,” said TNP President Christy Blanco. “Rep. Howard understands the importance of cutting red tape and freeing NPs to utilize their extensive training and experience to the best of their ability, caring for Texans in big cities and small counties alike.”

“It is my distinct honor to receive this award from TNP,” said Rep. Howard. “Nurse practitioners have long been key healthcare providers, here in Texas and throughout our country. NPs go above and beyond to serve all Texas communities, including historically underserved communities. I have no doubt that NPs will continue to improve Texans’ ability to access care, as well as the quality of that care. I look forward to supporting TNP next legislative session and advancing legislation that helps NPs and the Texans whom they serve.”

During the 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, Rep. Howard was author of HB 912, which would have streamlined and fast-tracked licensing for out-of-state, active NPs seeking to hold a license in Texas. She was also co-author of HB 2980, which would have dedicated a funding stream for Graduate Nursing Education. Both bills passed out of committee but did not advance beyond that. She also was a sponsor of HB 1792, which would allow NPs to practice without costly and



burdensome regulatory requirements. For the first time, this issue received committee hearings in both chambers of the legislature.

Representing House District 48, Rep. Howard was first elected to the Texas House in 2006. A trained nurse who worked as a critical care nurse at Brackenridge and Seton hospitals, she also served as Austin's first hospital-based Patient Education Coordinator. During the most recent session, she was a member of the House Appropriations Committee, which oversees the state budget. She also was Vice Chair of the House Administration Committee and has been a longtime member of the Higher Education Committee.

She has served on the boards of Austin Area Interreligious Ministries, Common Cause Texas, Texas Freedom Network, and the Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. She currently serves as a board member of the Expanding Horizons Foundation, supporting low-income housing and education.

“On behalf of TNP, we would like to congratulate Rep. Howard on this award and thank her for her innumerable contributions to NPs and their patients,” said Blanco.

Every year, TNP's Fall Conference brings together hundreds of nurse practitioners, students, and stakeholders to discuss trends in healthcare, the state of the industry, and both proposed and recent changes to Texas laws and regulations. This year's event, held virtually, runs September 25-27.

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*Texas Nurse Practitioners is the largest state association of nurse practitioners in the country. TNP advances and supports the role of NPs who provide accessible, quality health care across Texas each and every day. In hospitals and family clinics, and across a broad spectrum of specialties ranging from women's health to pediatrics and from mental health to family practice, Texas nurse practitioners provide the care Texans depend on. To learn more visit [www.texasnp.org](http://www.texasnp.org).*