



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Re: The East Parker County Chamber Launches Association Health Plan with North Texas Chambers Made Possible by New Regulations**

The East Parker County Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce new affordable health and wellness plan options for its small business members. This was made possible by Association Health Plan rules issued by the U.S. Department of Labor in July 2018. The Chamber, along with our Affiliated partners, have accomplished this in time for the effective coverage date for the new North Texas Employer Health Plan Cooperative as open enrollment for groups begins November 1, 2018.

An Executive Order issued last fall by the White House allows for the creation of Association Health Plans for small employers with 50 or fewer employees. Under this new rule, small businesses can enjoy the buying power and flexibility that large businesses have under the Affordable Care Act by pooling together through a geographical region, which consists of 22 North Texas counties. Until now, small businesses have been under more stringent Affordable Care Act regulations than large businesses.

The new North Texas Employer Health Plan Cooperative has worked closely with an insurance carrier partner, who has recently shared the news with their agents. Several Chambers have partnered together to create this cooperative that will benefit small businesses, which makes up 80% of our state and region's economy.

"I have been looking forward to a program like this since 2008," states Lisa Flowers, President and CEO of the East Parker County Chamber of Commerce. "The Chamber has carefully evaluated this option and I am excited to see that the right program is finally here. We are thrilled to provide this benefit to our small business members."

For a business to have an opportunity to buy one of the plans being offered through the Cooperative, they must be a member of an affiliated Chamber and be located in one of the designated 22 North Texas counties. The plans being offered are to be tailored specifically for small businesses with 2 – 50 employees and are among the most popular plans that are offered today to large employers nationwide. Small businesses interested in purchasing a plan can contact any of the Chamber's health insurance providers.

The East Parker County Chamber of Commerce represent over 500 businesses and over 1200 employees. We are a vibrant, forward-thinking organization and are committed to building a diverse and prosperous community while preserving heritage and culture in our area. Our mission is to enrich, promote and advocate for business growth that enhances our members and community.

For more information, please contact the East Parker County Chamber at 817-441-7844 or go to the website [www.NTEHP.ORG](http://www.NTEHP.ORG).