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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

February 20, 2020

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## **Rep. Howard Statement on Senate Race** *Decision on special election candidacy announced.*

**Austin, TX** - Today, Representative Donna Howard (D-Austin) told the media and public her conclusion as to whether or not to run for State Senator.

“I’ve been honored at the outpouring of support and encouragement I’ve received since Sen. Watson announced his retirement. The option of running for a seat in the Texas Senate is a once-in-a-decade opportunity and one that must be taken seriously. Serving in the Texas Senate means working on behalf of a much larger constituency, with the potential to have a much larger impact in my district and the state I love. That is very appealing.

“After spending the past few days talking with my family and valued members of our community, I’ve weighed possibilities and envisioned how I can best serve my district, hometown, and community. Ultimately, I am re-energized with an even greater commitment to building on the progress we’ve been able to make in the House of Representatives. I will not be running for a Senate seat at this time.

“I certainly recognize the important role of Senator. However, during my tenure in the House, and with the support of constituents, we’ve accomplished great things. We’ve finally seen the state begin to increase its share of public education, we’ve created a robust Sexual Assault Survivors’ Task Force, defended the Hill Country environment, brought scrutiny and sense to the state budget, and been on the forefront of defending women’s reproductive rights. Now, we have the opportunity to augment our efforts.

“I am excited to lead the Texas Women's Health Caucus as we expand our scope and redouble efforts for health equity. I am looking forward to more Democrats joining responsible Republicans to craft a state budget that works for all Texans. I’m optimistic that Democrats have a real chance to even the political numbers, and the potential for new leadership. Frankly, I enjoy the spirited exchange of ideas and the camaraderie of the Texas House, with so many different parts of our state represented and the ability for those differences to guide solutions together.

“I am grateful to all who sent messages of support and encouragement to run for the Texas Senate. The opportunity to serve as a Texas legislator is one I do not take for granted, and I am even more committed to working for you as State Representative.”

*Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin) has represented House District 48 since 2006 and is a member of the House Appropriations Committee, House Higher Education Committee, Vice-Chair of the House Administration and Chair of the Texas Women’s Health Caucus.*