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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **State Campaign Focuses on Protection Against Zika**

**Kerrville, Texas (May 27, 2016)** – A new campaign from the Texas Department of State Health Services reinforces what people can do to “not give Zika a biting chance” this summer.

The campaign launches Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup> and features public service announcements on radio and television along with online and outdoor ads reminding people they should prevent Zika by removing standing water, keeping mosquitoes out of their homes and preventing mosquito bites.

Sample ads and other materials are available at [www.texaszika.org/materials.htm](http://www.texaszika.org/materials.htm).

Everyone will benefit from following the advice because the same precautions help prevent other illnesses transmitted by mosquitoes, such as West Nile virus and chikungunya. The campaign also aims to reach groups for whom the precautions are particularly important.

Travelers to and from Latin America, the Caribbean and other areas with ongoing Zika transmission play a major role in helping stop the spread of the virus. There have been no documented cases transmitted by mosquitoes in Texas and no evidence that Texas

mosquitoes are infected. If travelers protect themselves while abroad, and for 21 days after returning to Texas, they can delay or prevent Zika from being introduced into the state.

The campaign also seeks to reach pregnant women because while Zika virus disease, itself, is usually mild, Zika can cause serious birth defects if a woman is infected during pregnancy. Pregnant women should delay travel to Zika hot spots and should avoid acquiring the virus from sexual partners who have traveled abroad.

The total value of the campaign is \$2 million and is funded by federal public health emergency preparedness funds.

Zika virus is transmitted to people primarily through the bite of an infected mosquito, though sexual transmission from an infected person is possible. Texas has had 36 travel related cases in the last several months.

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