



2017 Legislative Priorities

At the Center for Public Policy Priorities, we believe in a Texas that offers everyone the chance to compete and succeed in life. Legislative advocacy is one important way we use data and analysis to enable Texans of all backgrounds to reach their full potential.

Our bold, research-driven 2017 legislative priorities dare Texas leaders to make Texas the best state for hard-working people and their families.

Ensure Health and Wellness

OUR VISION

All Texans have meaningful access to affordable health care.



OUR WORK

- Protect Medicaid and CHIP from further damaging cuts.
- Defeat bills that would reduce immigrant access to health care.
- Increase funding and provider capacity for state family planning programs.
- Support expanded scope of practice and access to non-physician medical and mental health professionals to make health care more affordable for Texans.

All Texans are insured and remain insured.



- Improve enrollment and renewal of Medicaid and CHIP for children and pregnant women.
- Prevent loss of Medicaid 1115 waiver funding.
- Pass a Texas solution to the Coverage Gap for working poor Texans.

Health coverage ensures access to quality care and financial protection.



- Increase protections against surprise medical bills.

All Texans with mental illness or substance use disorders are able to access services and do so in the least restrictive setting for their needs.



- Endorse expanded peer support services in correctional facilities and on re-entry to the community.
- Ensure clear standards and enforcement of federal and state laws requiring “parity” between mental health and substance use benefits and coverage for other medical services.

All Texans have year-round access to healthy food, and no Texan goes hungry.



- Amend the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) work requirement policies to improve the program’s ability to serve vulnerable populations and protect families from loss of benefits.
- Defeat efforts to restrict SNAP purchases.

Texans are able to access existing safety net programs when needed, and benefits are extended to Texans raising children of other family members.



- Improve benefit program access and administration.
- Amend Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to provide meaningful cash assistance to kinship families.



Expand Economic Opportunity

OUR VISION

Texas funds its public schools at a level adequate to meet the needs of all students.



OUR WORK

- Advance changes to the school finance system to improve equity in funding for all students.
- Defeat efforts to divert limited public funding to voucher programs.
- Support a statewide study of the cost of providing a quality education.

Academic achievement gaps between socio-economic and racial/ethnic groups are closed.



- Increase funding for the High-quality Prekindergarten Grants Program.
- Advance policy solutions to address academic challenges faced by middle school students.

Texas colleges become more affordable, and fewer students are dependent on loans.



- Increase the amount of state funds community colleges can earn for improved student outcomes.
- Defeat efforts to reduce financial aid funding or remove tuition-funded financial aid programs.
- Adopt a funding policy that incentivizes closing academic achievement gaps between socio-economic and racial/ethnic groups.
- Defeat efforts to repeal the Texas Dream Act.

Texans have access to workforce training and educational career pathways that provide access to middle-class jobs.



- Increase and improve the integration of higher education and workforce data.
- Increase support for the Accelerate Texas program, which integrates basic reading, math, and writing skills with workforce training.

All Texas workers have access to quality jobs.



- Expand access to retirement savings in the workplace.

OUR VISION

State and local revenue systems are capable of fully funding necessary public services.



OUR WORK

- Prevent harmful tax cuts or revenue diversions.
- Reject a tighter state spending cap.
- Use the Rainy Day Fund, if needed, to prevent major cuts to education and health care.
- Block efforts to further restrict local governments' ability to raise the revenue needed for public services.
- Improve the appraisal process to ensure assessment of all property at full market value.

We believe in a Texas

that offers everyone the chance to compete and succeed in life.

We envision a Texas where everyone is healthy, well-educated, and financially secure.

We want the best Texas – a proud state that sets the bar nationally by expanding opportunity for all.

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is an independent public policy organization that uses data and analysis to advocate for solutions that enable Texans of all backgrounds to reach their full potential.

We dare Texas to be the best state for hard-working people and their families.

