



**MAYORS FOR A
GUARANTEED
INCOME**



**COUNTIES FOR A
GUARANTEED
INCOME**

April 22, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

As founder of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income - an organization representing over 190 current and former local elected officials from across the United States - I'm writing to express concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions for us to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - I've seen its effects firsthand.

Guaranteed income is not a "socialist experiment," as you call it in your petition. In fact, it's been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. Nor is the idea new or radical. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

You argue that "Harris County has neither received nor will receive any return benefit" from the Harris County guaranteed income program. Did you not see the results from the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021, which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families across the country with no strings attached - also known as a guaranteed income? The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

As opposed to the unsubstantiated talking points you use throughout your petition, we have more facts to back up our case that guaranteed income works. Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income has supported over 60 guaranteed income pilots across the country. In total, these pilots will deliver at least \$250 million in direct, unconditional relief to everyday Americans.

Research on guaranteed income pilots shows that when given unrestricted payments, recipients are able to rise above the barriers of poverty and create economic stability for themselves, their families, and their communities. When I was Mayor of Stockton, I implemented the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income program, the Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED). A study conducted by independent researchers determined that full-time employment rose, from [28% to 40%](#), among residents who received the guaranteed income, and their financial, physical and emotional health all improved.

Tomas Vargas, Jr., one of the recipients of SEED's \$500 per month guaranteed income, is an exemplar of the impact of this type of program. Before SEED, he was juggling multiple jobs: working part-time at UPS, repairing cars, mowing lawns, delivering groceries and picking up any other work he could find. He almost never saw his children. His family briefly received food stamp assistance, but when he managed to pick up extra hours at work, they lost that line of support. The guaranteed income payments helped Tomas apply for one full-time job, something he had never been able to do because he couldn't afford to take a day off work to interview. The extra financial security allowed him to spend more time with his children, and ultimately break the cycle of poverty he had seen in his community his whole life.

Independent research studies on pilots in [Cambridge, MA](#) and [Saint Paul, MN](#) have also found an increase in employment rates. Recipients in Saint Paul reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Studies of Cambridge's program also found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. [Paterson, NJ](#)'s pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

Americans are struggling, and many families are only partially covered by, or completely left out of, existing social safety net programs. Harris County residents experience higher rates of poverty than other large counties, not only in Texas but across the nation, with [1 in 6 people](#) living in poverty. A guaranteed income allows families to use the monthly checks for their pressing needs, rather than the government deciding what people need. With poverty rates skyrocketing while the cost of living continues to increase, guaranteed income programs serve as vital lifelines for millions of American families.

I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Tubbs,
Former Mayor of Stockton, CA
Founder of MGI and CGI and MGI Co-Chair



April 23, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

As Co-Chair of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income—an organization representing over 190 current and former local elected officials from across the United States—I am urging you to allow Harris County to continue its pursuit of a guaranteed income for low-income residents. We have independent evaluation that tells us that guaranteed income works—and I’ve seen its effects firsthand.

As Mayor of Saint Paul, I launched the nation’s first guaranteed income pilot to leverage public funds. Our People’s Prosperity Pilot provided 150 residents with babies with \$500 a month for up to 18 months. An independent evaluation of the program found profound effects, with the number of people employed increasing from 49% at the beginning of the pilot to 63% six months after the program ended. Recipients showed fewer symptoms of anxiety or depression and better health overall. Researchers also found that recipients had greater food security, transitioned into better housing, felt a greater sense of hopefulness, and showed other indicators of well-being and quality of life.

What we saw in Saint Paul tracks with what we’ve seen in other guaranteed income studies. Independent research studies on pilots in [Stockton, CA](#) and [Cambridge, MA](#) also found an increase in employment rates. [Paterson, NJ](#)’s pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Recipients in Stockton also reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Studies of Cambridge’s program found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

All of this aligns with the results from the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021, which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families across the country with no strings attached—also known as a guaranteed income. The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share on record of households with children that were food insecure. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

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We encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a handout, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melvin Carter". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Melvin Carter
Mayor & MGI Co-Chair



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY

118 NORTH CLARK STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602
(312) 603-4600
TDD: (312) 603-5255

TONI PRECKWINKLE
PRESIDENT

April 18, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

As a leader of Counties for a Guaranteed Income - an organization representing over 190 current and former local elected officials from across the United States - I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. I want you to know that guaranteed income works - we've seen its effects firsthand.

Guaranteed income has also been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. Nor is the idea new or radical. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

The Expanded Child Tax Credit is a great example. It reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

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independent researchers determined that full-time employment rose, from [28% to 40%](#), among residents who received the guaranteed income, and their financial, physical and emotional health all improved.

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I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Toni Preckwinkle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Toni Preckwinkle, President, Cook County Board of Commissioners & CGI Co-Chair



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

866 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012 / (213) 974-2222

HOLLY J. MITCHELL

SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT

April 23, 2024

Mr. Ken Paxton
Attorney General of Texas
Office of the Attorney General
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

RE: Letter of Support for Harris County's Guaranteed Income Program

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

As Co-Chair of Counties for a Guaranteed Income, I am writing to express my strong support for programs that offer unconditional cash assistance to low-income residents, often referred to as Guaranteed Income. I am concerned about your efforts to block Harris County's innovative guaranteed income program, Uplift Harris. Counties for a Guaranteed Income, together with our sister organization Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, represents over 190 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. Our coalition has supported over 60 guaranteed income pilots across the country, and what we've seen over and over again is that guaranteed income works.

Struggling families need our support – with the cost of living continuing to rise, families are left with choosing between paying rent and putting food on the table. Workers have to work 2 or 3 jobs yet still do not have the resources to rise out of poverty. Guaranteed income is not a “socialist experiment,” as you call it in your petition. In fact, it's been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

Attorney General Paxton
April 23, 2024

I championed guaranteed income in Los Angeles County, launching the largest pilot program in the nation. BREATHE is giving 1,200 county residents \$1,000 per month for 3 years. There are no strings on this cash because we believe that the people enduring financial instability are best positioned to make decisions that efficiently address their household's needs — whether paying for rent, a new tire, or an unexpected trip to urgent care.

You argue that “Harris County has neither received nor will receive any return benefit” from the Harris County guaranteed income program. However, we can look to the benefits of the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021 which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families nationwide with no strings attached. The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

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Attorney General Paxton
April 23, 2024

I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a handout, to Texas's most vulnerable. If there are any questions about my support, please contact my Senior Deputy for Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity, Caroline Torosis, at ctorosis@bos.lacounty.gov or 213-974-2222.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor, Second District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors & CGI Co-Chair

(CT)



April 25, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

I am Vice Mayor of the City of Cudahy and a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

Guaranteed income is not a "socialist experiment," as you call it in your petition. In fact, it's been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. Nor is the idea new or radical. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

You argue that "Harris County has neither received nor will receive any return benefit" from the Harris County guaranteed income program. Did you not see the results from the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021, which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families across the country with no strings attached - also known as a guaranteed income? The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to record lows, including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families by 26% and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that employment rates did not decline, contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in ten times the return on investment.

As opposed to the unsubstantiated talking points you use throughout your petition, there are more facts to back up the case that guaranteed income works. Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income has supported over 60 guaranteed income pilots across the country. In total, these pilots will deliver at least \$250 million in direct, unconditional relief to everyday Americans.

Research on guaranteed income pilots shows that when given unrestricted payments, recipients are able to rise above the barriers of poverty and create economic stability for themselves, their families, and their communities. The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) was the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income demonstration. A study conducted by independent researchers

Mayor
Jose R. Gonzalez

Vice Mayor
Elizabeth Alcantar

Councilmember
Martin U. Fuentes

Councilmember
Cynthia Gonzalez, Ed.D

Councilmember
Daisy Lomeli

City Manager
Alfonso Noyola, ICMA-CM

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I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a handout, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the word.

Elizabeth Alcantar
Vice Mayor



City of BELL GARDENS

7100 Garfield Avenue • Bell Gardens, CA 90201 • 562-806-7700 • www.bellgardens.org

April 29, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

I am a Council Member in the City of Bell Gardens and a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

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As opposed to the unsubstantiated talking points you use throughout your petition, there are more facts to back up the case that guaranteed income works. Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income has

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Research on guaranteed income pilots shows that when given unrestricted payments, recipients are able to rise above the barriers of poverty and create economic stability for themselves, their families, and their communities. The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) was the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income demonstration. A study conducted by independent researchers determined that full-time employment rose, from [28% to 40%](#), among residents who received the guaranteed income, and their financial, physical and emotional health all improved.

Independent research studies on pilots in [Cambridge, MA](#) and [Saint Paul, MN](#) also found an increase in employment rates. Recipients in Saint Paul reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Studies of Cambridge's program also found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. [Paterson, NJ](#)'s pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

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I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand-up, not a handout, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorgel Chavez', is placed over a light gray, textured rectangular background.

Jorgel Chavez
Council Member



Village of
Yellow Springs

Office of the Mayor

April 29, 2024

Dear Attorney General Paxton: As a member of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income—an organization representing over 190 current and former local elected officials from across the United States—I am urging you to allow Harris County to continue its pursuit of a guaranteed income for low-income residents. We have independent evaluation that tells us that guaranteed income works—and I've seen its effects firsthand. As Mayor of Yellow Springs, Ohio, our village community foundation launched the nation's first guaranteed income pilot for a small village. Data is being collected by the University of Pennsylvania Guaranteed Income Research and The Ohio State University Center for Financial Resources specializing in Guaranteed Income pilots.

Independent research studies on pilots in Stockton, CA and Cambridge, MA found an increase in employment rates. Paterson, NJ's pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Recipients in Stockton also reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Studies of Cambridge's program found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

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Sincerely,

Mayor Pam Conine



City of Albuquerque Office of the Mayor

Timothy M. Keller | Mayor
Samantha Sengel, EdD | Chief Administrative Officer
Kevin Sourisseau, CPA | Chief Financial Officer
Patrick Montoya | Chief Operations Officer
Veronica Martinez | Chief of Staff
Matthew Whelan | Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Mariela Ruiz-Angel, MSW, MBA | Assoc. Chief Administrative Officer

April 25, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

I am Mayor Tim Keller of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I am a member of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

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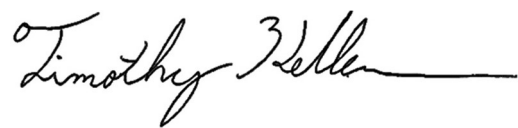
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy M. Keller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Timothy M. Keller
Mayor



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CITY COUNCILLOR
SUMBUL SIDDIQUI

Email: ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov
Phone: 617-349-7237

April 25, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Paxton:

I am the former Mayor of Cambridge, MA and a current City Councillor. As a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

Guaranteed income is not a "socialist experiment," as you call it in your petition. In fact, it's been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. Nor is the idea new or radical. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

You argue that "Harris County has neither received nor will receive any return benefit" from the Harris County guaranteed income program. Did you not see the results from the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021, which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families across the country with no strings attached - also known as a guaranteed income? The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

As opposed to the unsubstantiated talking points you use throughout your petition, there are more facts to back up the case that guaranteed income works. Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CITY COUNCILLOR
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Income has supported over 60 guaranteed income pilots across the country. In total, these pilots will deliver at least \$250 million in direct, unconditional relief to everyday Americans.

Research on guaranteed income pilots shows that when given unrestricted payments, recipients are able to rise above the barriers of poverty and create economic stability for themselves, their families, and their communities. The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) was the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income demonstration. A study conducted by independent researchers determined that full-time employment rose, from [28% to 40%](#), among residents who received the guaranteed income, and their financial, physical and emotional health all improved.

While I was Mayor of Cambridge, we started a pilot that provided 130 single care takers with \$500 monthly for 18 months. This program was a lottery program and not everyone who applied received the funds. Single parent households with children 18 or under who earned at or below 80% Area Median Income were eligible. Applicants were chosen randomly. We ensured all participants received benefit waivers so that families didn't lose other benefits now that they would be receiving \$500 monthly.

This program has been a lifeline for residents and recipients have been able to go back to school to enhance their skills, regain employment, pay off most of their credit debts, enroll their children in extracurricular activities, and pay for groceries and avoid waiting in food pantry lines.

Independent research studies on our pilot in [Cambridge, MA](#) and in [Saint Paul, MN](#) also found an increase in employment rates. Recipients in Saint Paul reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Our Cambridge program also found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. [Paterson, NJ](#)'s pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

Since then, I have expanded our pilot to nearly 2,000 families. Any family living at or below the 250% poverty line with a child was eligible to receive \$500 monthly for 18 months. We used \$22 million from Cambridge's American Rescue Plan funds to initiate this expansion to our residents in need.

Americans are struggling, and many families are only partially covered by, or completely left out of, existing social safety net programs. Harris County residents experience higher rates of poverty than other large counties, not only in Texas but across the nation, with [1 in 6 people](#) living in



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poverty. A guaranteed income allows families to use the monthly checks for their pressing needs, rather than the government deciding what people need. With poverty rates skyrocketing while the cost of living continues to increase, guaranteed income programs serve as vital lifelines for millions of American families.

I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,
Councillor Sumbul Siddiqui
Former Mayor 2020-2024

SUSAN ELLENBERG
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT FOUR
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, EAST WING
70 WEST HEDDING STREET, 10th FLOOR
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95110
TEL: (408) 299-5040
supervisor.ellenberg@bos.sccgov.org • www.supervisorellenberg.com



April 25, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Pax-ton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Pax-ton:

I am Susan Ellenberg, President of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

Guaranteed income is not a "socialist experiment," as you call it in your petition. In fact, it's been supported by conservatives like economist Milton Friedman and President Richard Nixon, whose Family Assistance Plan in 1969 would have provided a minimum income to poor families across America. Nor is the idea new or radical. The United States has a long history of using cash transfers to address financial hardship, from Social Security payments to child tax credits, earned income tax credits, and unemployment insurance. Guaranteed income is simply the continuation of a common-sense approach to supporting community financial stability that is reflected in America's most effective and popular government programs.

You argue that "Harris County has neither received nor will receive any return benefit" from the Harris County guaranteed income program. Did you not see the results from the Expanded Child Tax Credit in 2021, which provided direct, recurring cash payments to families across the country with no strings attached - also known as a guaranteed income? The Expanded Child Tax Credit reached more than 35 million households with children, cutting child poverty by nearly half and driving it to [record lows](#), including across all racial and ethnic groups measured. It also reduced food insecurity among families [by 26%](#) and led to the lowest share of households with children that were food insecure on record. Studies of the program also found that [employment rates did not decline](#), contrary to a popular yet false trope. Overall, researchers found that the Expanded Child Tax Credit resulted in [ten times](#) the return on investment.

As opposed to the unsubstantiated talking points you use throughout your petition, there are more facts to back up the case that guaranteed income works. Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income has supported over 60 guaranteed income pilots across the country. In total, these pilots will deliver at least \$250 million in direct, unconditional relief to everyday Americans.

Research on guaranteed income pilots shows that when given unrestricted payments, recipients are able to rise above the barriers of poverty and create economic stability for themselves, their families, and their communities. The Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) was the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income demonstration. A study conducted by independent researchers determined that full-time employment rose, from [28% to 40%](#), among residents who received the guaranteed income, and their financial, physical and emotional health all improved.

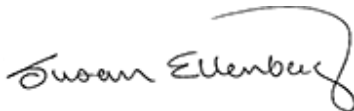
Santa Clara County was an early adopter of guaranteed basic income pilot programs as an anti-poverty and homelessness prevention measures. We have allocated \$12 million across four basic income pilot programs - \$3.55M for the first in the nation program for former foster youth, \$3M for unhoused high school seniors, \$1.74M for young mothers and \$4M for a program I introduced that will be one of the first in the nation to provide support to community members returning from incarceration.

Independent research studies on pilots in [Cambridge, MA](#) and [Saint Paul, MN](#) also found an increase in employment rates. Recipients in Saint Paul reported greater levels of mental and physical health. Studies of Cambridge's program also found increased time and space for parenting, and better educational outcomes for children. [Paterson, NJ](#)'s pilot program resulted in a rise in self-employment and higher incomes among participants from baseline and when compared to a control group. Virtually all programs have resulted in increased financial stability and the ability to afford a \$500 cash emergency, such as an unexpected car repair or a broken appliance.

Americans are struggling, and many families are only partially covered by, or completely left out of, existing social safety net programs. Harris County residents experience higher rates of poverty than other large counties, not only in Texas but across the nation, with [1 in 6 people](#) living in poverty. A guaranteed income allows families to use the monthly checks for their pressing needs, rather than the government deciding what people need. With poverty rates skyrocketing while the cost of living continues to increase, guaranteed income programs serve as vital lifelines for millions of American families.

I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,



Susan Ellenberg, District 4
President
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors





City of Tacoma

Mayor Victoria Woodards

April 25, 2024

The Texas Attorney General Ken Pax-ton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Pax-ton:

This is Victoria Woodards, the Mayor of Tacoma, Washington, and a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

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City of Tacoma

Mayor Victoria Woodards

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The City of Tacoma just launched its second pilot of the Growing Resilience In Tacoma (GRIT) program, our local guaranteed income iteration that was one of the first in the nation. This pilot has had tremendous results and impacted the lives of hundreds of local families.

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City of Tacoma

Mayor Victoria Woodards

I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victoria R. Woodards".

Victoria R. Woodards

Mayor



Farrah N. Khan, Mayor

1 Civic Center Plaza, Irvine, CA 92623-9575

cityofirvine.org

949-724-6233

May 3, 2024

Texas Attorney General Ken Pax-ton
PO Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711-2548

Dear Attorney General Pax-ton:

I am Mayor of the City of Irvine and a member of Mayors and Counties for a Guaranteed Income, an organization representing nearly 200 current and former local elected officials from across the United States. I'm writing to express my concern that you are using state resources for a baseless crusade against the low-income residents of Harris County. Anyone who reads your lawsuit can see it is better suited for your campaign website than a court of law. There are too many distortions to address in one letter, but I do want you to know that guaranteed income works - and there is data to prove it.

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I encourage you to reconsider your approach and look at the facts about what Harris County is trying to achieve. Guaranteed income works - providing a hand up, not a hand out, to Texas's most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Farrah Khan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Farrah N. Khan
Mayor of Irvine