



Stop using gimmicks to get around hiring additional staff

The number of eligibility workers in Human Services agencies has not kept pace with the increase in Texans applying for assistance. For example, over the last 10 years the number of Texans in the SNAP program has doubled, while the number of eligibility workers has not increased. Medicaid and Chip applications are projected to increase by an additional 247,240 recipients by 2019. Our population increase is causing a higher demand on workloads and current employees are experiencing unmanageable work levels. Historically the position of agency leaders is that data analytics and outsourcing will end the workload crisis throughout Human Services agencies. This theory is questionable given the overwhelming numbers of new cases state workers have to process.

More state workers are needed in local offices to decrease this workload and keep up with Texas' population growth. At least an additional 1,500 additional staff are needed in Human Services Eligibility, 1,500 DADS long-term care and regulatory services and 1,500 in DSHS health services to bring workloads to a reasonable level.

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SFY	Estimated Unduplicated Yearly Enrollment	Average Monthly Enrollment ¹	Estimated Number of Eligible Children Who Remain Unenrolled	Enrollment Rate
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Children's Medicaid

2015	3,653,000	2,962,139	590,000	83%
2016	3,730,000	2,971,621	665,000	82%
2017	3,784,000	3,013,815	696,000	81%
2018	3,838,000	3,057,508	723,000	81%
2019	3,919,000	3,121,417	728,000	81%

CHIP

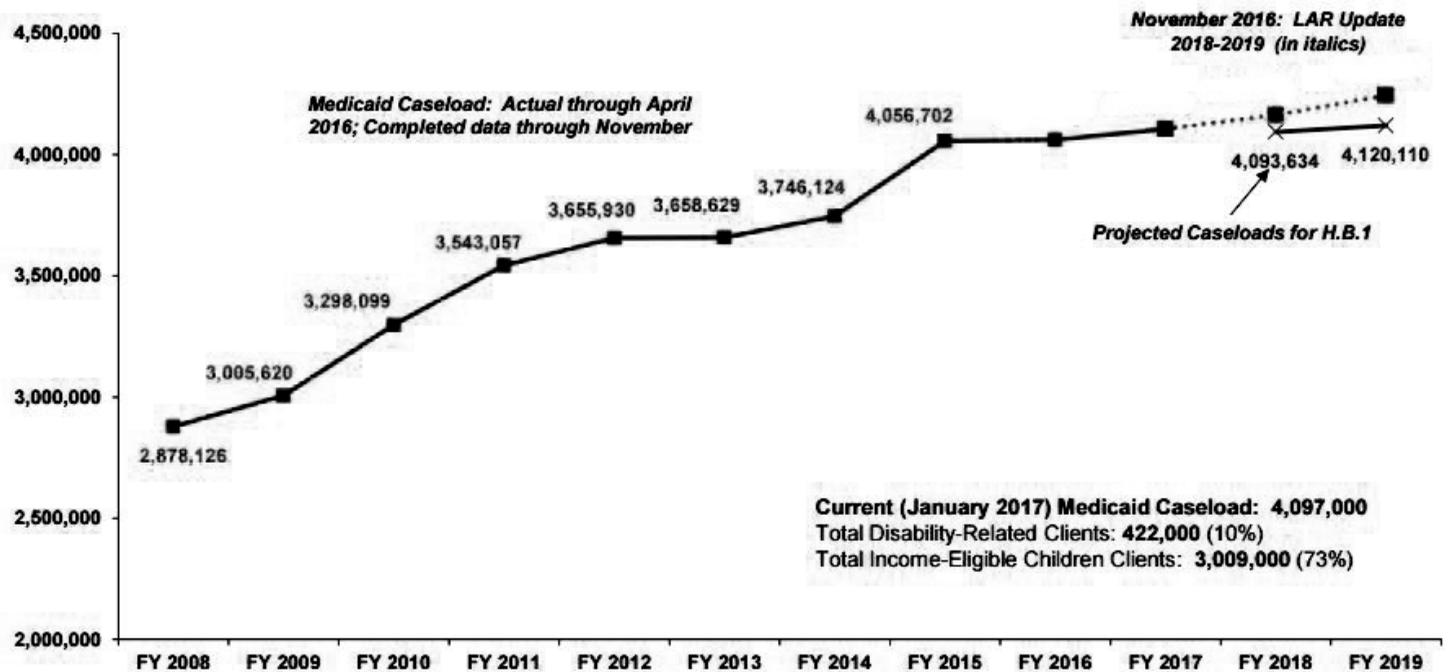
2015	626,000	339,831	106,000	76%
2016	619,000	360,788	94,000	79%
2017	647,000	387,314	83,000	82%
2018	682,000	407,952	102,000	80%
2019	715,000	427,793	107,000	80%

Children's Medicaid & CHIP

2015	4,279,000	3,301,971	696,000	83%
2016	4,349,000	3,332,409	759,000	81%
2017	4,431,000	3,401,129	779,000	81%
2018	4,520,000	3,465,460	825,000	81%
2019	4,634,000	3,549,211	835,000	81%

Notes: Estimates account for citizenship and income status of population (insurance status is also considered for CHIP). However, these estimates do not account for other factors considered during eligibility determination, such as resources.

Medicaid Full-Benefit Caseload: Historical and Estimated Caseloads Compared With 85th Legislature, Caseload Measures for Fiscal Years 2008 - 2019



Gimmicks previously used to “fix” the problem of understaffing and high workloads

- **BPR** - In 2014, HHSC administrators stated that the “roll out of the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) that would alleviate high workloads because the application and renewal processes would be stripped of unnecessary steps.” But just stripping steps isn’t an adequate solution when the problem is a dramatic increase in applications being received by state agencies. In fact, as predicted, the BPR rollout has caused its own set of problems such as a lack of accountability with errors, repeated technical failures, and an emphasis on quantity over quality work.

The real solution for an increase in demand should be to hire and train more staff.

- **CONSOLIDATION** - In 2015 the Texas Legislature approved the consolidation of the five Human Services agencies and their 54,000 employees into a single agency with a single commissioner. The new agency is in the process of combining and rearranging the numerous services currently performed by the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and Health and Human Services eligibility offices. This process has done little to alleviate the burden placed on frontline state employees and is only slated to save \$32.3 million over the next five years. The costs of reorganizing 54,000 state employees and the work they do is a disruption to critical services that the five agencies now provide, and is no substitute for adequate staffing levels.
- **Managed Care Organizations** - STAR+Plus and other MCO contracts have led to a reduction of DADS employees and hurt benefits for eligible pregnant women and low income children through managed care. (See separate Legislative Sheet for additional details.)

Human Services is suffering from extreme turnover

Agency officials admitted employee turnover was a major problem in their own report to the Sunset Commission: *While staffing issues are ever-present across all agencies, inability to maintain or increasing experienced personnel at levels to match caseload growth inhibits HHSC’s ability to deliver benefits. Compounding this challenge, staff retention, high turnover rates, and a less tenured eligibility workforce make it difficult to effectively respond to caseload increases and maintain performance.*

As state employees face increasing workload demands, stagnant pay, and cuts to their pension benefits, they are leaving state employment in increasing numbers. This high turnover in the human services agencies threatens the quality of services which vulnerable Texans depend. In HHSC and DADS the turnover rate exceeds the overall state employee average of 17.8%, which itself is the highest level since 2008.

We ask that you support increased staffing levels in HHSC, DADS and DSHS.

We ask that you support SB 571 by Senator Menendez to provide a career ladder for state workers
