



PRESS RELEASE

Alliance for Opportunity announces new policy roadmap to reduce poverty

WASHINGTON, DC (January 27, 2022) – Today, the Alliance for Opportunity is proud to announce the launch of a resource that provides key policy recommendations for reducing the number of people in poverty. The recommendations are based on creating generational transformation in Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas, but the policy implications can be applied nationally as well. On the website, policymakers will see an explanation of how the safety net is failing, the path forward, and practical policy options that state leaders can act on now to advance a comprehensive and transformative safety-net reform.

The Alliance for Opportunity is a collaborative initiative between the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF), the Pelican Institute for Public Policy (Pelican Institute) in Louisiana, and the Georgia Center for Opportunity (GCO). It is designed to promote solutions and build the political will to present and advance a comprehensive and compelling plan for reform to alleviate poverty by allowing people to find work and opportunities that will lead to a flourishing life. According to 2020 federal Supplemental Poverty Measure numbers, Georgia had 1,383,000, Louisiana had 869,000, and Texas had 3,601,000 residents in poverty.

The goal of the Alliance for Opportunity is that over the next 10 years, we reduce the number of people in poverty (defined above) by 20% in each state. That means 1 million people out of poverty: 276,600 people in Georgia, 173,800 people in Louisiana, and 720,200 people in Texas.

"We couldn't be more thrilled with this new online portal that will be the go-to place for policymakers to find solutions to the most pressing poverty issues in our culture today," said Randy Hicks, president and CEO of the Georgia Center for Opportunity. "Simply put, the U.S. safety net needs a paradigm shift. Our low-income neighbors deserve to move out of dependency, find lasting self-sufficiency, and flourish. The status quo is unacceptable."

In 2019, despite arguably the strongest economy in American history, more than 70.2 million Americans participated in at least one welfare program, and more than seven million prime-aged males, ages 25-54, were out of the workforce. Now, those numbers are now soaring due to the COVID-19 pandemic and on-going economic crisis.

The Alliance is built on the shared belief that the best path for poverty relief is through a well-functioning civil society with inclusive institutions that support opportunities for people to pursue happiness and achieve dignity, self-sufficiency, and prosperity. The Alliance does this through focusing on three areas of reform that will unlock opportunity:

- Keeping Vulnerable Americans on Track: Safety Net Reform
- Ensure Everyone Has the Right to Earn a Living: Workforce Reform
- Addressing Poverty Through the Justice System: Criminal Justice Reform

"Bad public policy that keeps people in poverty and dependent on government isn't the only challenge low-income people face, but it's significant enough that correcting it can start to put many Americans back on a path to prosperity," said TPPF's CEO Greg Sindelar. "The Alliance for Opportunity's policy 'roadmap' is a more effective approach to addressing the systemic problems within our safety net programs and fixing them so individuals and families can get the help they need without falling victim to generational dependence. It's a smarter way to ensure our state and federal policies are grounded in the values of dignity, self-sufficiency, and purpose of every person."

"It is a fundamental principle that every American should have the opportunity to flourish. The current system locks people in cycles of poverty through our over-complex safety-net programs, government induced barriers to work, and roadblocks to opportunity for people exiting the justice system. It's time to make a change and the Alliance for Opportunity has released the roadmap that will lead to a stronger country."

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