



Galveston-Houston Immigrant
Representation Project

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GHIRP Demands Immediate Restoration of Funding

Galveston-Houston, TX – March 27, 2025 – The [Galveston-Houston Immigrant Representation Project \(GHIRP\)](#) strongly condemns the Trump administration’s decision to terminate nearly all funding for legal services provided to Unaccompanied Immigrant Children. This devastating move has immediately cut off critical legal representation for **26,000 vulnerable children** navigating the complex U.S. immigration system alone. This action represents the most brazen attack on immigrant children since family separation.

The [Amica Center for Immigrant Rights, Immigrant Defenders Law Center, and Justice Action Center](#) have filed a federal lawsuit challenging this unlawful termination. GHIRP is an organizational plaintiff in the lawsuit, filed against the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and other defendants, which seeks to restore essential legal representation programs for unaccompanied immigrant children.

Legal Representation Protects Children

The most effective way to protect unaccompanied children is to ensure they have access to legal advocates who can guide them through the immigration systems. Attorneys play a vital role in protecting individual children and holding government shelters accountable. Nonprofit legal service providers like GHIRP meet with unaccompanied children within days of their arrival, offering Know Your Rights (KYR) presentations, legal screenings, courtroom assistance, and direct representation. Without these services, children are left defenseless against potential harm, including trafficking, abuse, and wrongful deportation.

Immigrant children and youth often flee unimaginable harm and dangers in their home countries. Our legal services are an essential tool to accessing safety and stability. Through legal representation, GHIRP ensures that children actively participate in their immigration case by presenting an effective defense to deportation. There is no child’s version of immigration law; no matter the age, children are forced to meet the same legal standards in court with or without an attorney. GHIRP ensures that our child clients have holistic representation and access due process.

Legal services serve as a critical defense against exploitation, ensuring that children can report abuse and seek legal protections, such as visas for trafficking survivors or those who have been

abandoned or neglected. Children with legal representation are more likely to attend school, receive medical care, and live in a stable home.

This lawsuit aims to restore immediate access to these essential programs canceled by the government, ensuring that unaccompanied immigrant children receive the legal representation and support that is their right. **GHIRP serves 1,500 children each year with this funding and represents 300 clients** in their immigration case. Our clients are young and many have faced incredible obstacles, yet they show resilience every single day. Our youngest client is only two years old.

"Our 2-year-old client is one of the many vulnerable kids impacted by this abrupt termination of pro bono legal services. She will be expected to appear in immigration court to defend herself against deportation, and GHIRP intends to stand by her side and help her advocate for her rights. We are determined to continue fighting for our clients and will find a way to do so despite the loss of funding." [Alexa Sendukas](#), Managing Attorney, Immigrant Children & Youth Program.

"These funding cuts coincide with the federal government's increased focus on targeting children for deportation. Every child deserves a voice and a chance to thrive, yet the government is intent on quickly propelling immigrant children to the same dangers they fled. GHIRP will advocate more zealously now for them than ever before." [Chiqui Sanchez Kennedy](#), Executive Director.

Take Action!

- **Contact your representatives** and urge them to reinstate funding for legal representation of unaccompanied children.
- **Share our news and updates** on social media to raise awareness and stand in solidarity with affected children.
- **Support GHIRP's Mission** and advocate for immigrant children's rights by donating or joining us at our [2025 Spring Festival Fundraiser!](#) Please visit www.ghirp.org/donate.

 For media inquiries, please contact: info@ghirp.org



GHIRP ICY Team



GHIRP

Galveston-Houston Immigrant Representation Project



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Did you enter as an unaccompanied minor?
Have questions about your immigration status?
Want to know what your options are?



FREE Immigration Information Sessions



When: 1st Thursdays of the month
Time: 8:30 AM

Dates:

- April 3rd
- May 1st
- June 5th
- July 3rd
- August 7th
- September 4th
- October 2nd
- November 6th
- December 4th



Where: 6001 Savoy Drive, Ste. 400
Houston, TX 77036

No prior registration required - Walk-ins welcome

NOTE: GHIRP will offer consultations with a legal professional following the presentation. Referrals and social services resources will also be available. Our focus is on unaccompanied minors, but families are also welcome! These sessions will provide crucial guidance to help protect and empower immigrant youth and their loved ones.

We will discuss

- General information about current immigration laws, rules and regulations.
- Your rights regarding your legal status and immigration enforcement.

info@ghirp.org | 713-561-3059 | www.ghirp.org |

GHIRP is an immigration legal services nonprofit serving Galveston and Houston. Our Mission: Building a resilient, diverse community by providing holistic legal services to immigrants in need.