

# Press Conference to Discuss Vital Healthcare and Housing Catch-22 that Leaves Many Homeless and Dependent on Welfare

*Mental Health Crisis, Low-Income Residents and Single Moms Suffer the Most*

ABILENE, TEXAS, USA, August 24, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The WEALTHFair Tour](#) is hosting a Press Conference at the Betty Hardwick Center on August 24th at noon to discuss dire challenges, both locally and nationwide, as related to an increase in mental illness, homelessness, poverty, and welfare dependency. Racquel W. Jones, Founder of Can I Live Inc. & The WEALTHFair Tour as well as Dr. Kimberly Muktarian, Policy Analyst, will discuss vital conflicts in the current system that is leaving many without medical assistance, support and homeless.



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The ultimate mission is to provide a proven, repeatable blueprint to breaking free from government dependency in order to start building a sustainable lifestyle of freedom and independence.”

*RW Jones*

“If our Wealth is our Health then both should be fair” – Dr. Muktarian

Take a closer look at the root of the problem, solutions and strategies to empower those who need it most.

## REALITY CHECK IN ABILENE

On their way to speak at an event in Abilene, both Dr. Muktarian and Jones suddenly stopped in their tracks at the sight of a 32-year-old black young man who suffered from a mental illness and was desperately trying to reach

his doctor to adjust his medication because he was not coping well.

As the women helped him return to Oceans Behavioral Health, a private mental health

institution, the staff advised that the corresponding doctor was booked and unavailable to assist that day.

Dr. Muktarian explains that “An Intake Specialist from the hospital then came to assist us but was unable to do so due to the client’s expired life cycle of 180 days allotted to Medicare patients. The Director of the Institution, Stacey Sanford, RN, explained that the client did not have Medicaid, which would allow him unlimited days for Mental Health treatment. He would not be able to receive services unless another institution was willing to pay, who could contract with another facility. According to the staff, the client did not have Medicaid. The process for receiving Medicaid is a daunting process and often takes three to four months tops. Most facilities do not have social workers who conduct intake interviews for Medicaid upon arrival. Therefore, patients are left to be discharged and find a way to apply independently. Without assistance, this process can be difficult.”



Unfortunately, this one of many Catch-22 scenarios that oftentimes results in untreated mental illness as well as an increase in homelessness and crime that could have otherwise been avoided.

“Judge Downing Bolls of Taylor County Courts informed us that he deals directly with mental health patients and agreed that many of the patients are not treated long enough, so it becomes a revolving door issue.” – Dr. Muktarian

#### CHALLENGES FOR UNINSURED PATIENTS IN TEXAS

- \*Adults who qualify for Medicaid usually consist of pregnant women or persons who have been determined to be disabled.
- \*Many adults with mental illness have not yet completed the application and been found as disabled.
- \*For instance, at the Betty Hardwick Center adult mental health client population, about 40% of those enrolled in services have Medicaid, the remainder are uninsured.
- \*The state of Texas does fund local mental health authorities to serve persons who are uninsured and provide an array of services, but there are some limitations.
- \*The Betty Hardwick Center does provide medication, can offer inpatient care, and an array of outpatient services, including Case Management, Rehabilitative Skills Training, Counseling, and Psychiatry for both uninsured and Medicaid eligible clients.
- \*Transportation can be a challenge for some of the people, locally, who do not have money for a bus pass.

\*Clients are facing homelessness, which can be challenging to find in the community, they don't always have a phone, and those things can be additional barriers to overcome.

## SINGLE-MOM STRUGGLE

As a single mom with four children on welfare, struggling to become financially independent, Jones has firsthand knowledge about maneuvering social services, child support, court, and baby daddy drama—but it wasn't easy. Like many of today's public housing residents, she was penalized for wanting to break free from the merciless welfare system that relentlessly pushed her 10 steps backwards through policies, rules, and program requirements.

The unfortunate reality is that low-income moms who receive government assistance are penalized for working. As soon as a mom enters or returns to the workforce, the benefits she depends on to support her family (i.e., food, healthcare, childcare, formula for babies, and housing) are drastically cut, or lost altogether, leaving her no room to live. This situation leaves these moms stuck at the bottom, incentivized to stay home and do nothing while receiving more money than if they were employed.

## STEPS AND SOLUTIONS

In a prerequisite to receiving the voucher, public housing residents are having to sign away their rights to return to the property in hopes to cash in on the promise of Choice that the Section 8 Voucher Program offers, and most importantly, make a desperate escape from their infested molded, rodent-packed prison cells that they call home.

The WEALTHFAIR Tour demands that HUD applies the same rules that developers receive through their cozy RAD deals (i.e., soft loans) to residents who cannot find homes as renters in this volatile real estate market. The Tour's Policy Agenda seeks to address fairness, equity and inclusion for America's poorest families who are disproportionately represented by black and brown communities.

The Organization's Policy Partner has submitted a request for public information to the local housing authorities and its cities to show the inconsistency in both the city's 5-year consolidated plan and the Public Housing Agency's (PHA) five-year plan. While both entities are expected to work together to solve the issues of homelessness, poverty and affordable housing, neither of the plans are meeting the demands.

"Our mission is to advance affordable housing, economic inclusion, and personal responsibility through advocacy, community and civic engagement, and education. We believe that all Americans are created equal and possessed of inalienable rights to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and to justice under the law. Yet the entitlements provided to people living at or below poverty are structured to keep them poor while entitlements offered to wealthier Americans and corporations assist in wealth creation and enhanced prosperity." – RW Jones

Can I Live believes that all Americans are created equal and possess the inalienable rights to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness—and justice under the law. Unfortunately, many of the entitlement programs provided to millions of families living at or below poverty are structured in a way that keeps them trapped in a cycle of dependence.

If not stopped, this vicious cycle of poverty will continue for generations to come. Criminal activity induced by poverty will rise, mental health depression will increase, toxic and strained relationships will remain stagnant—which means, teenage pregnancy, single-parent households, fatherless homes, juvenile delinquency, mass incarceration, etc.

#### UNLOCKING CHANGE

In a country where inflation has skyrocketed and gentrification is the new land-grab, mothers on welfare are behind in the market.

The WEALTHFAIR Tour can be found providing education, awareness and motivation to engage HUD-Assisted Families in understanding their rights as it pertains to relocation, opening small businesses and contracting with the local PHA, homeownership utilizing the section 8 vouchers, and resident management entities.

The WEALTHFAIR Tour policy push addresses the #1 reason why moms on entitlement programs don't work.

They call this the Welfare Cliff—a punitive way to disincentivize families from working by immediately cutting off vital services, such as health insurance, food and cash assistance, all while increasing their rents and payments for subsidies. Families have no way to ever grow themselves off the dependency of the Welfare System.

The WEALTHFAIR Tour kicked off its campaign at the Annual Public Housing Authority Directors Association (PHADA) annual conference. The conference was comprised of Public Housing Executive Directors, Commissioners, Tech Vendors, Consultants and PHA Board Commissioners. RW Jones and her partner Dr. Kimberly Muktarian spoke to associations grouped on how to fill in the gaps by contracting low-income residents as well as policies that will assist Public Housing residents in moving from poverty to prosperity.

The fully-wrapped RV is coming ready with an arsenal of information, resources and tools to help families escape the dependency of government programs.

If you are interested in bringing the WEALTHFAIR Tour to a local city, the organization can be reached at <https://thewealthfairtour.com/>

Showcasing at the National NAHRO Conference: September 22-24, 2022

<https://www.nahro.org/events/national-conference/>

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