

# Federal Judge Temporarily Blocks Biden Administrations Program to Grant Legal Status to Immigrant Spouses of US Citizens

*Legal challenges mount as the Biden administration's initiative to protect undocumented families faces a significant legal setback.*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, August 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Biden administration's "Keeping Families Together" program, aimed at granting legal status to undocumented immigrant spouses of U.S. citizens, has been temporarily blocked by U.S.

District Judge J. Campbell Barker in Texas. The program, announced in June 2024, sought to provide a streamlined pathway to permanent residency for an estimated half a million undocumented adults and 50,000 children living in the United States.

The program allowed undocumented spouses and stepchildren of U.S. citizens to apply for permanent residency without leaving the country, a process that typically requires a prolonged separation due to immigration laws. Applicants who met the requirements, including living in the U.S. for at least ten years and having a clean criminal record, would have been eligible to apply for legal status and work authorization for three years while their residency applications were processed.

However, the program was met with swift opposition from 16 Republican-led states, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. The states argued that the program incentivizes illegal immigration and represents an overreach of executive authority by the Biden administration. They filed a lawsuit challenging the program, which ultimately led to Judge Barker's temporary injunction.

Judge Barker, a Trump appointee, issued a 14-day administrative stay on the program, stating that the claims brought forth by the states were substantial and warranted more in-depth consideration. His order effectively halts the processing of applications under the program,



President Joe Biden Spouses Program Blocked

though the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will continue to accept applications while the legal case proceeds.

The "Keeping Families Together" program was introduced as part of President Biden's broader immigration policy, which has faced criticism from both immigration advocates and opponents. The program was designed to address the plight of mixed-status families who have been living in legal limbo for years, offering them a pathway to legal status and, eventually, U.S. citizenship. The Biden administration has framed the program as a pro-family initiative, emphasizing the importance of keeping families together and preventing unnecessary separations.

In response to the ruling, Texas Attorney General Paxton praised the decision as a victory for the rule of law, arguing that the program would have unlawfully rewarded over a million undocumented immigrants with a pathway to citizenship. He credited the support of America First Legal, a conservative advocacy group founded by former Trump adviser Stephen Miller, for helping to achieve the legal block.

On the other side, immigration advocates have expressed deep concern over the ruling. Karen Tumlin, founder of the immigrants' rights nonprofit Justice Action Center, criticized the decision as an extreme measure taken without evidence of harm to the states. She emphasized the heartache this ruling would cause for thousands of families hoping to secure legal status and avoid the fear of separation.

The Biden administration has vowed to continue fighting for the program. President Biden issued a statement criticizing the ruling, calling it "wrong" and reaffirming his commitment to keeping families together. The administration has indicated that it will defend the program vigorously in court, arguing that it aligns with fundamental American values of family unity.

The legal battle over the "Keeping Families Together" program is expected to continue in the coming weeks, with additional hearings and arguments anticipated. As the case progresses, the program's future remains uncertain, leaving thousands of families in legal limbo. The outcome of this case will have significant implications for U.S. immigration policy and the lives of those directly affected by it.

For more detailed coverage and analysis of this ongoing legal challenge, please visit our full news article here: <https://www.us-immigration-news.com/immigration-biden-spouses-program-blocked>

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