

Alejandro Rangel-Lopez
New Frontiers, a project of Loud Light Civic Action
Oral Opponent Testimony of HB 2491
For the House Elections Committee

February 4th, 2026

Chair Proctor and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Alejandro Rangel-Lopez from Dodge City, and I am speaking to you today as the Campaign Manager of New Frontiers. We're a southwest Kansas based project of the nonpartisan, nonprofit organization Loud Light Civic Action. New Frontiers' mission is to empower young southwest Kansans through the values of dignity, belonging, and freedom. I'm here representing over 500 Kansans who have signed on to this project. I'm here today to urge you to oppose the passage of HB 2491 as it promotes the needless surveillance of noncitizen Kansans and advances the false premise that undocumented Kansans receive public benefits of any kind en masse. This is dangerous rhetoric that continues to villainize hard-working immigrant Kansans seeking to uplift their families and the communities they call home.

The lack of language in this bill regarding how this data will be stored and used leaves us little to debate: The bill language prior to this hearing is less than half a page long. This is an embarrassment to our public input process and leaves the door open to broad interpretations of this bill. If we want to have honest, open consideration of legislation, Kansans deserve to have all the information to prepare testimony.

While not explicitly stated, this bill seeks to find evidence of undocumented folks receiving public benefits which is simply not possible: According to the [National Immigration Forum](#), undocumented immigrants, including DACA holders, are **ineligible** to receive most federal public benefits, including SNAP (sometimes referred to as food stamps), regular Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Unless this legislative body believes that the U.S. citizen children of undocumented immigrants should be ineligible for public benefits, there is no reason why this is information needed by the secretary of state.

Even in mixed-status families, U.S. citizen eligibility for benefits does not extend to undocumented family members: Like any U.S.-born citizen, U.S. citizen children of undocumented parents can receive federal benefits if they meet eligibility requirements without penalty. Similarly, the child's eligibility does not change their parents' or any other family members' eligibility for that benefit.

Non-citizen immigrants utilize social programs at lower rates than U.S. citizens: An analysis by researchers at the [National Bureau of Economic Research](#) shows that when the only difference between an immigrant and a native-born U.S. citizen is their immigration status, immigrants use public benefits at much lower rates than people born here. When they do sign up for these benefits, it's for their U.S. citizen children during times of economic stress.

Both undocumented and non-citizen immigrants pay into a system that they don't/can't utilize: According to the [Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy](#), undocumented immigrants contribute an estimated \$11.74 billion to state and local economies each year. However, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for many of the federal or state benefits that their tax dollars help fund.

Again, I encourage you to look at the facts on this debate regarding immigrants in our state. The villainization and scapegoating of immigrant Kansans does nothing to actually address the root causes of issues facing our communities today. This debate has devolved so much in recent years that now we're talking about sending lists of names to the Secretary of State to make sure they don't accidentally get a penny of assistance. The threat isn't real, you're throwing legislation at the wall to see what sticks, and besides continuing to push this dangerous rhetoric, this bill does nothing to save taxpayer dollars. I urge you to oppose HB 2491 and any attempts to categorize large groups of folks like immigrant Kansans as drains on our societies.