

### **Ann Beeson** • Chief Executive Officer

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A renowned social justice lawyer, former philanthropy executive, and frequent public speaker and writer, Ann Beeson joined the Austin-based Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) in 2013.

Under Beeson's leadership, CPPP has deepened its commitment to racial and ethnic equity, expanded its research and advocacy at the local level, and strengthened its state legislative advocacy. CPPP research and advocacy led to legislation to protect Texans from surprise medical bills, especially in emergency rooms. The organization's policy analysis helped to prevent large drops in health insurance coverage and reduce the number of uninsured Texans. CPPP also worked with partners to pass guaranteed paid sick days for workers in Austin and San Antonio, the first cities in the south to do so. As leading experts on school finance reform, CPPP created a data and policy road map for legislators to ensure all Texas kids receive a quality education, and successfully blocked several school voucher bills that would have diverted much-needed public money to private schools. Beeson has built a strong senior management team and nurtured a culture of learning and support to strengthen CPPP's long-term sustainability.

Beeson was previously the Executive Director of U.S. Programs at the Open Society Foundations, where she managed the distribution of over \$150 million annually to promote human rights, justice, and accountability nationwide. She was the national Associate Legal Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, where she worked from 1995-2007. She argued twice before the U.S. Supreme Court, litigated numerous cases around the country, and launched groundbreaking programs to stop the erosion of civil liberties in the name of national security and to protect free speech and privacy on the internet.

Beeson has been recognized as one of the nation's top lawyers by American Lawyer Magazine and the National Law Journal. A proud Texan, Beeson has embraced a wide range of innovative strategies to advance social change. Before joining CPPP, she launched an initiative to bring artists and creative leaders into the center of social justice strategies. In 2012-13, she was a Senior Fellow and Lecturer at the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at the University of Texas, where she co-produced a public media series to inspire more people to get engaged in their communities.

She grew up in Dallas, TX, and received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Texas. Beeson obtained her law degree from Emory University School of Law, and served as law clerk to the Honorable Barefoot Sanders, then chief judge of the Northern District of Texas.



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### ISSUE EXPERTISE / SPEAKER & INTERVIEW TOPICS

- The importance of data and facts in public policy, including an accurate 2020 Census Count
- Bipartisan solutions/working across the aisle
- The fight between Texas and cities over "local control"
- Rural Texas – data, misperceptions and opportunities
- The value of paid sick leave for Texas workers and public health
- Immigration policy and the Dream Act in Texas
- Public education funding and school vouchers in Texas
- The intersection of arts, culture and social justice
- The role of philanthropy in social change and public policy

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