

**Supporting House Bill 924 Sample Support Letter**

**Subject:** Support HB924, Ending child marriage in Texas

**Sample Text:**

I am writing to urge you to support HB924, the bill introduced by Representative Jon Rosenthal, that would end child marriage in Texas, without exception. Currently, the marriage age in Texas is 18; however the law includes a dangerous exception that allows emancipated 16- and 17-year-olds to marry. HB924 eliminates this dangerous loophole and reserves marriage, a serious legal contract, for those who have attained the age of 18 and the full rights of adulthood.

The legislature took a step in the right direction in 2017 by eliminating the dangerous exception that enabled children of any age to marry with parental consent and judicial approval; however, minors still remain at risk in Texas. Parents can still force their children to emancipate in order to force them to marry. In these cases, there is no mechanism in place to ensure parental coercion is not playing a role in emancipation. Further, the 2017 law removed the only avenue for escape for teens whose parents plan to take them overseas for a forced marriage. Minors can easily be forced or coerced into marriage or trapped in an abusive marriage; therefore, emancipation should not be a valid argument for permitting marriage under the age of majority.

Child marriage also severely jeopardizes outcomes in health, education, and economic freedom. It also increases the risk of domestic violence. I therefore urge you to support HB924, and protect all minors from child marriage in Texas. The longer we wait, the more minors we put at risk.