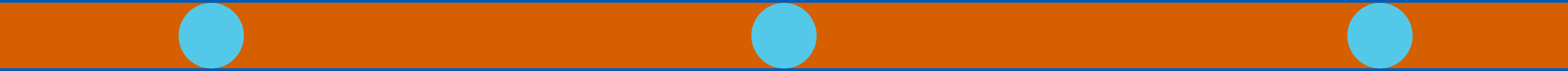


Cook Children's Sounds Alarm on Threat to Health Care Access for Texas Children and Urges Texas Leaders to Save and Protect Children's Health Plans



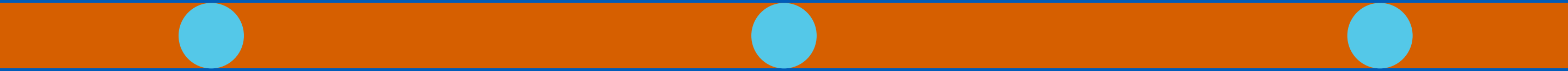


Cook Children's today expressed profound concern over a looming crisis that threatens health care access for Texas' most vulnerable children. A staggering **1.8 million children and expectant mothers** statewide, including **125,000** within Cook Children's Health Plan's Tarrant County service area, face potential disruptions in their health coverage due to the current situation.

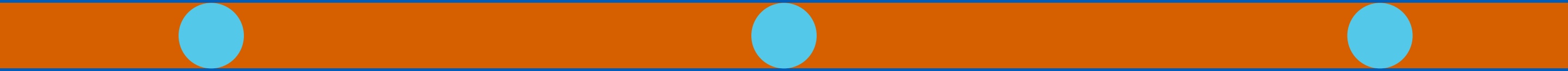


This precarious situation will have devastating consequences for **10,000** children with complex medical conditions, including **170 relying on ventilators** and **1,700 who use wheelchairs**. Beyond the direct impact on these children and their families, the repercussions extend to our community's economic stability, potentially **costing 400 jobs in Tarrant County and up to 2,000 jobs across the state** within Texas-based children's health plans if this issue is not resolved.





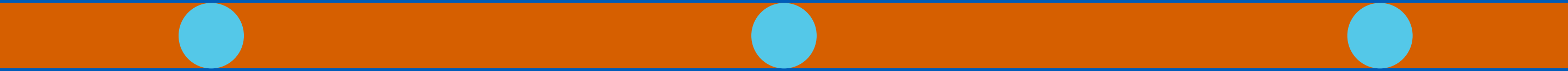
Despite hopeful signs earlier this session, with bill language from Representative Charlie Geren and Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa making its way to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services, **recent legislative inaction suggests a willingness to not address this critical matter during the current legislative session as intended by the courts.**



This is an urgent situation demanding immediate attention.

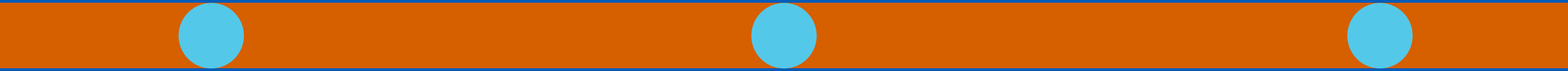
At the heart of this crisis is a flawed procurement process by The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) that inexplicably favored large, for-profit, out-of-state national plans over established local children's health plans like Cook Children's, Driscoll Children's Hospital, and Texas Children's Hospital in Houston.





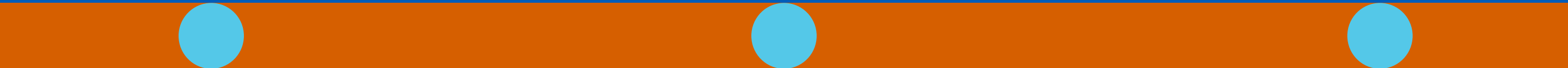
These Texas-based organizations

possess a proven track record of delivering high-quality care while achieving positive patient outcomes and maintaining high member and physician and provider satisfaction. HHSC's process failed to adequately consider past performance, quality of care, and health plan member satisfaction, leading to this deeply concerning outcome.



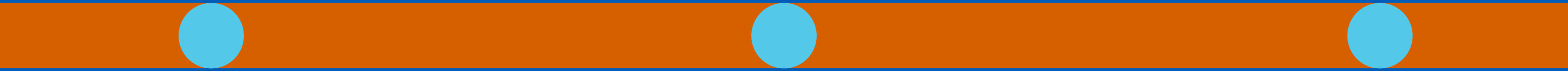
The potential consequences of inaction are dire, inevitably leading to further costly litigation and, more importantly, threatening to disrupt the vital health care services that countless Texas children and their families depend upon. The question remains:

Why has decisive action not been taken?



For more than 107 years, Cook Children's mission has been unwavering: to do everything for the health and well-being of the children we serve. This commitment compels us to continue fighting tirelessly for these children and their families. The stakes are simply too high to do otherwise.



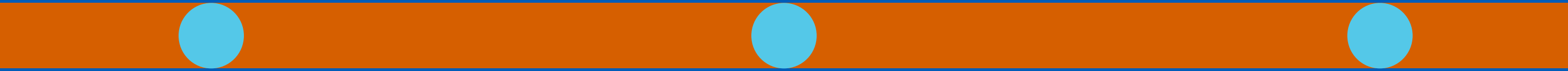


Our state's leaders have a **critical 24-day window** to rectify this flawed procurement process. We urge them to **prioritize Texas children by investing in their health care and ensuring local, proven children's health care providers can continue serving our communities.**



Allowing the current HHSC contract awards to stand will **drain millions of dollars from our state, benefiting out-of-state shareholders** instead of Texas children and businesses. Cook Children's alone reinvests **\$200 million** annually in our community, demonstrating our commitment. We implore our leaders to **choose Texas children and Texas-based, non-profit children's health plans** over out-of-state, for-profit interests.





The exclusion of dedicated children's health plans from this process demands explanation, as the health and stability of our health care system are at stake.

June 2 is the critical deadline.

The time for action is now!
Before it's too late.

