

**For Immediate Release**

## **UH Law Center's 30th Frankel Lecture Explores COVID Policy Reversals and the Future of American Social Safety Net**

**Houston, Oct. 07, 2025** – The Houston Law Review at the University of Houston Law Center is hosting [Samuel R. Bagenstos](#), a nationally recognized expert in health, labor, and social policy as the keynote speaker at the [30<sup>th</sup> Annual Frankel Lecture](#) on Friday.

Bagenstos, the Frank G. Millard Professor of Law and Arlene Susan Kohn Professor of Social Policy at the University of Michigan, will explore how federal programs expanded during the pandemic and the legal, policy and social consequences of their subsequent rollback in his lecture "COVID and the Great Retrenchment."

The event is at 11 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 10, in the Danny M. Sheena Courtroom of the John M. O'Quinn Law Building. Attendees can also join online.

Bagenstos has extensive experience working with pandemic-era programs and government policies. From 2021 to 2022, he served as the general counsel at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the U.S. government. There he shaped executive orders, oversaw COVID relief implementation, and advised on regulatory and budget priorities central to federal pandemic response.

For the next two years (2022-2024), he served as general counsel of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), overseeing legal guidance on COVID relief programs, Medicare/Medicaid initiatives, health privacy, drug regulation, and civil rights. In that role, Bagenstos led the implementation of the first-ever Medicare drug price negotiation program. Also, he was the principal deputy assistant attorney general for civil rights from 2009 to 2011 at the U.S. Department of Justice, where he directed civil rights enforcement and helped with the 2010 Americans with Disability Act regulations update and disability rights initiatives.

An established civil rights litigator, Bagenstos argued four cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, including *Young v. United Parcel Service* (2015), which established key protections for pregnant workers, and *United States v. Georgia* (2006), affirming the constitutionality of Title II of the ADA. He is also an accomplished scholar and author of influential works on disability law and civil rights, with a myriad of articles published in prominent law reviews and non-academic publications, as well as two books, "Law and the Contradictions of the

Disability Rights Movement” (2009) and “Disability Rights Law: Cases and Materials” (2010).

Bagenstos has also testified before Congress on several occasions, including in support of the Fair Pay Restoration Act, the ADA Amendments Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and regarding the problem of mental illness in prisons.

Commentators for the lecture are:

- Andrew Hammond, Professor of Law at Indiana University’s Maurer School of Law
- Abigail R. Moncrieff, Associate Professor of Law and Political Science and Co-Director of the Center for Health Law and Policy at Cleveland State University

Participating attorneys will receive two hours of Texas continuing legal education credit. Complimentary parking and lunch are available for in-person attendees.

**WHAT:** The Houston Law Review’s 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Frankel Lecture, “COVID and the Great Retrenchment.”

**WHERE:** The John M. O’Quinn Law Building, 4170 Martin Luther King Blvd., Houston, TX 77204 and online.

**WHEN:** 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Friday, Oct. 10, 2025

[Click here for more information](#) about the event.

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**About the University of Houston Law Center**

The University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) is a dynamic, top-tier law school located in the nation’s 4th largest city. UHLC’s Health Law, Intellectual Property and Information Law, Legal Writing Program, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 15. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 12 centers and institutes that fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.

## **About the University of Houston**

The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter for excellence in undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse regions in the country, UH is a federally designated Hispanic- and Asian American-Serving institution with an enrollment of more than 47,000 students.