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Proposed “Public Charge” Rule Would Increase Poverty, Hunger, & Suffering

Shriver Center Denounces Trump Administration’s Latest Attack on Families & Immigrants, Mobilizes State Advocates to Resist

CHICAGO—No family should have to choose between meeting their basic needs and being with their loved ones.

Yet in its latest racially fueled attack on families, immigrant communities, and people living in or near poverty, the Trump Administration is seeking to propose a federal rule that, if implemented, would threaten both the immigration status and access to various public assistance programs of millions of immigrants throughout the country. By expanding the scope of the so-called public charge doctrine, the rule would effectively punish people seeking admission into the United States and those attempting to become legal permanent residents because of their use of public programs, such as Medicaid, food assistance through SNAP, and housing assistance. The proposed rule would jeopardize vital food, housing, medical, and other basic assistance for families struggling to make ends meet.

The Trump Administration’s anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy agenda is already causing immigrants to forgo crucial assistance, even though they are legally entitled to it, for fear of being targeted for deportation. The new rule would exacerbate that trend, driving families further into the shadows and undermining their ability to pursue financial security and live in dignity.

Furthermore, this adds to ongoing threats by the Trump Administration to low-income families in America, including undermining the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid, delivering tax breaks for the wealthy, and imposing work requirements on all basic needs programs.

The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law denounces this cruel and reckless public charge proposal. These proposed rules can and must be defeated. In the weeks and months to come, we will work tirelessly to mobilize with state and national partners, including through our Legal Impact Network, Racial Justice Institute, and Protecting Immigrant Families-Illinois coalition, to oppose the proposed rule. We will help amplify the voices and stories of those most affected. And we will use all legal avenues to challenge the proposed rule and protect immigrant families.

The best way to strengthen our country is to ensure that all families who live in it can meet their basic needs. All families need food, medical care, shelter, and other basics to thrive and contribute to their communities and our country. We should continue to invest in the policies and programs that improve lives, cut poverty levels, and support people going to work.

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The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law provides national leadership in advancing laws and policies that secure justice to improve the lives and opportunities of people living in poverty. We specialize in practical solutions. We advocate for and serve clients directly, while also building the capacity of the nation’s legal aid providers to advance justice and opportunity for their clients. www.povertylaw.org

