

Press Statement

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California Groups Push Back on Trump's Proposal To Punish Immigrant Families

As Administration releases "Public Charge" proposal, California coalition aims to Protect Immigrant Families

A powerful California coalition of health care, nutrition, anti-poverty, education, children's and immigrant rights stakeholders denounced the Trump Administration's latest attack on immigrant families. This weekend the Department of Homeland Security released its [proposal to restrict](#) the ability for lawfully present immigrants who have accessed public assistance to obtain permanent residency (also known as a green card), or enter the United States from abroad. The draft language expands the definition of "public charge" to include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), non-emergency Medicaid, the Medicare Part D low-income subsidy, Section 8 housing and other vital programs for which these immigrants are fully eligible. If implemented, this proposal to change "public charge" would force millions of immigrant families to choose between the things they need to ensure their economic security and health, and remaining in the United States with their families and the people they love.

In response, the California Protecting Immigrant Families coalition, focused on fighting the expansion of "public charge", issued the following joint statement:

"The Department of Homeland Security's "public charge" proposal is yet another attack on immigrants, our valued social safety net, and communities who seek to care for their loved ones.

At a time when Americans face increasing health care, education, and housing costs, on top of stagnant wages, this Administration has chosen to erode the social safety net that makes it possible for millions to provide food on the table, seek health care for their loved ones, and put a roof over their heads. The Administration is cutting vital lifelines for families all while fueling racist and xenophobic attacks on immigrant and low-income communities. The proposed rule is simply the latest step in this strategy to defund the safety net and worsen disparities, and we should not fall for it.

The California Protecting Immigrant Families coalition represents every sector of our state's civil society, bringing together legal, health and education advocates, as well as representatives from labor, state and local government and California's congressional delegation. This multi-sector coalition has come together to fight this proposal, and we

invite all Californians of conscience to join us in defending our values and protecting families across our state.

Most importantly, immigrant communities should know that the regulations governing public charge *have not yet changed*. **This anti-immigrant policy has not gone into effect.”**

More information about public charge, and the campaign to Protect Immigrant Families, including how to submit your comments *once this proposal is open for public comment*, is available at www.protectingimmigrantfamilies.org

The **California Protecting Immigrant Families coalition** | Members include:

- Alameda County
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA
- Asian Health Services
- Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
- Berkeley Media Studies Group
- California API Budget Partnership
- California Association of Food Banks (CAFB)
- California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems (CAPH)
- California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA)
- California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC)
- California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN)
- California Primary Care Association (CPCA)
- California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLA Foundation)
- County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA)
- California WIC Association
- Californians Together
- Children Now
- Children’s Defense Fund - California (CDF)
- City and County of San Francisco Human Services Agency
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
- Community Action Marin
- Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC)
- Dignity Health
- First 5 Marin
- Greenlining Institute
- Health Access
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)
- Justice in Aging
- L.A. Unified School District (LAUSD)
- Latino Coalition for a Healthy California (LCHC)

- Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
- MomsRising
- NextGen America
- SEIU California
- Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)
- Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
- The Children's Partnership
- Western Center on Law and Poverty

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Background:

Currently, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) considers many factors when deciding to grant lawful permanent residence (LPR), also known as a green card. One of these factors is a person's past or possible future use of public benefits, but currently, only two categories of benefits are considered: cash assistance (such as CalWorks or SSI) and long-term care (such as nursing home care that a government program pays for). Any other benefits—including Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and WIC—are not considered. The Trump administration's anti-immigrant proposal aims to punitively expand the benefits to be considered; however, **no changes have yet been made** to the process for individuals applying for LPR status from within the U.S. This means that immigrants who are currently eligible for these important programs can continue to use them.