

URGENT ACTION NEEDED ON PROPOSED IMMIGRATION POLICY CHANGES

The Trump Administration has proposed new immigration rules that will make it harder for people here legally. Two Notices of Rulemakings have been published and are currently receiving comments. We urge you **to submit comments detailing your opposition to the proposed changes.**

Fee Waivers – deadline for comments is Thursday, November 22

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is attempting to transform the fee waiver application process by making it more difficult for individuals to obtain fee waivers when seeking immigration relief. A [notice of proposed rulemaking](#) was issued drastically changing the process to request a fee waiver. Most notably, the proposal would remove receipt of means-tested benefits as a basis for qualifying for the fee waiver and require exclusive use of the Form I-912 for fee waiver requests. These proposed changes would deny access to relief for deserving immigrants and, as with the proposed changes to public charge, are one more example of this administration's favoring the wealthy over working class people, low-wage workers, and vulnerable populations who make immeasurable contributions to our communities and our economy.

<https://www.ilrc.org/fee-waiver-public-comment-template>.

Public Charge rules – deadline for comments is Monday December 10

The Trump Administration has proposed new immigration rules that will make it harder for people here legally to secure green cards or become citizens if they have accessed any of a number of government benefits that in the past they have been entitled to. The Department of Homeland Security is accepting comments on the so-called Public Charge rules until December 10. Asian Services in Action, Inc. (ASIA Inc.) is part of a coalition of immigration rights advocates trying to get at least 100,000 comments submitted against the proposal.

Under current rules, an immigrant is considered a "public charge" and therefore not eligible for an improvement in immigration status if they receive more than fifty percent of their income from either Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Social Security.

Under the proposed new rule, receiving any of the following will count against an immigrant's ability to change their visa status:

- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, a.k.a. food stamps)
- HUD housing assistance
- Medicaid
- The Department has stated that it is considering adding the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to the list and is taking comments on the issue.

The rules would allow immigration service employees to count receipt of these benefits against an immigrant whenever they apply for a change of status (e.g. from a work visa to a green card.) An immigrant who has attained self-sufficiency will only see that count in their favor if they currently earn more than 250% of the poverty line (for a family of four, that would be \$62,700.)

We are asking people to submit comments against the proposed regulations. The arguments most frequently being used against them include:

- The proposal will hurt immigrant families to temporarily need government assistance as they establish themselves and attain self-sufficiency.
- The change is unnecessary--immigrants access fewer government benefits than native-born Americans and since they pay over \$200 billion in taxes annually, they on balance contribute to government budgets.
- The change insufficiently credits someone who is currently self-sufficient, allowing their past receipt of government benefits to count against them.
- The family-based immigration system that this country has employed for decades has worked to build communities and strengthen our overall economy.

For more information, ASIA, Inc. has a page devote to the issue:

<http://www.asiaohio.org/publiccharge/>

Scott Piepho has put together a collection of fact sheets and templates in a public Google Docs folder: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1l00X-QGvC8s4RxJAHrsyYkIBq8g9hXOv>

The advocacy coalition Protect Immigrant Families has a website that includes on the front page a link for submitting a comment: <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/>

ASIA, Inc. would appreciate anyone commenting against the rules to let us know so that we can tell our funding partners how successful we have been in securing comments. Contact Scott Piepho at spiepho@asiaohio.org.

Thanks to everyone for their attention and help.