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THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR THE PUBLIC CHARGE RULE: ILLINOIS ADVOCATES COMMEND PRESIDENT BIDEN’S REVIEW PLAN

CHICAGO --- The Protecting Immigrant Families - Illinois (PIF-IL) coalition applauds President Biden for signing an Executive Order requiring the Department of Homeland Security to engage in an immediate review of the public charge rule in order to (1) evaluate the effects of the continued implementation of the rule, (2) identify what federal agencies can do to address the impact of the rule on public health and the immigration system, and (3) determine how these agencies can communicate about the rule to reduce the fear and confusion it has created in immigrant communities, all within the next 60 days.

The public charge rule has had a devastating effect on immigrants across the country and Illinois since it was announced in 2017. The rule has deterred immigrants from accessing food assistance, health care, and housing programs designed to protect families and strengthen communities. As advocates, service providers, and community organizations working with communities to help them thrive, PIF-IL welcomes Biden’s newly announced plan to review the public charge rule and mitigate the harm it continues to cause.

Today we celebrate today’s executive order as the beginning of the end of the public charge rule. Yet, we recognize that the journey will require ongoing patience, advocacy, and accountability. We will continue to fight against the rule here in Illinois and to advocate for quick action on the plan to review the rule outlined in the Executive Order. **For now, it is crucial for immigrants to know that the public charge rule is still in effect.** But, this Executive Order clearly signals that meaningful change is coming.

This announcement comes in the midst of a global pandemic that has disproportionately impacted Black, Latino/x, and immigrant families, including in our home state of Illinois. “We know that the fear caused by the public charge rule has deterred many immigrants from seeking essential healthcare services including COVID testing, treatment, and, now, vaccination,” said Luvia Quiñones, Health Policy Director at ICIRR. “Immigrants should take today’s announcement as a confirmation to not be fearful of prioritizing your and your family’s health,

especially in the middle of a pandemic. Under no circumstance should immigrants be fearful of seeking healthcare.”

“The public charge rule deters families from seeking food, housing and healthcare that other families can access without fear. It also damaged the trust immigrants had with the federal and local governments,” said Militza Pagán, Staff Attorney, at the Shriver Center on Poverty Law. “Multiple courts have made clear this cruel rule was unjust and illegal. President Biden’s executive order is a step in the right direction to put an end to the fear and confusion immigrant families have faced for far too long.”

“Today’s announcement is a cause for celebration for immigrants across the nation,” said Sylvia Puente, President and CEO at Latino Policy Forum. “After four years of targeted anti-immigrant attacks causing fear and confusion, the chilling effect caused by this rule has discouraged mixed-status immigrant households from enrolling into important benefit programs. This plan of review of the public charge rule should bring relief for immigrant families.”

PIF-IL remains committed to defending and protecting immigrant rights in accessing benefit services for themselves and their families. PIF-IL asks organizations and individuals advocating on behalf of immigrant families to visit the [Protect Immigrant Families Illinois Website](#) to learn more about the most recent developments regarding the recession of the public charge rule and to access relevant resources.

Protecting Immigrant Families Illinois members: AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Asian Human Services, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet, Elevate Energy, Erie Family Health Center, DuPage Federation, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Health & Medicine Policy Research Group, , Healthy Illinois Campaign, Housing Action Illinois, Illinois AAP, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), Latino Policy Forum, Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Family Services, Legal Council for Health Justice, National Immigrant Justice Center, Ounce of Prevention Fund, Shriver Center on Poverty Law, University YMCA

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