**Public Charge Proposed Rule**

Public Comment Templates

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| **Sample Comments from an Individual:**Make sure to modify template comments to reflect your own experience so your contribution counts as unique comment **(aim for at least 30% unique content for your comment to be counted**)!  |

I strongly oppose the proposed public charge regulation that would force millions of children and families to forgo essential public benefits, resulting in nationwide increases in hunger and poverty. [add your story here: *Why is protecting immigrant access to SNAP (CalFresh), Medicaid (Medi-Cal), and section 8 housing vouchers important for you? To your community as a whole?*] In order for our communities to thrive, everyone in those communities must be able to get the care, services and support they need to remain healthy and productive. This proposal won’t just hurt immigrants—it will degrade the health and well-being of our nation as a whole.

I am writing to strongly oppose the Department of Homeland Security’s proposed “public charge” rule change. [add your story here: *Why is protecting access to basic needs assistance (food, health care, and housing) for immigrant families important to you? To your community as a whole?*] There is no way to target individual immigrants without harming their families—if you hurt parents, you hurt children. CalFresh helps over 2.5 million California children get the food they need for healthy development and lifelong success. If fear of immigration consequences were to cause parents to forgo CalFresh benefits for their eligible children, the impact on health and economic outcomes will be felt for generations.

I am writing to strongly oppose the Department of Homeland Security’s proposed “public charge” regulation that would severely limit low-income people’s ability to buy food, having devastating effects on local economies and the well-being of our communities. [add your story here: *Why is protecting immigrant access to SNAP (CalFresh) important to you? To your community as a whole?*] Immigrant households provide funding for safety-net programs with their tax contributions, and their spending on food and health services provides jobs to American workers and supports businesses. SNAP is an effective anti-hunger tool, discouraging immigrants and their families from participating would drive entire communities deeper into hunger and poverty.

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| **Sample Comment from an Organization:** Organizations are encouraged to **include as much relevant information as possible**: research, statistics, personal stories. Please also attach any research articles cited in your letter. Lengthy comments can be submitted as PDFs. |

[Date]

Samantha Deshommes, Chief

Regulatory Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Department of Homeland Security

20 Massachusetts Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20529-2140

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing on behalf of [organization name] to express our strong opposition to the changes proposed by the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) regarding “public charge,” published in the federal register on October 10th, 2018.

[Insert paragraph describing your organization and why this is particularly urgent to you, plus the expertise that you have on issues raise. ***30% of your comment should be unique***].

XYZ organization is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ organization based in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Our mission is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

California cannot prosper if our immigrant neighbors are afraid to get the help they need to stay strong and productive, and raise children who thrive. Programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (CalFresh in California), Medicaid (MediCal), and Section 8 Housing Vouchers provide families with a critical foundation for health and well-being, while lifting millions of people out of poverty each year. Discouraging use of these programs won't just hurt immigrants—it would drive entire communities deeper into poverty and hunger.

Use of non-monetary benefits does not indicate future reliance on the government; in fact, the opposite is true. 4 in 5 CalFresh-participating families are working, but their low wages won’t afford them everything they need to get ahead. CalFresh helps these families put food on the table, while making room in the budget for other expenses. In doing so, CalFresh lifted over 850,000 Californian’s out of poverty in 2016.[[1]](#footnote-0) Likewise, when people can afford nutritious food we see higher attendance in schools and better academic performance, increased workplace productivity, and improved physical and mental health outcomes. This rule would only be placing unnecessary barriers between immigrant families and the programs that help them thrive.

This proposal threatens to roll back progress made in addressing hunger and poverty in California. [Insert paragraph describing any impacts your organization has already seen/expects to see].

[organization name] strongly believes that people who are eligible for anti-hunger programs should not be deterred, penalized, or stigmatized, and should not suffer adverse immigration consequences for using benefits they are eligible to receive. For these reasons, the Department of Homeland Security should immediately withdraw its current proposal, and dedicate its efforts to advancing policies that strengthen—rather than undermine—the ability of immigrants to support themselves and their families in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. Please do not hesitate to contact [FILL IN] to provide further information.

[Name]

[Title]

[organization name]

1. CalFresh Cuts Poverty in all Congressional Districts. [CA Budget and Policy Center Fact Sheet](https://drive.google.com/open?id=11RfV3FTOBgO2YlQvZZrKSLq-OtzFljA9). [↑](#footnote-ref-0)