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ADVOCATES APPLAUD BIDEN PLAN TO REVERSE TRUMP PUBLIC CHARGE REGULATION

WASHINGTON — The White House Tuesday released a [fact sheet](#) indicating that President Joe Biden will sign an executive order directing federal agencies to review Trump public charge regulations that have effectively denied millions in immigrant families health care and economic support during the COVID-19 pandemic and threaten to undermine vaccination efforts. The announcement came just weeks after 500 nonprofit organizations affiliated with the [Protecting Immigrant Families](#) coalition [sent a letter](#) urging Biden to act quickly. Responding to the announcement, advocates issued the following statements:

"Immigrants have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic caring for the sick, harvesting our nation's food, and keeping businesses running. These public charge regulations have prevented immigrants from obtaining health care, food, and financial relief at a time when it's needed most," said Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the **National Immigration Law Center**. "We commend President Biden for acting quickly to end this harmful policy, and urge Congress to deliver an immigrant-inclusive COVID-19 response that ensures immigrants have full access to relief as our nation begins to enter a recovery phase. There can be no just recovery without immigrants."

"For immigrant families, including millions of children, Trump's public charge regulations worsened the intersecting health and economic storm of the COVID-19 crisis," said Olivia Golden, executive director at the **Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)**. "That's why hundreds of organizations came together in the Protecting Immigrant Families campaign to fight these damaging rules. We thank President Biden for taking urgent action to thaw the regulations' pervasive chilling effect and look forward to working together to ensure that immigrant families can get the help they need."

"Pediatricians have witnessed the devastating toll that the public charge regulation has had on the health of immigrant families. This regulation stoked fear and confusion in immigrant communities, leading families to forgo critical health and nutrition services that they are eligible for," said **American Academy of Pediatrics** President Lee Savio Beers, MD, FAAP. "When

children miss out on these vital programs, their health suffers. We must ensure all children can reach their full potential if we are to reach ours as a nation. The American Academy of Pediatrics commends today's action by President Biden to begin reversing the harmful public charge rule, and is calling on all federal leaders to work toward ending the harm caused by this rule and to advance policies that support all children – no matter where they or their parents were born."

"At a time when Latinos and other communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, we applaud today's announcement to end President Trump's cruel and counterproductive public charge policies," said Carlos Guevara, associate director of immigration policy at **UnidosUS**. "The direct line between these policies and members of our communities not seeking the critical supports is painfully clear, which make now the time for a new course – one that delivers a truly inclusive pandemic response to ensure the nation, indeed, builds back better."

"COVID-19 has deepened America's hunger crisis, and the public charge policy has been part of the problem," said Luis Guardia, president of the **Food Research & Action Center**. "We commend President Biden for taking swift action to reverse this cruel policy to mitigate the pandemic's hunger consequences for millions of immigrant families."

"No one should ever have to choose between keeping their family healthy, or keeping them together. The Trump public charge rule is a part of a larger pattern of attacking Black and Brown communities, and it has had the devastating impact of denying many the health care they need during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Emily Stewart, executive director of **Community Catalyst**. "As health advocates, we are very relieved the Biden-Harris administration has taken swift action to reverse it."

"The new public charge rule was an attack on low-income immigrant communities, intended to limit legal immigration and stop immigrants from accessing the critical safety net programs that they qualify for and need," said Eva Millona, president and CEO of the **Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition** (MIRA). "We're grateful to President Biden for acting quickly to reverse this cruel policy and the fear and anxiety that came along with it."

"This is an important first step in repairing the damage caused by the previous administration's public charge regulation," said Cheasty Anderson, Director of Immigration Policy and Advocacy at the **Children's Defense Fund, Texas**. "We look forward to working in concert with the Biden administration on a comprehensive outreach and education strategy to re-enroll some of the millions of eligible children who have lost health care and nutrition supports because of the fear this policy engendered in low-income immigrant communities."

"President Biden understands that our nation's protection of human dignity must be extended to all who live here. There must be no discrimination on a basis of wealth, race, or status. The prior

administration did not understand this and banned many immigrants from getting needed services,” said Sister Simone Campbell, executive director of **NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice**. “President Biden’s actions to end Trump’s “public charge” prohibition puts us on a more humane path. We the People will be judged by how we treat the most vulnerable. Ending the Trump restrictions that have stopped immigrants from receiving COVID tests and treatment is exactly what our faith and patriotism calls us to do. This is the common good.”

“The public charge rule has instilled fear and confusion in immigrant communities for far too long,” said Audra Wilson, president & CEO at the **Shriver Center on Poverty Law**. “Multiple courts have made clear this cruel rule was unjust and illegal. We commend President Biden for his swift response and urge the Administration to rescind this rule as quickly as possible.”

“We commend the Biden administration for moving to swiftly address public charge which has already led to immigrant families disenrolling and foregoing critical health care due to the stark and harsh anti-immigrant policies over the last four years,” said Juliet K. Choi, CEO of the **Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum**. “At a time when our nation is collectively working to address the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, we must remember that the pandemic does not discriminate based on immigration status. Let’s lift up a whole of community approach to ensuring all families can seek the care and treatment they need - healthier families mean a healthier nation and a faster recovery.”

“The National Health Law Program is committed to health equity, and we are eager to work with the Biden administration to build a more just health care system that works for everyone in this country. Rescinding the Trump administration’s changes to public charge regulations is a step in the right direction and must be part of the larger effort to reverse policies intended to harm and intimidate Black, Indigenous, and people of color,” said Elizabeth Taylor, executive director at the **National Health Law Program**. “Including Medicaid in public charge consideration had a chilling effect that made immigrant families wary of accessing health care to which they are legally entitled. The dual health and economic crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic only highlighted the cruelty of this policy. Amid this national emergency, expanding access to quality health is essential.”

“The public charge rule has caused untold suffering in the lives of immigrant families who have had to forego access to life-saving care and services. While we have so much work ahead of us to undo the harmful impact of this rule on our communities, we are heartened by the swift action by the Biden administration to reverse this cruel policy, ” said Cynthia Buiza, executive director for the **California Immigrant Policy Center**. “During this difficult time, as the pandemic rages on, access to the safety net is more important than ever. We look forward to working with this new administration to ensure that our national safety net truly works for everyone.”

“President Biden’s actions today are important steps toward ensuring both that the United States welcomes immigrants who want to build a life here and that immigrants already here and their family members have access to health care and other critical services,” said Shelby

Gonzales, director of immigration policy at the **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities**. “In the midst of the current health and economic crises, these benefits are vital to helping individuals and families survive, making swift action to reverse the Trump public charge rules critical.”

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