

# Protect New Mexico Families!

## Submit Public Comment Opposing Trump's Plan to Penalize Immigrant Families Who Get Help with Basic Needs

In October, the Trump administration published [a proposed rule](#) to limit lawful immigration by drastically changing the definition of a public charge. Under the proposed rule, the federal government would be able to consider the use of basic assistance programs like SNAP food assistance, housing assistance, and Medicaid as reasons to deny a green card, entry or reentry into the U.S, or to change immigration status.

The proposal will also penalize children, older adults, people with lower incomes, people living with pre-existing health conditions or disabilities, and people not fluent in English, by negatively affecting their ability to get green cards.

We strongly urge you to submit a comment telling the government to stop attacking our families through these scare tactics.

**Deadline to submit comments: December 10, 2018**

**Submit your comment here:**

<https://www.regulations.gov/comment?D=USCIS-2010-0012-0001>

**What to include in your comment:**

The government will only consider comments that are at least 30% unique. Use the outline below to draft a comment that reflects your opposition to the rule. It doesn't have to be long or detailed!

	<b>Sample text:</b> <i>Please write some of your own text to maximize the impact!</i>
<b>1. Say you oppose the proposal.</b>	I strongly oppose the proposed public charge rule that will harm many members of my community.
<b>2. Explain the impact of the proposal on your community.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least 77,000 children in New Mexico (including U.S. citizens) live in a household with immigrant parents in which the household receives one or more benefit that would make the parents a public charge under the new rule.<sup>1</sup></li><li>• Immigrants are members of our community. 1 in 10 New Mexicans are immigrants, and 1 in 9 New Mexicans have immigrant parents.<sup>2</sup> Immigrants make valuable contributions to our state and deserve the same opportunities as any other tax payer.</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Migration Policy Institute "Chilling Effects: The Expected Public Charge Rule and Its Impact on Legal Immigrant Families' Public Benefits Use" Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/chilling-effects-expected-public-charge-rule-impact-legal-immigrant-families> (2018)

<sup>2</sup> American Immigration Council, "Immigrant in New Mexico" available at: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-new-mexico> (2017)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Mexico stands to lose as many as 2,700 jobs and nearly \$400 million in economic activity because eligible New Mexicans will forego federal benefits that flow directly into our local economy.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Explain why the policy is wrong</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, housing, and medical assistance are critical for families that need to access those programs and have long term impacts on health and a family’s ability to work.</li> <li>• Placing more restrictions on green card eligibility by making people choose between family reunification and basic needs like health care, food, and shelter is not only cruel but will impair economic growth driven by immigrants. It also contradicts our nation’s basic value of keeping families together.</li> <li>• Punishing immigrant families for accessing additional public benefits that keep communities healthy is unwarranted. Many cities, which are already facing high health care costs and affordable housing crises, will have to absorb increased rates of uncompensated health care and see an increase in rates of homelessness.</li> <li>• Moreover, punishing immigrants for seeking vital nutrition services will force families to choose between reuniting or staying with their loved ones and putting food on the table.</li> <li>• When immigrants avoid health and nutrition services out of fear, poor health outcomes can affect an entire community. School absenteeism due to hunger and illness can lead schools and school districts to lose resources.</li> </ul>

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<sup>3</sup> Sources: Estimate of direct loss was calculated by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; economic ripple effects and jobs lost was estimated by the Economic Policy Institute. See Methodology for details. Totals may not sum due to independent rounding. For methodology, see "Only Wealthy Immigrants Need Apply," Fiscal Policy Institute, October 10, 2018. (on file with NM Voices for Children)