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PIF-IL Coalition Will Continue Fighting for Immigrant Families Despite Implementation of Public Charge Regulation in Illinois

Chicago, IL -- The Protecting Immigrant Families Illinois (PIF-IL) coalition is disappointed by the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling to lift a statewide injunction and allow the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to implement the expanded “public charge” regulation in the State of Illinois. PIF-IL denounces the Trump administration’s relentless attacks on immigrants and stands alongside Illinois’ immigrant community in the ongoing fight against this discriminatory, unjust, and racially inequitable rule.

After the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that the agency will apply the final version of its new public charge rule to applications and petitions submitted by Illinois residents on or after today, February 24, 2020, the same date set for the nationwide implementation.

While the February 21st U.S. Supreme Court ruling is a setback, it is not a ruling on the merits of the case. All of the cases against the rule continue to be litigated here in Illinois and throughout the country. PIF-IL members Shriver Center on Poverty Law, Legal Council for Health Justice, and Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights will be presenting their case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit on Wednesday, February 26, arguing why the injunction we were granted in the fall should remain.

PIF-IL will continue its mission to educate and train service providers, community advocates, legal experts, and government officials on the impact and substance of this ruling.

PIF-IL recognizes that implementation of this regulation will force some immigrants to make hard choices about using benefits, but we want to make clear that the majority of immigrants and their families will still be able to access much-needed benefits without immigration consequences. For more information about who is and who is not impacted by this new regulation, see our public charge fact sheet at protectingimmigrantfamiliesillinois.org.

“As the administration itself admits, this regulation could be irreversibly detrimental to immigrant communities, forcing people to neglect their own well-being in order to be allowed to remain in the U.S. with their families,” said Fred Tsao, senior policy counsel for Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. “The anxiety and confusion around this regulation have already intimidated immigrant families, even those who are exempt from its effect, into disenrolling from critical programs and services. The rule pointlessly and cruelly puts individual and public health at risk.”
The PIF-IL coalition believes this rule fundamentally alters America’s immigration system. Throughout our history, millions of people have come to the United States to build a better life for themselves and their families—many with little more than the clothes on their back. This rule disgraces the American dream, allowing immigration officials to bar people who have working class incomes, people with disabilities, children and seniors, those who do not have a high school diploma, and those who are not proficient in English, among others, in disregard of their human desire to succeed and to remain with parents, children, family.

For questions about public charge please contact pifillinois@povertylaw.org. Please direct immigrant families with questions to the Immigrant Family Resource Program (IFRP): these community-based organizations make up a statewide network with staff who are trained on public charge. IFRP staff collectively speak over 55 languages and can be accessed at https://www.icirr.org/ifrp.

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