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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN OPPOSES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S LATEST ATTACK ON LEGAL IMMIGRATION**

***Administration's proposed overhaul of immigration laws would force legal immigrants to risk their immigration status in order to access healthcare, housing assistance & other programs***

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and a coalition of attorneys general and attorneys general-elect today opposed the federal government's latest effort to attack, demonize and marginalize immigrants in Illinois and around the country. The federal administration has proposed a radical overhaul of so-called "public charge" rules that could make it easier to deny adjustment of status to lawful immigrants, reject green card applications, or even remove lawful immigrants from the country if they utilize certain healthcare, nutrition or housing programs.

The proposed rule could even force lawful immigrants to make an inhumane choice of whether to protect their lawful immigration status or risk it by accessing healthcare programs or other programs for which they are already eligible. Madigan and her colleagues filed official comments today explaining why the rule is both unlawful and bad policy that would cause significant harm to Illinois and its residents.

"The federal administration continues pursuing unlawful and abhorrent immigration policies, and the overhaul of the public charge rules sinks to another low," Madigan said. "I stand with my colleagues in opposing this inhumane policy."

So-called "public charge" rules have existed in immigration law for several decades. They have been understood to allow the government to deny entry to potential immigrants who are likely to become "primarily dependent" on public assistance.

The federal administration's proposal would upend decades of established practice and make lawful immigration much more difficult by:

1. Greatly expanding the scope of services that can be considered in determining whether someone is likely to be "primarily dependent" on public assistance to include Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and housing assistance;
2. Significantly lowering the threshold for declaring someone a likely "public charge" to as low as \$150 per month; and,
3. Potentially exposing immigrant children to being labeled a "public charge" if they are enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Once a lawful immigrant has been labeled a "public charge," he or she may be unable to successfully apply for a green card or adjust immigration status, and may even be removed from the country.

[In their comments](#), Madigan her colleagues argue that the proposed changes will be "destabilizing, discriminatory, and will cause harm to immigration populations and to the States," particularly in regards to healthcare costs, which can be expected to climb as immigrants avoid healthcare programs like Medicaid and instead are forced to seek expensive emergency care. The proposed rule would also discriminate against people with disabilities and non-English speakers.

In addition to being bad public policy, Madigan and her colleagues believe that the proposed rule violates federal law because the federal administration has not presented appropriate evidence or analysis to justify the radical changes it has proposed. The proposed rule also violates Executive Orders governing the issuance of new regulations.

Joining Madigan in submitting today's comments are the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode

Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington, as well as the attorneys general-elect of Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Minnesota and New York.

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