

## Proposed Public Charge Rule Sample LTE/Op-ed

Today, I/[organization](#) told the Trump Administration that its [proposed public charge rule](#) is a bad idea for [City or State](#) and America.

The proposed rule seeks to dramatically overhaul who can enter or stay in the U.S. by expansively redefining what being a public charge means. The proposed rule unnecessarily expands the definition of who could be deemed a public charge—changing it from a person likely to become primarily dependent on benefits to one who simply receives one or more public benefits—and allows an extensive new list of public benefit programs—including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to be considered. Alarming changes also target families with children, seniors, non-English speakers, or low or moderate incomes.

The proposed rule would greatly undercut efforts to address hunger, sickness and poverty by deterring immigrant families from accessing critical public programs such as the SNAP, Medicaid, Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy, and housing assistance—programs that keep people from going hungry, getting sick, or becoming homeless, and are essential to [City or State's](#) and our nation's health and well-being.

The [proposed rule](#) itself concedes:

*“There are a number of consequences that could occur...Worse health outcomes, including increased prevalence of obesity and malnutrition, especially for pregnant or breastfeeding women, infants, or children, and reduced prescription adherence; ...and increased rates of poverty.”*

[Research](#) shows that SNAP plays a critical role not just in reducing poverty and hunger, but also in improving nutrition and health, especially among children. Yet this proven program is included as a benefit that could trigger a public charge determination under the proposed rule.

SNAP rules are complicated. Public charge rules as to which steps in the immigration process are impacted, and which are not, are also complicated. The interaction of these two complicated sets of rules will generate increased fear and confusion, even in instances where refugees, asylees, and children who are lawful permanent residents are eligible for SNAP and would not face public charge consequences.

[Provide example, if possible, of how someone in your community — anonymously if appropriate — is not accessing SNAP or has unenrolled from the program due to fear and confusion.](#)

No one, no matter where they are from, should have to choose between food and family. And no one should be at risk of separation from home and family just because they

asked for often temporary help to meet basic needs under rules that allow granting them eligibility. This goes against our country's core value of helping all of our neighbors in need of food, medical care and shelter.

People from all sectors of society — business owners, educators, health care providers, religious leaders and advocates for struggling families in our communities — have a role to play in stopping this harmful proposed rule from going any further.

The Department of Homeland Security is accepting public comments on the proposed rule until **December 10, 2018**. Already, tens of thousands of people have chimed in on why the proposed rule is not only mean-spirited and ill-conceived, but an assault on our nation's health and well-being.

**Join me/us** in protecting immigrant families from hunger and poverty. [Submit a comment in opposition to the proposed rule](#) through the Food Research & Action Center's comment platform.