

Quotes in Opposition to "Public Charge" Rule Change

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"Texans should be aware that today, just over one in four Texas children—about 1.8 million children—have at least one parent who is not a U.S. citizen. Every year, about 100,000 new Texan Green Card holders are approved, and hundreds of thousands more are waiting their turn. This damaging proposal threatens the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of Texas families."

--Anne Dunkelberg, Associate Director, [Center for Public Policy Priorities](#)

"As pediatricians who care deeply about the health and well-being of all children in Texas we are extremely concerned about the effects of the recently released proposed public charge rule. Sowing fear among Texas families – one quarter of our children live in families with an immigrant parent – could cause countless numbers to drop or refuse participation in Medicaid, CHIP and SNAP. This fear will have direct impacts on our children's health including, but not limited to, reduced immunization rates, fewer moms receiving prenatal care, and less adequate nutrition for families who rely on SNAP. This is not the future we want for our children."

--Dr. Ben Raimer, President, [Texas Pediatric Society](#), The Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

"The proposed changes to "public charge" rules are mean-spirited and short-sighted. The same children we would deny food and medical care today are tomorrow's workforce. Texas needs a healthy and educated workforce to retain its economic advantage. Under the proposed rules we all lose."

--Celia Cole, CEO, [Feeding Texas](#)

"When people are scared to accept help with food, housing and health care — the basic building blocks of family life — Texas pays the price. Our communities are weakened when families can't go to work or school."

--Ken Janda, President and CEO, [Community Health Choice](#)

"Any policy change that makes it harder for people to get access to the benefits to which they are legally entitled risks increasing the prevalence of communicable and chronic disease and could negatively impact the health of our most vulnerable, including pregnant women and infants."

- Judge Clay Jenkins, [Dallas County](#)

"It is tough enough to become financially stable as a young person in Texas without your own government using your immigration status against you to force a choice between pursuing citizenship or health care and food."

-Allie Aguilera, Policy and Government Affairs Manager, [Young Invincibles](#)

"The proposed rule discriminates against people with disabilities and their families seeking legal status by setting forth standards that single out physical and mental health conditions that could impact ability to work. The regulations will also discourage people with disabilities from accessing critical services like healthcare, housing, and food to keep them healthy and support independent living. Disability should never impact immigration status and we strongly condemn any restrictions that discriminate against or jeopardize the health of Texans with disabilities."

-Jolene Sanders, Advocacy Manager, [Easterseals Central Texas](#)

"This proposed expansion of what should be considered an immigrants' likelihood of being 'public charge' is yet another attack on our legal immigration system and a deterrent against low-income immigrants seeking legal status. We are deeply concerned that this change will result in families choosing to forego legal permanent residency when faced with the difficult choice of providing care for US citizen family members on the one hand, and legal status on the other. We are also deeply concerned about the risks of this rule creating another pathway to deportation."

-Kate Vickery, Executive Director, [Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative](#)

"VELA works primarily with immigrant families of children with disabilities, and we are extremely concerned about the impact of this proposed change. We have already seen a decline since the 2016 presidential election in parents accessing benefits for their eligible U.S. citizen children, out of fear of deportation and family separation. This rule, and the fear its process has created, will make things significantly worse for families who are already marginalized. Without benefits, especially Medicaid and disability benefits for children, our families simply will not make it."

--Maria P. Hernandez, Executive Director, [VELA](#)

"Denying green cards and visas is both immoral and short-sighted. Without access to basic needs and preventive-care services, self-sufficiency for vulnerable people and their families seeking to become productive citizens of our community will be impossible. The cost therefore, will fall on local Texas taxpayers, who will invariably pay for expensive emergency care and lost economic contributions."

--Iliana Gilman, Chief Executive Officer, [El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission](#)

"I am concerned that the proposed public charge rule introduces arbitrariness and uncertainty into the application process. It is a laudable goal to reduce the number of Americans and immigrants alike who must use government benefits due to lack of skills and access to work, but the public charge rule fails to achieve this goal and instead introduces unnecessary confusion into the process."

--Kathryn Freeman, Director of Public Policy, [Christian Life Commission](#)

"The idea of utilizing medical care and food (Medicaid, CHIP and SNAP) as bargaining tools to deter legal immigration is not only un-American, but also as sinister as separating families for the same intent. This proposed rule will foster additional fear, and force families to choose between mental and physical well-being and the hope of living as one family."

--Jose Luna Jr., MD, [Centro San Vicente Health Center](#), El Paso TX

Harming children in order to promote an anti-immigrant, anti-working class agenda is reprehensible. The trauma this proposed rule is already causing to countless Texas children and families will have repercussions throughout our communities and will actively create a poorer, sicker, and less safe America.

--Patrick Bresette, Executive Director, [CDF-Texas](#)

"Texas children thrive when they have access to healthy foods, high-quality education, and basic healthcare. Often at the mercy of their parents to gain access to these necessities, children, will ultimately be the ones most impacted if any barrier is put in the way of families accessing essential programs. The proposed change to Public Charge, will leave the future of Texas' economy, workforce, and wellbeing hanging in the balance."

--Jenny Eyer, Director, Center for Child Health, Research and Policy, [Children at Risk](#)

"Families are the heart of our immigration system. For much of our U.S. history, employment-based immigration has been a much lower priority than family unity. The proposed 'public charge' rules would effectively turn that tradition upside down. Trump has repeatedly expressed his desire to severely limit the number of immigrants sponsored by family members, something that Congress and the American people have rejected. His new system would make it more difficult for low-income families to petition for an elderly parent by requiring the immigrant to post a \$10,000 public benefits bond. We recognize that our economy will require more immigrant workers in the future to maintain the momentum toward continued prosperity. But our family-based immigration system should not be perverted merely to line the pockets of employers with the funds to sponsor foreign workers."

--Juanita Valdez-Cox, Executive Director, [La Union del Pueblo Entero](#)

"The changes will increase fear and confusion among all legal immigrant families, leading to decreased participation in health coverage and other programs for themselves and their children. This would contribute to more uninsured and negatively impact the health and financial stability of families as well as growth and healthy development of their predominantly U.S.-born citizen children."

--Grace Chimene, President, [League of Women Voters of Texas](#)

"The anticipation of changes to the public charge rule has instilled fear in the immigrant families Foundation Communities serves. As a result, some parents have already removed their children from the health programs that ensure childhood wellness and contribute to family financial security. The uncertainty created by the proposed rule may cause families to drop out of services that contribute to educational success, financial stability, and better health."

--Kori Hattemer, Director of Financial Programs, [Foundation Communities](#)

"With more men being denied lawful immigration status, the 'public charge' rule will disproportionately affect the women and children left behind, and economically discriminate primarily against women in poverty. Ultimately, children in our families will suffer. Just as DACA eligibility for mothers has been shown to correlate with improved mental health in their children in a compelling Stanford study (published in Science, September 2017), we have no doubt that secure access to health and social services is crucial for the health and well-being of the entire family."

--Dona Kim Murphey, MD PhD, Chair of [Pantsuit Republic](#)"

"I oppose this rule because it threatens the well-being and health of many people. Let those who have been here, paid taxes, want to work and want to be citizens have a chance to be good Americans. They may be better Americans than we could ever be. Let's give people a chance to do good with their lives and in turn, help America keep its values and its hard-working ethic."

--Sr. Phylis Peters, D.C., [Proyecto Juan Diego](#)

[List of Texas organizations signed on in opposition to the "public charge" rule change:](#)

Caritas of Austin, Jo Kathryn Quinn, Executive Director

Center for Public Policy Priorities, Anne Dunkelberg, Associate Director

Centro San Vicente Health Center (El Paso), Jose Luna Jr., MD

Children at Risk, Jenny Eyer, Director, Center for Child Health, Research and Policy

Children's Defense Fund, Texas, Patrick Bresette, Executive Director

CitySquare, Reverend Gerald Britt, VP External Affairs

Community Health Choice, Ken Janda, President and CEO

Dallas Coalition for Hunger Solutions, Sara Albert, Public Policy Action Team Chair

Dallas County Judge, Honorable Clay Jenkins

Disability Rights Texas, Susan Murphree Senior Policy Specialist
Dominican Sisters of Houston, Ceil Roeger, OP
Easterseals Central Texas, Jolene Sanders, Advocacy Manager
EPISO and Border Interfaith, Adriana Garcia, Organizer
Faith in Texas, Akilah S. Wallace, Interim Executive Director
Feeding Texas, Celia Cole, Executive Director
Foundation Communities, Kori Hattemer, Director of Financial Programs
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative, Kate Vickery, Executive Director
Indivisible Houston, Daniel J. Cohen, Chair
League of Women Voters of Texas, Grace Chimene, President
Office of the Mayor, Austin, Mayor Steve Adler
One Voice of Central Texas, Jo Kathryn Quinn, Chair
Pantsuit Republic, Dona Kim Murphey, MD PhD, Chair
Project Vida Health Center (El Paso), Bill Schlesinger, CEO
Proyecto Juan Diego, Sr. Phylis Peters, D.C.
Texans Care for Children, Adriana Kohler, Senior Health Policy Associate
Texas AFL-CIO, Rick Levy, President
Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (TAOG), G. Sealy Massingill, MD, President
Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, Kathryn Freeman, Director of Public Policy
Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, Scott M. Daigle, Public Policy Director
Texas Council on Family Violence, Linda Phan, Policy Director
Texas Impact, Bee Morehead, Executive Director
Texas Pediatric Society, The Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Dr. Dennis Conrad, President
Texas State Teachers Association, Portia Bosse, Director of Public Affairs
The Metropolitan Organization (TMO), Houston
Fr. Ed Gomez, San Pablo Episcopal/St. Paul's Episcopal Church
The Rev. Eileen O'Brien, Episcopal Missioner at the University of Houston
Maria Bautista Vargas, Episcopal Missioner at Texas Southern University
The Rev. James M.L. Grace, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
The Rt. Rev C. Andrew Doyle, Episcopal Diocese of Texas
Fr. Eric Holloway, Missioner, Episcopal Student Center, Austin
Fr. Simón Bautista, Christ Church Cathedral
Reverend Barkley Thompson, Dean, Christ Church Cathedral
Rev. Rhanel Johnson, St. Andrews United Methodist Church
Fr. Albert Zanatta, Assumption Catholic Church
Rev. John Ogletree, First Metropolitan Church
VELA, Maria P. Hernandez, Executive Director
Young Invincibles, Allie Aguilera, Policy and Government Affairs Manager