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**COALITION OF 32 CITIES & MUNICIPALITIES, LED BY NEW YORK CITY AND CHICAGO, SUBMIT COMMENT IN OPPOSITION TO TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S "PUBLIC CHARGE" PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE**

*Coalition's comment addresses the legal failings of the proposed "public charge" rule change*

**NEW YORK**—Thirty-two local governments and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, led by the City of New York and the City of Chicago, [submitted a comment](#) to the federal government yesterday in opposition to the Trump Administration's proposed "public charge" rule change. The comment explains why the proposal violates the Administrative Procedure Act and other federal laws.

"We strongly oppose yet another cruel policy coming out of the White House," said **NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "This proposed rule, if finalized, could force working New Yorkers to choose between enrolling in public benefits they have a legal right to and staying in the country legally. The Trump administration's hateful and racist rhetoric will not change who we are as a beacon to the world. We are joining cities and municipalities across the nation to fight this rule with every tool at our disposal."

"Chicago is and will remain a welcoming city that works to provide its residents with resources, not stand by while they are taken away," said **Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel**. "We are proud to join municipalities from across the country to urge the rejection of this proposed rule, which is just the latest example of the Trump Administration's unlawful attempts to unfairly target and endanger the most vulnerable among us."

"America is about giving everyone a chance to lift themselves up, take care of their families, and chase their dreams — and our government should never be in the business of punishing people who may need a little help making sure their kids are safe, fed, and have a roof over their heads," said **Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti**. "Creating fear and targeting legal immigrants who follow the rules does nothing to increase our security or strengthen our economy — it is nothing less than a public disgrace."

"Our diversity is one of Philadelphia's greatest strengths," said **Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney**. "This proposed rule would reverse policy that is fundamental to the identity of our

country as a place where immigrants can come with just a few dollars in their pocket, work hard and build a better life for themselves and contribute to their new communities. This proposed rule change extinguishes that tradition and will result in confusion, fear, and hardship among Philadelphia’s immigrant community. It will endanger the health and well-being of tens of thousands of Philadelphians, and it will harm our city’s economy.”

“This proposal by the Trump Administration is a radical departure from the current rule and makes it harder for tens of thousands of our residents in the District of Columbia to get their green cards,” said **District of Columbia Attorney General Karl A. Racine**. “We’re standing with New York and other cities in this comment letter because we believe this rule change is not only cruel, but illegal.”

On October 10, 2018, the federal government [published](#) a proposal to expand the “public charge” test for immigration purposes. Under current rules, a “public charge” is an immigrant who is likely to rely primarily on cash assistance or long term care from the government for subsistence. The proposed rule would redefine a “public charge” as an immigrant who has received or is likely at any time in the future to receive certain specified public benefits. The test is principally administered to first-time green card applicants and applicants for certain types of visas.

This comment asserts that the proposed rule violates numerous provisions of law and should be withdrawn. It also notes that the proposed rule would not serve its stated purposes—namely to increase the “self-sufficiency” of immigrants—but would instead shift federal costs on to states and localities, as well as create entirely avoidable public health and other crises.

*“The Proposed Rule published by the Department of Homeland Security (‘DHS’) changes, without legitimate basis, centuries-old law governing who may be excluded from the United States or refused permanent legal status based upon their receipt of public benefits, otherwise known as the ‘public charge’ rule.”*

*“This Comment focuses on the legal failings of the Proposed Rule, which violates the Administrative Procedure Act (the ‘APA’), and other affirmative obligations of the rulemaking process . . . . For all of these reasons, the Proposed Rule is unlawful and should not be adopted.”*

Read the full comment [here](#).

Alongside the Cities of Chicago and New York—and the U.S. Conference of Mayors—the following local governments signed on to the public comment: Berkeley, CA; Long Beach, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Sacramento, CA; Santa Monica, CA; West Hollywood, CA; Boulder, CO; Boulder County Board of County Commissioners (CO); Washington DC; Iowa City, IA; Gary, IN; Somerville, MA; Baltimore, MD; Minneapolis, MN; Kansas City, MO; St. Louis, MO; Plainfield, NJ; Rochester, NY; Columbus, OH; Dayton, OH; Portland, OR; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Central Falls, RI; Providence, RI; Austin, TX; Alexandria, VA; Burlington, VT; Seattle, WA; and Madison, WI.

This comment is one of hundreds of thousands of comments that were submitted to the Federal Register following the proposed rule's publication date. Some of the localities that joined this comment, including [New York City](#), have also filed locality-specific comments. The period to submit comments closed on December 10.

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