



## Asian Americans for Equality

2 Allen Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor • New York, NY 10002

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Dec. 7, 2018

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
Department of Homeland Security  
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20529-2140

Re: DHS Docket No. USCIS-2010-0012, RIN 1615-AA22, Comments in Response to Proposed Rulemaking: Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE), a 45-year-old non-profit organization, we are writing in response to the Department of Homeland Security's proposed changes regarding who is considered a "Public Charge." We are vehemently opposed to this proposed rule, which would threaten the welfare of millions of immigrant families.

Based in New York City, AAFE has a long history of preserving and building affordable housing, empowering small business owners, facilitating neighborhood planning initiatives and providing an array of community services. Each year, our Department of Justice-certified counselors provide immigration assistance to at least 2,500 individuals seeking citizenship.

This proposal is a misguided and dangerous scheme to pick and choose who can immigrate and pursue their dreams of greater opportunity in the United States. It would prevent immigrants who use government services - including Medicaid, food stamps, Section 8 housing assistance - from obtaining permanent resident status. This change would go against the history of our country and undermine our values of equal opportunity.

At AAFE's neighborhood service offices on the Lower East Side and in Chinatown in Manhattan, in Flushing and Jackson Heights, Queens, and in Sunset Park, Brooklyn we have for many months been witnessing the detrimental effects of this administration's immigration policies. People are afraid. They're fearful about asking for help, even when it means going without food and health care for their families. AAFE's staff has even heard from members of the community too scared to call 911 during emergencies. Fewer people are enrolling in AAFE's civics, English language and citizenship classes, even though they want nothing more than to contribute to their communities — and to become American citizens.

This rule would force parents to make terrible choices between feeding, educating and housing their children and keeping their families together. Rather than dividing our families and our communities, we urge this administration to make investments in education, workforce training, housing, health care and infrastructure. Our country is stronger when we stand together to build a compassionate, healthy, prosperous future for us all.



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We urge the administration to withdraw this proposed rule, which would impair immigrants' ability to financially support themselves and their families. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information about our unique experiences supporting and empowering immigrant communities in New York City.

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