



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

Senator Rivera's Public Comment on USCIS Proposed Changes to Public Charge Rule

GUSTAVO RIVERA November 30, 2018

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My name is Gustavo Rivera and I am a State Senator for the 33rd Senate District of New York. Since 2010, I have had the honor to represent 318,000 Bronx residents, many of whom have migrated to this country in the hopes of a brighter future, as so many Americans have done since our country's foundation. Today, I proudly represent one of the largest Dominican and Puerto Rican populations in the United States, the fastest growing Mexican population in the country, and substantial and diverse population of Africans, Central Americans, and Southeast Asians.

Despite my district's rich diversity, the majority of my constituents, including many hard-working immigrants, face a dire economic reality. With a median income of \$27,000 and a rising cost of living, many families struggle every day to make ends meet. The proposed changes to the public charge rule make it abundantly clear that this administration is not only seeking to limit legal immigration, but that it is willing to do it at the expense of the poorest among us, including millions of New Yorkers and their families.

Currently, 38 percent of the 2.02 million non-citizens New Yorkers, as well as 33 percent of New Yorkers born in the United States, could be deemed unacceptable if they were subjected to the proposed public charge rule due to their use of food, housing, or healthcare assistance.

For the parents of the 704,000 U.S.-born children in New York State who are enrolled in either Medicaid or Child Health Plus, this rule change would force them to choose between providing basic healthcare to their children or increasing the chances for their application to be rejected and their potential deportation.

This rule change would also have a devastating impact on New York's economy. Immigrants residing in New York contribute \$48.9 billion in taxes, own nearly 300,000 businesses, and employ nearly 500,000 New Yorkers. Further, New Yorkers could be forced to disenroll from programs such as Medicaid and SNAP among others, which would cause New York State to lose as much as \$2.6 billion in federal funding, feel a \$5 billion loss in economic ripple effect, and lose around 34,000 jobs.

That is why I am joining the calls of many of my colleagues across all levels of governments as well as advocacy organizations to demand that this administration ceases its continuous attacks against immigrant communities and immediately withdraws the proposed public charge rule as it will jeopardize the well-being and future of thousands of families that call New York home.