

#OneNation

Join Forces, Fight Back, Protect Our Families

For Immediate Release: Thursday, September 27, 2018, 1:30 p.m.

Contact: Edward Tom 415.601.2627

LEADERS JOIN FORCES AGAINST NEW POLICY TARGETING LEGAL IMMIGRANTS Proposed New Homeland Security Rule To Punish Families, Endanger Public Health

OAKLAND, CA – Thursday, September 27, 2018 – A broad coalition of elected officials, community leaders, patients, physicians, activists, and supporters are joining forces to lift their collective voice against a new policy that threatens the health, safety, and unity of civil society. The policy specifically goes after legal immigrants who play by the rules, pay taxes, and are contributing to society. They are now at risk if they have used vital public support benefits such as health care, food stamps, or housing assistance.

Announced this week by the Department of Homeland Security, the new proposal would punish and potentially separate millions of legal residents from their families by wrongfully denying them readmission or permanent residence.

Assemblymembers Rob Bonta and David Chiu, Supervisor Wilma Chan, patients, physicians, together with health care, housing, and other safety net, civic engagement, and advocacy groups, are gathering today to speak out and fight back.

“It is unfair, it is dangerous, and it is not our American values. Our American values mean we live and breathe the reality that immigrants continue to strengthen our nation. Our shared ethos of hard work, caring for one another, and contributing for the greater good is what has defined the best part of our history and our vision for a united America.” said Sherry Hirota, CEO of Asian Health Services in Oakland California.

The complex rule has elected leaders, community groups, and health care, housing, and civic engagement activists concerned about the potential abuse by the Department Homeland Security to overstep its authority and unfairly punish legal immigrants. The rule would deny permanent “green card” status to immigrants who use vital public benefits, such as Medicaid, food stamps, medicine for the elderly, and Section 8 Public Housing. Just as inhumanely, it also calls for wealth, age, health, family status, and education to be weighed in who can come in, and who can stay.

More than 20 million children could be separated from their families, millions would be denied access to healthcare and would be forced to forgo food and nutritional support. Although the White House has not been able to garner Congressional support for restricting family immigration, this Homeland Security ruling intends to bypass both Congress and public opinion.

The law requires that the public must be granted the opportunity to weigh in. Community leaders anticipate hundreds of thousands of public comments against the proposal within 60 days of when it is released. Congress has the right and responsibility to rein in agency regulations such as this, and so the public comment process can stop the proposed rule.

Dr. Tung Nguyen said, “This is a fight we believe we can win. We are laser focused on three things to shut down this cruel and divisive proposed rule,” he emphasized. “One, we will submit hundreds of thousands of opposition statements during the 60-day public comment period, two, we are registering people to vote in the upcoming election on Tuesday, November 6th and three, ultimately we are calling for Congress to block the rule.”

“Treating immigrants as public charges is based on the unfair principle that income and wealth determine one’s value to society,” said Hirota. “America is one nation built on the strength of immigrants. We are only as strong as the most vulnerable among us. We will not let the Trump policy agenda force families to choose between healthcare, stability, food they need, and their children and the people they love.”

Join us, #OneNation. Register to vote in the November 6, 2018 election, send in your opposition to the proposed rule at <https://www.onenationaapi.com>.

More than a thousand groups across are opposing the proposed rule, <https://asianhealthservices.org/protecting-immigrant-families-national-campaign-opposition-statement-over-1100-organizational-signatures/>

###