THE AIDS INSTITUTE DENOUNCES PUBLIC CHARGE RULING

Discrimination Against Immigrants Undermines Efforts to End the HIV Epidemic

Washington, DC—The Supreme Court’s decision to allow the Trump Administration’s rule regarding “public charge” for immigrants to go into effect will undermine nationwide efforts to end the HIV epidemic. The rule, originally slated to go into effect on October 15, 2019, is currently being challenged in several lower courts, and had been under injunction against implementation while that process played out.

The public charge rule proposed by the Trump administration will deter immigrants in the U.S. who hope to gain permanent resident status from seeking assistance from Medicaid, SNAP, the Section 8 Housing program, or other safety net programs because that assistance could jeopardize their eligibility for visa extensions or green cards. This will have a negative impact on the ability for individuals to be linked to live-saving and curative treatments for HIV and viral hepatitis, and could perpetuate the ongoing epidemics of those diseases that are occurring across the country.

“In order to end the HIV epidemic, we need to ensure that people who are living with or are at risk of HIV feel empowered to seek the care they need, whether it’s an HIV test, HIV prevention services like PrEP, or treatment for HIV. By erecting barriers to that care, the administration is undermining its own goal of ending the epidemic,” said Rachel Klein, Deputy Executive Director of The AIDS Institute. “This rule is currently being challenged in courts across the county and allowing it to be implemented despite those challenges is irresponsible and dangerous.”

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The AIDS Institute is a national non-partisan, nonprofit organization that promotes action for social change through public policy, research, advocacy and education.

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