

**HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS RECOGNIZE SIGNIFICANT HARM TO
IMMIGRANT FAMILIES RESULTING FROM USCIS' FINAL PUBLIC
CHARGE RULE**

Immigrant students should focus on studies, not food insecurity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Jose Magaña-Salgado (jose@presidentsimmigrationalliance.org)

Washington, D.C.—Today, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration and Services (USCIS) issued its [final public charge regulation](#), scheduled for publication on Wednesday, August 14th. The new rule will undermine the success of immigrant and international students and their families and negatively impact higher education institutions. We are deeply disappointed that despite the strong concerns raised in thousands of comments, including those submitted by our two organizations and numerous higher education institutions, the final regulation still ignores the extensive evidence that demonstrated the significant, adverse impacts that the rule will have on immigrant families, including U.S. citizen children of immigrants, as well as entire communities and our nation.

The final regulation will penalize low-income immigrants, who receive “one or more designated public benefits for more than 12 months, in the aggregate, within any 36-month period,” including any cash benefits for income maintenance, Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), most forms of Medicaid, and certain housing programs. Critically, the public charge regulation would jeopardize the ability of [millions of noncitizens](#) to obtain green cards. Regardless of some additional clarification, the rule will continue to [chill the use](#) of critically needed benefits by U.S. citizens, their families, and others eligible for assistance.

Furthermore, despite the extensive research showing the benefits of immigrants to our country and the critical role of postsecondary education in boosting upward mobility and helping the economy, this public charge regulation will deter immigrant youth and adult learners from enrolling in higher education and workforce training programs and will significantly [harm the U.S. society and economy](#).

Teresita B. Wisell, Executive Director, Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education, stated: “The regulation will disproportionately affect community college students, as one third of community college students have family incomes of less than \$20,000. The rule will not only undermine the ability of students and their families to succeed at our nation’s community colleges—which our nation universally acknowledges as a critical pipeline to the workforce and further

education—but discourages individuals from accessing the services for which they are otherwise eligible. A hungry student is a student who cannot study, cannot focus on her studies, and whose success is uncertain. This regulation deprives immigrant students and their families from accessing the services needed to be healthy and productive contributors to our communities and country.”

Miriam Feldblum, Executive Director, Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, stated: “The government’s public charge regulation is an ill-conceived measure that will undermine the ability of higher education to contribute to our nation’s economic engine, shrink the tax base, and discourage future immigrant entrepreneurs and innovators from coming to our country. Our colleges and universities must remain open and competitive to immigrant and international students. This policy will increase the barriers for immigrant students seeking to pursue higher education, and deter others from utilizing our nation’s immigration channels to come and contribute to our nation. The Alliance will support all efforts to rescind this regulation and restore our nation’s commitment to immigrant students and their families.”

The non-partisan **Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration** brings together college and university leaders dedicated to increasing public understanding of how immigration policies and practices impact our students, campuses and communities, and supporting policies that create a welcoming environment for undocumented, immigrant, and international students. The Alliance is comprised of over 430 presidents and chancellors of public and private colleges and universities, serving over four million students in 41 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

The **Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education (CCCIE)** is a national network of community colleges and other professional organizations committed to increasing educational and career opportunities for immigrant and refugee students. CCCIE builds the capacity of community colleges to accelerate immigrant and refugee success and raises awareness of the essential role these colleges play in advancing immigrant integration through education. CCCIE’s work is guided by a Blue Ribbon Panel of community college leaders, representing over 50 colleges serving an estimated 1.2 million students.