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23 Children's Health, Advocacy Organizations Join Together to Oppose Public Charge Final Rule

"Today, our 23 children's health and advocacy organizations join together in expressing our strong opposition to the final public charge rule issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). By expanding the public charge test, which is used to decide if someone can become a permanent U.S. resident or obtain a visa, the DHS final rule will have a detrimental impact on the health of millions of immigrant children, pregnant women and families.

"Families will be forced to choose between accessing vital health insurance programs or risk being able to remain together in our country. Children's health will bear the burden of the public charge final rule, with families disenrolling from or avoiding services they are eligible for out of fear. Children will miss out on the long-term health benefits of programs like Medicaid and expectant mothers will forgo prenatal care. Estimates show that changing the public charge definition puts millions of children at risk of disenrollment from key health programs, including children with specific medical needs. Recent data show that nearly 1 million fewer children are enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program – with the chilling effect caused by the public charge proposal likely being one of the factors driving unenrollment.

"Our organizations are urging DHS to rescind the public charge final rule immediately, and instead call for policies and programs that support the health and well-being of immigrant children, pregnant women and families."

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Medical Student Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
Association for Community Affiliated Plans
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Child Care Aware of America
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Dental Health Project
Children's Health Fund
Families USA
Family Voices
First Focus on Children
Georgetown University Center for Children & Families
March of Dimes
MomsRising
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Education Association
Nurse-Family Partnership
Prevent Blindness
United Way Worldwide