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SUPERVISOR WILMA CHAN REMINDS RESIDENTS OF DEADLINE TO COMMENT ON CHANGES TO “PUBLIC CHARGE” PROPOSAL

Oakland, CA – Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan today reminded County residents that they have five days left to comment on a proposed federal rule change that would negatively impact the health and well-being of immigrants legally residing in the United States.

The proposed change would amend the definition of a “public charge,” or an individual immigration officials consider likely to become dependent on the government as their main source of support. Currently, a person is designated a “public charge” if they collect cash benefits such as SSI or TANF. The new definition would penalize recipients of programs including SNAP (Cal-Fresh), Medicaid (Medi-Cal), Section 8 housing, and other critical non-monetary public assistance that supplement the incomes of working families struggling to meet their basic needs.

“Alameda County has a proud tradition of inclusion and diversity – one that is inconsistent with the current Administration’s continued hostility towards immigrants residing lawfully in this country,” Supervisor Chan said. “This represents an important opportunity to reject the politics of fear and division by standing with our immigrant communities and voicing our opposition to this malicious regulatory change.”

Residents can comment on the proposed change until Monday, December 10, 2018 at 8:59 PM PST by visiting <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=USCIS-2010-0012-0001>. To date, over 123,000 comments have been submitted to the federal government.

Negative consequences of the proposed change include:

- Denying legal immigrants visas or permanent residency (known as a Green Card)
- Discouraging access to critical primary health care, including flu shots and prenatal exams
- Exacerbating poverty by limiting access to housing, nutrition, healthcare, and education
- Penalizing individuals over arbitrary criteria, including the lack of English proficiency
- Threatening billions of dollars in federal economic growth
- Risking up to \$2.8 billion in lost economic output in California and 17,700 California jobs

Last month, Supervisor Chan hosted and cosponsored a Public Charge Town Hall in Oakland aimed at educating community leaders, service providers, and residents on the proposed changes to the “public charge” regulation. Over 200 individuals attended the event, which included presentations by the Alameda County Social Services Agency and Immigrant Legal Resource Center. County staff are continuing to do outreach and education on this issue.

Other California officials who have joined Supervisor Chan in denouncing this proposal include Senator Kamala Harris, Senator Diane Feinstein, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Congressman Ro Khanna, Congressman Eric Swalwell, State Senator Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember Rob Bonta, Attorney General Xavier Becerra, the entire Alameda County Board of Supervisors, and many other California leaders.

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About Supervisor Wilma Chan

Alameda County Supervisor Chan represents District 3, which includes the cities of Alameda, San Leandro, parts of Oakland including Chinatown, Jack London, Fruitvale and San Antonio neighborhoods, and the unincorporated community of San Lorenzo. She is currently President of the Board of Supervisors, Chair of the Health Committee, and a member of the County’s Personnel, Administrative, and Legislative Committee, the Budget Committee, the Unincorporated Services Committee, and the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant Rights. For more on Supervisor Chan’s accomplishments and current initiatives, please visit www.acgov.gov/board/district3 or connect on Facebook with “Supervisor Wilma Chan.”