

As an education funder committed to improving the futures of vulnerable students, the Maddox Charitable Fund joins foundations across the nation to express our profound concern over the “public charge” overhaul that would significantly change immigration policy.¹² The proposed rule consideration would erode the resilience of working families while straining schools, nonprofits and other community institutions.

One in four children in the United States has at least one immigrant parent.

We are all familiar with the social determinants of health, but the same socio-political and economic factors have a major impact on student success when families are forced to live under perilous public policy. In fact, research from 2017 and 2018 shows that anti-immigrant federal policies and rhetoric fuel have led to drops in attendance and applications to early childhood education programs, and have reduced participation from immigrant parents in the classroom.³

Students cannot learn when they are imperiled by threats of parental deportation and fraught with sleepless nights. The public charge test would increase school absenteeism, lower literacy levels, decrease high school completion rates and keep graduates from attending college. The proposed rule would traumatize countless students, many of whom are U.S. Citizens. A decade from now we could have a less prepared workforce even as our nation strives to remain globally competitive.

The Maddox Charitable Fund’s most valuable partners are the nonprofits serving on the frontlines. The proposed rule would roll back decades of philanthropic investment in the nonprofit sector to increase immigrant families’ access to health and social services, reduce racial and ethnic disparities, improve community health and well-being, help families weather temporary financial pressures and facilitate long-term self-sufficiency and upward mobility.

The harm caused by the proposed public charge measure would ripple across the nonprofit sector, stressing NGOs whose services are already in high demand. Health clinics, legal services, child welfare initiatives, food and nutrition programs would be called on to respond to this avoidable human-made disaster.

¹ <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2018/09/22/dhs-announces-new-proposed-immigration-rule-enforce-long-standing-law-promotes-self>

² <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/fact-sheet/proposed-changes-to-public-charge-policies-for-immigrants-implications-for-health-coverage/>

³ https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/03/2018_harmfulimpactsece.pdf

From a human standpoint and social services perspective, we simply cannot afford it.

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Grantmaking Areas: Education, low-income youth, wildlife conservation

Mission Statement: The Dan and Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund's mission is to better our community through strategic investments in furthering wildlife conservation, and in improving the lives of young people.