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**Today’s Ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court to Lift Injunction on the Public Charge Rule Represents a Significant Loss for Children and Families Seeking to Build a Better Life in the U.S.**

**COLUMBUS –** The Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio is deeply disappointed in the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision, yesterday, to lift the injunction on new restrictions the Trump administration is making to the ‘public charge’ regulation. This new regulation makes harmful changes to how the government determines which immigrant families can remain in the country. The public charge rule is expected to affect over 56,000 Ohioans who are here legally and therefore, entitled to apply for public assistance.

Under the new rule, the receipt of public benefits, including Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), public housing assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and federal, state or local cash assistance, will factor into the Department of Homeland Security’s decisions to grant or deny green cards to immigrants living in the United States. Further, fear and misunderstandings about this rule can dissuade individuals from seeking help even though they are in the United States lawfully, are eligible for assistance and their immigration status would not be negatively affected by accessing that assistance.

“Today’s ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court allowing the proposed changes to the ‘public charge’ rule to go into effect will force many immigrants to make an impossible choice between the things they need – healthcare, food and housing – and the people they love,” says Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio Executive Director, Tracy Nájera. “The Administration’s public charge rule is an attack on the health and well-being of our immigrant communities – families and children – throughout the Buckeye State and has the potential to drive more families into the shadows.”

At a time when Ohio is experiencing significant decreases in the number of children insured through Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), this change in the “public charge” rule, only fuels the hostile political climate faced by legal immigrants, and further dissuades individuals from enrolling in benefits they need for themselves or their children. Additionally, the rate of children receiving SNAP/food stamp benefits has declined from 34.1% in 2017 to 32.1% in 2018, one of the largest declines the state has seen in recent years. Make no mistake, these numbers are not indicative of need, but rather demonstrate how political decisions are being made to withhold much needed services from families and children who need them most.

“We know that the best way to build a strong country is to ensure that the families who live here have the food, medical care, shelter and other basics they need to thrive,” continues Nájera. “We urge the state of Ohio and our state and county leadership to issue communications and raise awareness of who this rule impacts, what programs are included, and support efforts to ensure accurate information is shared, so that no child or family member who is need of assistance goes without it due to fear or misunderstanding.”

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The Children’s Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.