

## **Trump Administration Proposes Keeping Green Cards from Legal Immigrants Who Might Use Welfare**

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The Trump administration has publicly posted a proposal that'd bar legal immigrants from receiving green cards or citizenship if they've recently received welfare or other government assistance.

Under the new rule, which POLITICO reports was posted on Saturday, immigrants can be denied 'lawful permanent residency' if they've availed certain public benefits—or if the Department of Homeland Security anticipates they may do so in the future.

According to POLITICO, the move is representative of White House aide Stephen Miller's campaign to 'reduce drastically all immigration to the U.S., both legal and illegal.' Miller purportedly believes that taking on immigrants will help Republicans retain their majority in Congress come midterm elections.

Benefit programs targeted in the White House initiative include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, Medicare Part D and Section 8 Housing vouchers.

In a departure from the administration's initial proposal, immigrants will not be penalized for receiving subsidized health insurance through the Affordable Care Act or Children's Health Insurance Program.

Critics of the draft say it's likely to hurt the most vulnerable. Since work authorization is a priority for many legal immigrants, families could be forced to choose between employment prospects and programs which held their children.

As POLITICO notes, the rule isn't likely to hurt illegal immigration. Unauthorized aliens, by and large, do not qualify for most forms of federal welfare.

Once the proposal is published in the Federal Register, the Department of Homeland Security will open a 60-day window for public comment.

'After that,' writes POLITICO, 'the administration will incorporate feedback before it issues a final rule ,a process that could take many months.'

Current White House aide and outspoken immigration critic Stephen Miller. Image via Flickr/Gage Skidmore. (CCA\_BY-2.0)

The Department of Homeland Security is still trying to determine whether participation in the Children's Health Insurance Program should strip immigrants of their ability to receive green cards or legal permanent residency.

Department Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said in a Saturday statement that the regulation would "promote immigrant self-sufficiency and protect finite resources by ensuring that they are not likely to become burdens on American taxpayers."

Even throughout the administration's self-imposed family separation crisis, White House officials kept harsh on immigration.

"The Democrats think there are no consequences for anyone entering this country illegally," one White House official told POLITICO in June. "They are dramatically overreaching, and all of their hysteria and hypocrisy will backfire on them spectacularly.

"It is a giant mistake for Democrats to jettison their last possibility of a pivot to focus on pocketbook issues."

Interestingly, reports from groups like the libertarian Cato Institute have found that immigrants are less likely to use welfare or other public services than native-born Americans.