



Judge blocks Trump immigration rule linking health insurance to visas

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When it comes to targeting immigrants, the Trump administration hasn't held back. President Trump has continued to decrease the refugee cap, and he's poured millions of dollars into Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Recently, though, one of the administration's attempts to stifle immigration was halted. On Saturday, a federal judge blocked a Trump rule requiring immigrants to have health insurance before they can get a visa. It's a decision that many advocates are celebrating.

Signed by Trump in early October, the proclamation targeted people seeking immigrant visas outside of the U.S., requiring them to prove that they'd have U.S. health insurance within 30 days of arriving in the country. If not, they were required to prove they'd have enough money to pay for any medical costs. The rule didn't apply to lawful permanent residents, asylum seekers, refugees, or children.

The proclamation was supposed to go into effect on Sunday, Nov. 3. It was blocked by Judge Michael Simon of the U.S. district court in Portland, Oregon, who granted a 28-day temporary restraining order. In his order, Simon noted the harm that the proclamation would likely cause immigrants and their families.

"Facing a likely risk of being separated from their family members and a delay in obtaining a visa to which family members would otherwise be entitled is irreparable harm," Simon wrote.

Family separation is a key concern here because currently, prospective immigrants can essentially be sponsored by family members who are either U.S. citizens or green card holders. Trump's proclamation would prevent that, meaning families would remain separated.

The lawsuit against Trump's proclamation was brought by seven U.S. citizens and a nonprofit organization. According to Time, the lawsuit argued that the proclamation would block almost two-thirds of all prospective immigrants. It's unclear when Simon might rule on the facts of the case, in addition to his stay imposed Saturday, *Time* said.

"We know that our fight is far from over, we will be steadfast in our work to ensure that we end family separation, ensure the dignity and rights of our community are respected, and hold this administration accountable to our nation's constitution," Carmen Rubio, the executive director of Latino Network and a plaintiff in the case, told BuzzFeed News.

In a statement, the White House argued that Simon's ruling was "wrong and unfair." It went on to argue that U.S. taxpayers would "suffer the grave consequences of the immense strain inflicted on the healthcare system from subsidizing uncompensated care for those seeking admission."

However, immigrants use 39 percent fewer welfare benefits, including Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and more, than non-immigrants, according to research from the Cato Institute. A 2013 brief also noted that, when low-income non-citizens use public benefits, the average value of benefits per recipient is always lower than non-immigrants.