



**March 15, 2021**

### **Statement on reversal of public charge rule change**

The Greater Chicago Food Depository commends the U.S. Department of Justice for filing motions to dismiss its defense of the so-called public charge rule proposed by the previous administration. The public charge rule has done nothing but stoke fear and confusion since it was proposed in October 2018. Last week's motion by the Department of Justice ends a two-year legal battle and invalidates the public charge rule nationwide.

The harmful rule change added the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to the list of public benefits that could be negatively counted against people seeking lawful residency or citizenship.

In doing so, it discouraged immigrants and their families from seeking food assistance from SNAP, which is the country's frontline defense against hunger. It also had a chilling effect on immigrants' participation in other nutrition assistance programs that do not affect the public charge test.

The Food Depository has stood adamantly against the rule change since it was first introduced. As Chicago's food bank, we believe that no one should go hungry, regardless of immigration status, country of origin or any other factor. Through our network of partner food pantries, shelters, soup kitchens and similar programs, we're committed to serving anyone in need.

Food banks can't do it alone, though. Particularly at a time when the pandemic is disproportionately affecting Black and Brown communities, it's imperative that our immigrant neighbors are able to access federal nutrition programs.

Overturing this rule change is a hopeful step in the right direction.