



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Expresses Dismay Over SCOTUS Decision Affirming New "Public Charge" Rules

5-4 decision allows Trump Administration to enforce additional restrictions on qualifications for legal permanent residency

Washington, D.C. - The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today issued the following statement from Chief Executive Officer Arturo Vargas following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to allow the Trump Administration to deny legal permanent residency to those the government believes will rely on public assistance, such as housing or health care benefits:

"Yesterday the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, held up the controversial new 'public charge' rule which will enable the United States Government to deny entry into the country or application for legal permanent residence to individuals they deem likely to obtain public assistance. Without any indication that a reinterpretation is warranted, the Administration is proposing to significantly alter its definition of dependence upon public benefits to maximize the number and diversity of people denied immigration status on that basis.

"This rule is an attempt to erase the enormous net contributions to the U.S. economy that noncitizens make as workers, employers, and caregivers. And while these individuals must pay taxes from the moment they begin living and working in the United States, most noncitizens are not eligible to receive any public benefits until they have been legal permanent residents in good standing for at least five years. Only Congress, not the Administration, should change our nation's rules governing eligibility for benefits.

"Immigrants directly contribute to America's entrepreneurial spirit and creativity. We know from a 2015 study that 18 percent of all small businesses in the United States are immigrant-owned. These are the very businesses that fuel the American economy and show that enfranchised immigrant communities strengthen our country.

"Our shared prosperity as a country increases with each new American who takes on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The inspiring stories of immigrants should remind all Americans of how important naturalization is to the fabric of our society. The U.S. Supreme Court allowing enforcement of this prejudicial new rule only serves to undermine the future of our great nation."

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-profit, non-partisan organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.