Atlanta, Georgia, September 22, 2018 — Today, the Trump Administration released new proposed rules that would punish immigrants seeking vital healthcare and other services.

Immigrants are already currently barred from utilizing most federal programs during their first five years living in the United States. The proposed regulation greatly expands the federal government’s ability to reject applications for lawful permanent residency, attacking our family-based immigration system through backdoor methods.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice, an affiliation of five civil rights organizations, issues the following statement:

“This is a wide-reaching and incredibly depraved attack from the Trump Administration on our families. This proposed rule could discourage families from accessing the basic assistance they need in order to survive in our communities. More than 1.5 million Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) immigrants are in families that use public benefits to feed and sustain their families.

Health and nutrition programs support and lift up families in the U.S., including immigrant and U.S. citizen family members -- they are fundamental human rights. The proposed rules will force individuals into the impossible decision of keeping their families together or accessing the benefits they need to survive. The proposed rules are cruel and lack human decency. The original public charge provision is rooted in the racist actions of politicians from 1882, the same year as the discriminatory Chinese Exclusion Act.

Families are the cornerstone of any community and one of the most important institutions in our society. The government should be supporting families and helping them thrive during times of need instead of instilling fear.

We urge everyone to submit public comments expressing opposition to this rule before the comment period closes. We will continue to demand that this administration value our families. We will not stand for the Trump Administration’s white nativist policies that seek to keep immigrants of color out of this country and scare them away from accessing programs for which they are entitled.”

About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees (“Asian Americans”) in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.