

ADVOCACY FOR FEBRUARY 2020

(Because of the many cruel and harmful policies, we are attaching a list of contact information for elected officials, in case yours isn't handy.)

PRESENCE OF ICE IN MONROE COUNTY

On January 25, 2017, President Trump's Executive Order 13768 broadened "interior enforcement" priorities to target ALL undocumented immigrants for deportation *regardless of their individual circumstances*.

In the three years since, this massive expansion has devastated immigrant families and communities around the US—including right here in Indiana's Monroe County. The presence of ICE in Monroe County is now the subject of serious protest, including protests against the Sheriff of Monroe County for cooperation beyond the level required.

Contact: #ICEOutofMoCo #iceoutofmoco

See the excellent editorial by Christie Popp on this issue in Bloom Magazine (Feb./March 2020)

MIGRANT PROTECTION PROTOCOLS (MPP) ("REMAIN IN MEXICO PROGRAM")

(FROM DHS): The Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) are a U.S. Government action whereby certain foreign individuals entering or seeking admission to the U.S. from Mexico – illegally or without proper documentation – may be returned to Mexico and wait outside of the U.S. for the duration of their immigration proceedings, where Mexico will provide them with all "appropriate humanitarian protections" (*quotation marks mine*) for the duration of their stay.

The Trump administration is moving forward with this tough new asylum rule in its campaign to slow the flow of Central American migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. Asylum-seeking immigrants who pass through a third country en route to the U.S. must first apply for refugee status in that country rather than at the U.S. border.

This "Remain in Mexico" policy in Nogales has the following horrors: right now, asylum seekers are prevented from presenting at the Port of Entry due to "metering" or are returned to Mexico to await a hearing date in El Paso, Texas, approximately 350 miles from Nogales.

However, there is some good news on this:

The Florence Project has responded to the increased needs of asylum seekers in Mexico by creating a Border Action Team!

The Florence Project has a partnership with the [Kino Border Initiative](#) (KBI), and now can expand its presence in Nogales with the Border Action Team, in response to the recent implementation of the Remain in Mexico policy in Nogales. Right now, asylum seekers are prevented from presenting at the Port of Entry due to "metering" or are returned to Mexico to await a hearing date in El Paso, Texas, approximately 350 miles from Nogales, under the "Remain in Mexico" policy.

The Florence Project's "Border Action Team" currently is comprised of two legal assistants and one attorney, and thanks to donations, plans to add more staff to the team. In addition, the team is supported by other members of the Florence Project staff, its partners at KBI, and dedicated volunteers.

(next page: [THREE MORE PROBLEMATIC POLICIES](#))

PUBLIC CHARGE RULE

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will implement the Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds final rule ("Final Rule") on Feb. 24, 2020, except for in the State of Illinois where the rule remains enjoined by a federal court as of Jan. 30, 2020. Under the Final Rule, USCIS will look at the factors required under the law by Congress, including an immigrant's age, health, income, education and skills, in order to determine whether the alien is likely at any time to become a public charge.

The Final Rule, issued in August and originally scheduled to be effective in October, prescribes how DHS would determine whether an immigrant is inadmissible to the United States based on the alien's likelihood of becoming a public charge at any time in the future, as set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Final Rule also addresses USCIS' authority to issue public charge bonds in the context of applications for adjustment of status. Finally, the Final Rule includes a requirement that aliens seeking an extension or stay of change of status demonstrate that they have not received public benefits over the designated threshold since obtaining the nonimmigrant status they seek to extend or change.

The U.S. Supreme Court voted 5-4 to lift the nationwide injunction imposed by a federal judge in New York against the Trump administration's "public charge" rule.

Are you at risk under the Public Charge Rule? Go to: <https://www.boundless.com/public-charge-estimator/> From: Health Affairs (healthaffairs.org)

PROCLAMATION ON HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

In another apparent effort to curb immigration in the U.S., the White House issued a proclamation titled, "Suspension of Entry of Immigrants Who Will Financially Burden the United States Healthcare System," which will deny immigration visas for those who lack health insurance or the ability to pay for medical costs. This proclamation, released late in the night of Oct. 4, states that individuals seeking an immigrant visa must prove that they will obtain health insurance coverage within 30 days of entry in the U.S. or be able to pay for 'reasonably foreseeable medical costs.'

As written, it will not apply to asylum seekers, refugees, unaccompanied children, children of US citizens, those entering on temporary visas (including H1-B), international students and scholars, visitors for business, tourists, L-1 intracompany transferees, and those who were issued visas prior to the effective date. **However, it will apply to those currently seeking immigrant visas from abroad, including spouses and parents of US citizens and the immediate family members of lawfully permanent residents**, representing a striking departure from current and long-standing US immigration policy.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ALLOW STATES AND COUNTIES TO VETO REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

This Executive Order authorizes states and counties to veto refugee resettlement at the local level. Fortunately, it has been **struck down!** The Indianapolis Mayor and the Indiana Governor both stated earlier that they would not take that opportunity to reject refugee resettlement in, respectively, their city and state. It would be a great idea to thank them for their statements. We will certainly need their help in the future:

Mayor Joe Hogsett: Phone: 317-232-4567,

Governor John Holcomb: on Contact Information sheet (attached).

Cole Varga, Exec. Dir. of Exodus in Indy, wrote a powerful letter about this (attached).

(NEXT PAGE: USCIS FEES INCREASING)

USCIS FEES INCREASING

The Trump administration wants to **increase** the cost of citizenship applications by 83 percent for roughly 9 million **immigrants** eligible to become U.S. citizens. The citizenship application fee would rise from \$640 to \$1,170 and fees associated with legal permanent residency will rise 79 percent — from \$1,220 to \$2,195.

The Comment period has been extended to Feb. 10 (deadline for e-mail and postmark)

You can comment online by going to: <https://www.congressweb.com/AILA/71#/71/>

Comments must include “Reference: USCIS-2019-0010-10938”.