

# **End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: Trump administration continues attacks on immigrant families with proposal for HUD rule change and new immigration plan**

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Madison — Domestic violence victim advocates across Wisconsin are once again expressing their concern over the most recent attempts by the Trump administration to curb legal immigration in the United States. Coming on the heels of a new rule proposed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to prohibit “mixed status” immigrant families from living in public housing and other subsidized housing programs, President Trump announced his proposal for a new immigration plan last week, alarming advocates who serve immigrant victims of domestic violence.

“Time and time again President Trump and his administration have made it clear that they would rather pursue a campaign of xenophobia and outright nationalism than address the all-too-real violence and abuse impacting numerous immigrant families today, often related to US foreign policy abroad,” said Patti Seger, executive director of End Domestic Abuse WI. “The fact remains that undocumented immigrants commit crimes at much lower rates than native-born US citizens. If this administration is interested in making our country safer, it should start by ensuring that all immigrant and refugee victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and

trafficking feel safe reporting crimes to law enforcement without fear of deportation and family separation. These anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric only serve to increase the fear and anxiety that immigrant and refugee families are already feeling across the country.”

Last week, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) proposed new regulations that would prohibit “mixed status” immigrant families from living in public housing and other subsidized housing programs. Currently, mixed status families receive prorated housing subsidies so that family members who are U.S. Citizens or have immigration statuses that make them eligible for housing benefits receive the assistance for which they are qualified, while ineligible family members do not receive any housing assistance. If enacted, the proposed rule would result in more family separations and higher rates of homelessness for immigrant and mixed status families, all of which increase the risk of victimization and harm for immigrant survivors of domestic violence. The public has until July 9, 2019 to comment on the harm the proposed rule would impart.

In response to the proposal, Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia (TX-16), member of the House Financial Services Committee, introduced H.R. 2716 to block the proposed HUD rule. Reps. Lou Correa (CA-46), Veronica Escobar (TX-16), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14), and Chuy Garcia (IL-4) have joined as original cosponsors of this legislation and End Abuse is encouraging all of Wisconsin’s Congressional representatives to support the bill as well.

Compounding this potential change (which has yet to be enacted), President Trump announced his newly proposed immigration plan which would punish families by placing even further restrictions on family members of U.S. Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents trying gain lawful status in the United States. This plan is unlikely to garner support in Congress, and advocates for victims of domestic violence are urging their Wisconsin Representatives to reject the plan forcefully and publicly.

“Frankly, those of us in the domestic violence advocacy community are sick and tired of trying to make some of our leaders at the federal level understand the consequences of these bigoted policies and statements. It is long past time to reject xenophobia justified by lies and instead focus on family reunification, humane immigration policies and the protection of those who are actually in harm’s way, like immigrant victims of violence,” continued Seger. “Demonizing refugee families will not make anyone safer; it will only ensure that undocumented and immigrant

victims of crime remain in the shadows while abusers continue their violent behavior unimpeded.”

The proposed HUD rule change and President Trump’s new immigration plan are both yet to be enacted. Additionally, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) is likely to announce proposed changes in their deportation policies related to immigrants who lawfully utilize public services later this month. End Abuse encourages concerned parties to look at Protecting Immigrant /families and Keep Families Together for more information and updates on the proposed HUD rule and potential proposed DOJ rule