

# STOP the Charge!

**“Don’t oppress an immigrant. You know what it’s like to be an immigrant, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt.”**

Exodus 23:9

**“I was a stranger and you welcomed me...”** Matthew 25:35

**“So now you are no longer strangers and aliens. Rather, you are fellow citizens with God’s people, and you belong to God’s household.”** Ephesians 2:19

Our Scriptures are full of references to welcome the stranger--the immigrant. We are reminded in the Hebrew Scriptures that once God’s people were strangers in a strange land. The New Testament reminds Christians that we are called to treat strangers as part of Jesus’ own family. As Jesus reminds us in Matthew 25:40: **“I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.”**

Today our brothers and sisters, those who have come to our country in search of hope, face an unwelcome new rule. The Department of Homeland Security has proposed to deny permanent resident status, or other changes to the citizenship process, to those legal immigrants in our country who are receiving any benefit from the government. A \$10 monthly food stamp (SNAP) benefit or a voucher to help pay for housing might keep a hard-working family from moving toward citizenship. This was not the intent of the original **“public charge”** rule that was focused on people who received most of their livelihood from the government. The benefits added to the rule are the ways our country seeks to assist families in crisis. And yet this new rule is already keeping these families in need from important services.

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Rev. John McCullough of Church World Service, a Christian agency helping families in need around the world says it well: **“Hard-working immigrant families shouldn’t have to choose between having enough to eat and their citizenship prospects....This type of policy goes against the tenets of our faith traditions to welcome and love our neighbors, and also to care for our children.”**

## There is good news!

We can do something about this rule. Until December 10, the Department of Homeland Security has asked for feedback on these proposed changes. Agencies and individuals from across the country, including here in Oklahoma, are working to let them know that this proposed change is bad for families, bad for Oklahoma, and bad for people of faith. Visit the Coalition for the Future of Oklahoma Families’ web page to learn more about the rule, its potential impact, and a way to make your voice heard.

Visit [www.protectOKfamilies.org](http://www.protectOKfamilies.org) today!

Our Scriptures are clear that we are called as people of faith to welcome the stranger in our midst and not to harm them. They are our brothers, our sisters, and our neighbors. These families--that are here legally working hard and giving back--need our voice and need our help. Make your voice heard today and help us **STOP the Charge!**

Make a Comment Today!

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