June 26, 2018

Hon. Kirstjen M. Nielsen

Secretary of Homeland Security

Washington, D.C. 20528

Mr. Michael Mulvaney

Director of the Office of Management and Budget

725 17th Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Nielsen and Director Mulvaney,

The Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley (DPSV) stands with Democratic members of Congress in opposition to the draft rules from the Department of Homeland Security that would allow immigration officers to consider the use of public benefits by immigrants and their family members to determine an individual’s eligibility for visas or green cards. These draft rules would frighten and adversely affect families, including those who are United States citizens, from accessing crucial programs that help them prosper such as: medical care, food assistance, and housing assistance. This change in policy does not represent our nation’s ideals, and we urge you to reconsider and rescind this proposal.

Expanding the definition of public charge in this manner would create new standards that bar immigrants from obtaining legal entry or permanent resident status based upon their utilization of social services to which they are legally entitled. Federal standards already prohibit immigrants from obtaining federal public-benefits. These new draft rules will merely jeopardize the well-being of families. Under this change in policy immigrant populations, including legal residents, will be hesitant to seek social and medical services out of fear that it will be held against their application or re-application for legal status. These draft rules completely disregard American lives.

Our government should always strive to support communities rather than instill fear. These draft rules would effectively make American families choose between seeking necessary healthcare, or putting food on the table, and being granted legal status. Communities will be harmed as a result. Therefore, we strongly urge you to reconsider this harmful proposal immediately.

Sincerely,

Shanna Ingalsbee

Chair of the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley