



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## State Senator Kevin Parker's Statement on Supreme Court's Public Charge Decision

KEVIN S. PARKER January 29, 2020

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC CHARGE, PUBLIC CHARGE RULE, IMMIGRATION**

The Supreme Court's decision expanding the Trump Administration's draconian "public charge" policy is unconscionable and is against the values we share as a nation of immigrants. The ruling, which will deny permanent resident status to anyone who receives or has received public benefits, adversely affects millions of applicants. In light of this ruling, petitioners may now refuse life-saving medical assistance or choose to go without food and basic necessities to ensure a positive public charge determination. This is detrimental to the fabric that weaves us together as Americans, and we must band together to protect our immigrant communities.

In the immediate short term, this policy may be deemed as affecting the lives of millions nationwide who are seeking a pathway to U.S. citizenship. But the long-term view is that this is a devastating blow to our way of life as a humane, democratic society. The high court's ruling has the potential to exacerbate already fragile conditions immigrants face like food insecurity and housing instability. To make matters worse, the large-scale impact on vulnerable immigrant population segments like pregnant women, infants and children, people of the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities, will be catastrophic.

The negative impact of this ruling is vast. It will fundamentally move our country from one that encourages diversity and tolerance, to a nation that promotes exclusion and homogeneity.

So today, I join with the chorus of dissenting voices nationwide in standing up for not only our immigrant community, but for the values and ideals we share as a country of immigrants. In a country that beckoned immigrants to come and be numbered among its “huddled masses,” it is indeed a sad day when our government turns the page and forces people to make a choice between medical assistance and permanent residency.