



# Attorney General Raoul Fights To Ensure Immigrants Can Continue To Enter U.s.

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Chicago – Attorney General Kwame Raoul today joined a coalition of attorneys general and local municipalities in fighting actions the federal government is taking to further restrict visa approvals for immigrants seeking to enter the United States.

[In two amicus briefs](#) filed today, Raoul and the coalition call for an immediate halt to the implementation of new rules that aim to deny green cards and visas to immigrants who are likely to use government assistance programs in the future. The new rules also deny green cards and visas to those who cannot guarantee that they will have certain types of private health insurance within 30 days of arriving in the United States or alternatively have the means to pay for any foreseeable medical costs that may arise during their time in the United States.

“The federal government’s thinly-veiled attempts to limit immigration to the United States are unlawful and discriminatory,” Raoul said. “As Attorney General, I will continue to fight anti-immigrant policies that do not reflect the values of our residents or our states’ best interests.”

Raoul and the coalition’s briefs challenge rules and regulations the Department of State seeks to implement along with a presidential proclamation. If implemented, the executive branch would be allowed to unilaterally reshape immigration policies and severely limit legal immigration to the United States in ways that Congress never authorized.

Two of the State Department’s actions involve changes to incorporate a sweeping interpretation of “public charge.” In 2017, nearly half a million newly-arrived immigrants received visas as an immediate relative of a U.S. citizen or under a family-sponsored visa preference. However, the new restrictions would likely result in

hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents losing the opportunity to be united with their loved ones from abroad, including spouses, siblings, and adult children.

Raoul and the coalition also oppose a presidential proclamation to bar applicants from receiving immigrant visas unless they can establish that they either “will be covered by approved health insurance” within 30 days of entry to the U.S. or that they have the financial resources to pay for health care. In both briefs, Raoul and the coalition argue that the health care requirements conflict with Congress’ objectives of providing all citizens and documented immigrants residing in the United States with comprehensive, affordable health coverage. Estimates indicate that as many as 65 percent of recently-arrived green card holders would not have been granted a visa under the proclamation.

Raoul and the coalition also point out that the presidential proclamation will adversely affect states’ health insurance markets under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Specifically, the proclamation will likely have the effect of directing immigrants to purchase health insurance that does not comply with the ACA, which may increase uncompensated care costs and harm insurance markets, while increasing regulatory burdens and health care costs for states.

Immigrants contribute to national, state, and local economies by paying taxes, starting businesses, contributing to state and local labor forces, and consuming goods and services. Raoul and the coalition argue that imposing unreasonable and unlawful barriers to entry would pose substantial economic harm to not only the states, but also the entire U.S. economy. Nationally, immigrants pay more than \$405.4 billion in taxes, and immigrant-owned companies employ more than 7.9 million workers. In Illinois alone, immigrant-led households paid approximately \$5.2 billion in state and local taxes in 2014 and wielded \$47.8 billion in spending power.

The coalition supports the plaintiffs’ arguments that all three actions are unconstitutional and violate the Administrative Procedure Act because they are contrary to the Immigration and Nationality Act. Additionally, Raoul and the coalition argue that the rules were not promulgated with any notice or an opportunity for comment and are arbitrary and capricious. The cases are *Make the Road New York v. Pompeo*, which is pending in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, and *Doe v. Trump*, which is pending in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit.