

H.R. 1: Bad For Utah, Bad For Immigrant Children

Published: Monday, 14 July 2025 13:52

Written by: Ciriac Alvarez Valle



As our [executive director recently wrote](#), H.R.1, signed on July 4th by President Trump, will have long-lasting and profound negative impacts on the well-being of children across the state. Below, we highlight key provisions and implementation dates directly impacting Utah immigrant children and families.

Most of the upcoming changes reflect a larger alarming trend of immigrant exclusion policies for both undocumented and legally residing immigrants to remove access from programs and services, many of which are relied upon by families to ensure they are healthy and safe.

Healthcare, SNAP, taxes, and immigration enforcement will be impacted. While we await clearer guidance on how the implementation of the different policies will come into effect, one thing is clear: the bill will not make us safer, stronger, or better altogether and will instead harm some of our most vulnerable immigrant families and many other low-income families.

Healthcare Restrictions

Next year, many healthcare changes from the law will impact immigrant families,

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including changes to the eligibility of certain immigrants for Medicaid and CHIP. The law changes the federal funding for "qualified immigrants" to only a few qualifying statuses. Certain immigrants, such as humanitarian parolees, asylum grantees, and trafficking victims, among others, will no longer qualify for Medicaid or CHIP federal funding match. Premium Tax Credits under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will also be limited to this restricted definition listed in the graphic above. These restrictions will profoundly impact immigrant families' ability to seek primary care and obtain affordable coverage outside the emergency department.

SNAP Restrictions

Similar to the Medicaid and CHIP eligibility changes, the bill limits SNAP eligibility for immigrants to include **only** Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR or green card holders), immigrants who have been granted the status of Cuban and Haitian entrant; or individuals who are lawfully residing in the United States per the Compacts of Free Association between the US and Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau.

Unfortunately, unlike the Medicaid and CHIP changes, this provision became effective on the date of enactment. This means we may already see immigrant families face difficulty obtaining consistent access to nutritious foods and greater food insecurity over the coming months and years.

Child Tax Credit Restrictions

One change reinstated the Child Tax Credit (CTC) restrictions from the first Trump Administration. This means children with parents without a Social Security Number (SSN) will be deprived of receiving the CTC, and children with no SSN will also be excluded. For some perspective, in 2017, when this exclusion was first enacted, approximately [11,500 children were excluded](#) from the CTC. Unfortunately, as we see, this further exclusion impacts mixed-status immigrant families even if their children should be eligible to obtain the CTC.

Immigration Enforcement

Over the past seven months, we have seen an unprecedented amount of

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immigration enforcement and detention around the country, including [increased ICE arrests throughout our state](#). These policy changes have already had a profound impact on immigrants, including increased concern and anxiety over the [deportation of individuals themselves or loved ones](#) within the immigrant community. H.R. 1 will only exacerbate these issues because more than [\\$170 billion will be](#) spent on immigration and border enforcement-related activities through 2029.

Of that amount, approximately [\\$45 billion will be used to detain adults and families](#), giving Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) a budget larger than ever before to detain and deport families. The law explicitly approves the use of these funds for family detention. Approximately \$32 billion has been immediately provided for increased enforcement and deportations with little to no oversight. The bill will also increase funding for border enforcement, with more than \$75 billion set aside for constructing the border wall, increased border militarization, and surveillance at the border.

Locally, one pressing worry is the [\\$13.5 billion that will be provided for state and localities](#) seeking reimbursement for directly enforcing federal immigration laws. Late last month, Weber County approved a memorandum of understanding to take part in the 287(g) program, making it the [largest law enforcement agency in Utah to reach an agreement under this initiative](#). This program has longstanding concerns from national immigration organizations, [including community trust issues and civil rights concerns](#). One primary concern for Voices is the possibility of a rise in agreements like these now that more funding is available for local entities. The increases in funding for deportation and family separation, alongside the [spike in costs for immigration related applications](#), are going to have devastating impacts and increase fear for mixed-status families across our state.

What Can We Do?

While community leaders, local organizations, and immigrant communities grapple with the changes, we remain steadfast in seeking local policy solutions that meet the growing needs this bill has opened and will continue to stand up for all children in our state. We know that these changes will only harm immigrant families in our state, and we will do all we can to mitigate the harm and continue advocating for policies that reflect the values we hold as a state, ones of community, family, and resilience.

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We urge you to contact your local state Senators and Representatives about the harmful provisions and how they will impact your family, neighbors, and community.