Budget Proposals that will harm Maine’s Immigrants

The Governor’s proposed budget would bar many Maine immigrants from critical supports and services. Today, given the current climate, it is imperative that we ACT to preserve access to these critical supports for asylum seekers and other immigrants who rely on them.

Providing assistance for asylum seekers and other immigrants is a relatively small investment today that will pay off dividends into our future. Assistance through anti-poverty programs like General Assistance and SNAP increases the likelihood of a successful transition here while people get their feet on the ground and wait for permission to work from the federal government.

Let’s support policies that won’t leave anyone behind or shut anyone out. Let’s invest in Maine’s future; policies that help to build an economy that works for all of us.

General Assistance
The proposed budget would eliminate the General Assistance (GA) program. Many recent immigrants, including people seeking asylum rely on GA while they are stabilizing their lives here. GA provides critical support that pays for housing, food and medicine. It is the safety net of last resort for Maine people facing homelessness and hunger.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
The proposed budget would eliminate state-funded Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for elderly and disabled lawfully present immigrants. Currently the state SSI program provides limited monthly support to lawfully present immigrants who are 65 or older or who have a serious disability. This support is used for basic needs such as rent, heat and food. This proposal has already been rejected by the Legislature three times over the last 5 years.
**Food Supplement (SNAP)**
The proposed budget would eliminate state-funded Food Supplement benefits for lawfully present immigrants. The budget proposes to eliminate access to this vital food assistance. Currently certain lawfully present immigrants qualify for these benefits if they are seniors, have a disability, are victims of domestic violence, or are waiting for work authorization from the federal government. This proposal would eliminate food assistance for these vulnerable groups of immigrants.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**
The proposed budget would eliminate state-funded Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits for immigrant families with children. The budget proposes to eliminate access to TANF, which provides shelter, heat and clothing to families with children. This program is currently available to lawfully present immigrants who are seniors, have a disability, are victims of domestic violence, or are waiting for work authorization from the federal government. This proposal would eliminate this vital help for these vulnerable families with children.

Help us to stop these cuts!
Contact Maine Equal Justice to get involved!

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