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The Honorable Scott Turner
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410

April 21, 2026

RE: Opposition to Docket No. FR-6524-P-01

Dear Secretary Turner,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the newly proposed rule from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Docket No. FR-6524-P-01. Implementation of this rule would be inefficient, a breach of privacy, and threaten. The current system to evaluate housing assistance needs.

Currently, every household member aiming to be factored into the amount of assistance awarded to a household must declare their immigration status. However, family members can choose not to declare, or "not contend" eligibility, and are not required to provide documentation. They are simply excluded from the assistance calculation. The current system is a simple way to keep people housed, reduce community health costs, and reduce administrative burden. Removing the right to not contend eligibility forces families to live separately, surrender any eligibility they may currently have to receive ongoing prorated rental assistance, or become unhoused.

According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), this new rule would force 20,000 families to choose between losing the assistance that helps them pay rent or separating their family. This endangers 37,000 children, who do not have financial independence and would be at risk of homelessness. This aspect of the proposed rule lacks empathy in addition to being against what the original statute says. This sacrifice does not come at the benefit of greater efficiency or improved technology, leading to the second issue of the proposed rule which is the changes to the verification process.

The new verification process introduces arbitrary steps that would congest the system for all people seeking assistance, regardless of citizenship status. The new rule relies heavily on the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) to verify citizenship status; this is a completely new capability of SAVE. USCIS itself acknowledges the risk that the system may share inaccurate citizenship information with registered agencies like HUD, which could in turn affect eligibility determinations. Despite HUD acknowledging these limitations, they still propose to make SAVE the mandatory gateway to housing assistance for millions of residents. HUD correctly acknowledges that relatively few noncitizens falsely declare citizenship under its current rules, precisely because individuals who are ineligible have the option to elect "do not contend." Requiring an overhauled, error-prone system to perform mass citizenship verification to address a problem HUD itself characterizes as "limited" is not a proportionate or justified policy response.

In addition, the new two-stage verification process creates significant administrative burdens without adequate safeguards. If primary verification of citizenship fails, secondary verification is required. This is not a single uniform process; it differs depending on the document an individual submits and relies on the PHA or owner to manually review many of the documents that would be required, creating an overly complicated and long process that will result in unnecessary and inconsistent outcomes, delays or denials. Individuals are expected to participate in a complicated appeals process without any knowledge or experience of the system they are required to use.

However, perhaps the most consequential change is the proposed rule's removal of the existing provision allowing individuals 30 days to appeal to the USCIS when secondary verification fails to confirm their immigration status. The justification of this removal on the grounds that SAVE does not offer an appeal process and does not issue or maintain immigration documents and records. But this justification highlights the problem rather than resolving it: the elimination of an appeal right without substituting a meaningful alternative.

Under current law, PHA proceedings are paused pending the outcome of a DHS appeal. Under the proposed rule, termination and eviction proceedings would not be stayed while individuals pursue records corrections through outside agencies. This means that a tenant whose citizenship or immigration status is incorrectly flagged by SAVE could face eviction before they have any realistic opportunity to correct the error. The combination of a newly repurposed, error-prone verification system and the removal of a stay on eviction proceedings creates a serious and foreseeable risk of wrongful displacement for eligible tenants.

Lastly, I believe the effects on elderly noncitizens would be drastic. Under current rules, noncitizens aged 62 and older need only submit a signed declaration of their immigration status and proof of age, they are not required to submit documentary proof of immigration status. The proposed rule eliminates this exemption, requiring all noncitizens regardless of age to submit a

signed declaration, documentary proof of immigration status, and a signed verification consent form. This illogical elimination completely overlooks additional barriers to documentation that elderly noncitizens face, including records that are incomplete, held by foreign governments, or otherwise difficult to obtain. They are also less likely to have access to the technological, legal or administrative resources needed to navigate complex records correction processes. Subjecting this population to the same verification framework as all other noncitizens, without additional accommodation, assistance or procedural protection, is likely to result in wrongful exclusions among some of the most vulnerable HUD-assisted residents.

The proposed rule's harms are not abstract; they will be felt intensely in Massachusetts. According to the 2024 Report on Data Collection for Government Assisted Housing in Massachusetts by the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities, nearly [183,000](#) Massachusetts households received federal housing assistance as of the most recent comprehensive count, and the Commonwealth's assisted housing population is among the most diverse in the nation. Of Section 8 households in [Massachusetts](#), 46% are headed by someone age 62 or older, 28% include a person with a disability, and 28% include children under 18 the very populations this rule would place at greatest risk. [Nationally](#), the rule would disproportionately harm Latino families, who make up 85% of people in mixed-status households across the three largest rental assistance programs, and among the nine million citizens currently receiving HUD rental assistance, those most at risk are 72% people of color, 29% children, and 17% seniors. Our country and our commonwealth are already in the midst of a housing crisis with need exceeding supply. Displacing mixed-status families from the assistance they currently receive would not redirect housing to those in need; it would add more families to an already overwhelmed system.

For the reasons described above, I urge HUD to withdraw Docket No. FR-6524-P-01 in its entirety.



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