

Trump administration plan to redefine poverty would cut benefits to millions



Washington, May 18 (RHC)-- In Washington, the Donald Trump administration has proposed redefining how the government calculates the poverty line, using a different measure of inflation.

Economists warn the switch to the so-called "Chained Consumer Price Index" would underestimate the impact of inflation on wages, gradually chipping away at benefits like food stamps, Medicaid and healthcare subsidies for millions of Americans.

More than 750,000 could lose food stamps under Trump's proposal, many the poorest of the poor. The consumer price index is widely used and frequently criticized as inaccurate. The Office of Management and Budget said in a regulatory filing on Monday that it is soliciting comment to shift to the so-called "chained CPI," which rises more slowly because it assumes consumers will switch to less expensive items when prices go up.

Advocates for the poor said that such a change would run counter to the Trump administration's efforts to require more people to work for their benefits. The switch would most likely affect Americans who have jobs, but don't earn a lot of money so they still qualify for assistance.

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