

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

Proclamation No. 19-1265 Support of Refugee Resettlement

WHEREAS, a refugee is defined as a person outside of his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinions; and

WHEREAS, there are more refugees in the world today than at any time in recorded history, and half of the world's refugees are children; and

WHEREAS, refugees are fleeing armed conflict and human rights abuses in Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central America, and other regions; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 3 million refugees from sub-Saharan African, almost 4 million Afghani and Somali refugees, and nearly 5 million Syrian refugees, among many other refugees; and

WHEREAS, more than half of the world's refugees are hosted by only ten countries, and many of these countries do not have adequate resources to keep refugees fed, housed, or safe, leaving some refugees to survive on less than fifty cents a day; and

WHEREAS, ninety-five percent of Syrian refugees are hosted by only five countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, and one in four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee; and

WHEREAS, there is a continued lack of funding for humanitarian aid for host countries, and food rations and medical aid have been repeatedly cut for refugees; and

WHEREAS, refugees who need to be resettled include torture survivors, people with severe medical conditions, LGBTI individuals, children alone, and women and children at risk – all of whom who cannot return home and cannot stay in their host country due to their extreme vulnerability; and

WHEREAS, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has determined that 1.2 million refugees are in need of immediate resettlement, but fewer than 150,000 resettlement places are available worldwide; and

WHEREAS, refugees in need of resettlement represent only .3 percent of the world's population; and

WHEREAS, we applaud the historic, bi-partisan tradition of the United States in welcoming refugees, in keeping with our national values and respect for human rights; and

WHEREAS, a refugee does not get to choose to be resettled in the United States or the country of his or her choice; and

WHEREAS, even if a refugee is a candidate for resettlement in the United States, he or she must still be found admissible under U.S. immigration law; and

WHEREAS, every single refugee must undergo a security vetting process that is lengthy, extremely detailed, and very safe, taking 18 to 24 months and involving multiple law enforcement and intelligence agencies; and

WHEREAS, refugees are the most vetted individuals to enter the United States and are not permitted to travel to the U.S. until all security screenings have been successfully completed; and

WHEREAS, the organizations responsible for resettling refugees in this community, as well as numerous other community organizations and religious institutions, have declared their support for resettling refugees in Denver; and

WHEREAS, International Rescue Committee, Lutheran Family Services and African community Center have resettled more than sixty thousand refugees in Denver Metro, Colorado Springs and Greeley since 1980 from more than 110 countries including Burma, Iraq, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bhutan and Somalia; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. That the Council of the City and County of Denver therefore, in recognition of the efforts, declares its support for the resettlement of refugees no matter their religion, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, or country of origin, in Denver and calls upon other Colorado communities to join them in supporting a stronger national effort to resettle the most vulnerable refugees.

Section 2. That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall attest and affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to Michelle Avanci Roxbury.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL November 12, 2019

PRESIDENT