



# Welcoming Refugees 2021 Toolkit

Every September, the President sets the refugee admissions goal for the coming fiscal year. Fiscal Year 2020's refugee admissions goal of 18,000 was the lowest in the history of the program, but the need for resettlement has never been greater, with an estimated 37,000 people displaced from their homes due to violence, persecution, or war each day.

Now is the time for federal, state and local elected leaders to take a stand and urge the President to welcome refugees in the coming fiscal year. We need you to reach out to your Members of Congress, governor, mayor, city council members, and state legislators to and speak out in support of welcoming refugees!

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## *2 Ways to Take Action*

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### **1. Contact your Member of Congress While They Are in Their Districts**

Members of Congress will begin to return to their hometowns in the next couple of weeks. This is the time to let them know how important refugees are to you and your community and ask them to restore our commitment to refugee resettlement and increase admissions level. Members of congress will begin meeting and consulting Administration officials regarding admissions level for FY 2021 in September.

#### **HOW DO YOU DO IT**

- ✓ Find your Member of Congress by clicking on the hyperlink below. Insert your zip code and click submit. Then, click on each of their names to go to their websites where you can find the contact information to the office nearest to you. <https://whomyrepresentative.com/>
- ✓ Call that office and ask to speak to the Member of Congress and if they are not available, ask to speak to the staffer working on immigration issues.
- ✓ Sample Phone Script: *"My name is [NAME] and I'm a constituent from [CITY/STATE]. As a person of faith, I am deeply concerned of the low refugee admissions and urge [Senator/Representative] to consult with the Administration to raise refugee admissions to 95,000 for fiscal year 2021. Our country has both the capacity and responsibility to take in the world's most vulnerable. I urge you to reach out to the President and members of the Judiciary Committee to tell them that your community welcomes refugees."*
- ✓ If you do speak to the staffer, send them a follow-up email similar to the sample message below. If you cannot speak to the Member of Congress or the immigration staffer, ask for their email address and send them an email (see below).

### **Sample Letter/Email to Member of Congress or Staffer:**

Dear Senator/Representative [Last Name]:

As your constituent [and a person of faith], I am deeply concerned about the historically low refugee admissions this year and urge you to raise admissions level to 95,000 for fiscal year 2021. We are facing the worst refugee crisis in recorded history with 79.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world, including 26 million refugees, over half of whom are children. Refugees are of special humanitarian concern to the U.S. and are a testament to our nation's long, proud history as a beacon of hope.

[Share a personal story about why helping and welcoming refugees is important to you (your faith, your community, your business, your family or background etc.) Let them know the specific ways that refugees benefit and are welcomed into your community, and why refugee protection is so important to you. Make it personal!]

Since World War II, the U.S. has been the global leader in offering refuge to people escaping persecution, war or violence in their home country. I know the U.S. is capable of doing more and call on you to advise the President, members of his administration and the Judiciary Committee to raise refugee admissions to 95,000 in fiscal year 2021. My community welcomes refugees. Please reflect the best of our nation by supporting refugee resettlement.

### **2. Ask Your State/Local Leaders to Sign-on to This Letter**

There has never been a more urgent time for states and communities across the country to demonstrate their support for refugees and the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, a bipartisan program that has offered safety and homes to refugees the world over since 1980. State and local leaders can express their support to the President as he decides in September how many refugees to admit in the upcoming fiscal year by signing on to this [letter](#).

- ✓ Find your State and Local leaders here: <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>
- ✓ See sample email message below

### **Sample Email for State/Local Leader for Sign-On Letter:**

Dear [Title and Name],

As your constituent, I am writing to urge you to [consider supporting and signing-on](#) to this state and local elected leader letter which calls on the President to do more to help resettle refugees in the coming fiscal year. As my elected representative, your voice matters and the President needs to know: our community welcomes refugees and wants to help them.

We are facing the worst refugee crisis in history, with nearly 80 million displaced persons around the world, including 26 million refugees, half of whom are children. Close to 1.4 million refugees need to be resettled to safety, and yet the U.S. has cut our commitment to the lowest levels ever.

Our community can do more to help. By signing on to this letter, you are demonstrating to the President, and the world, that we stand with refugees. [To learn more about the letter and sign-on, please click here.](#) Thank you for considering this request.

### Sample Call Phone Script for State/Local Leader Sign-On Letter:

- Make sure you call your elected representatives to encourage them to sign-on. After identifying yourself as a constituent, tell the staffer that you would like to leave a brief message:
- I am calling to urge [Title/Name] to support refugees by signing onto a letter open to all state and local elected leaders across the country.
- The letter urges the President to welcome refugees in the coming fiscal year.
- Our community stands with refugees and has benefited from their contributions. We want to do more to help at a time of historic need.
- I urge you to demonstrate that our community stands with refugees at this time of historic need.
- I am happy to send an email with the link – which is [welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://welcomingrefugees2021.org) – who can I send that to?

### Social Media:

- #RefugeesWelcome2021
- #RefugeesWelcome
- #AmericaWelcomes
- #WithRefugees

### Sample Tweets to State/Local Leaders:

(1) Refugees are essential to our communities and the fight against #COVID19. More than 300,000 refugees in the U.S. work in the healthcare sector or in food supply chain industries. Refugees need our help, and we need theirs. #RefugeesWelcome2021 [welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://welcomingrefugees2021.org)

(2) The U.S. has historically been a global leader in the protection of refugees. @xxx, will you join hundreds of other local and state elected officials in asking @POTUS to restore this legacy of welcoming refugees? #RefugeesWelcome [welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://welcomingrefugees2021.org)

(3) Last year, the President reduced refugee admissions to a historic low. @xxx, will you take action & urge the administration to welcome refugees this year? Sign this letter: [welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://welcomingrefugees2021.org) #RefugeesWelcome

(4) Last year, @POTUS reduced refugee admissions to a historic low and abandoned our longstanding leadership in refugee resettlement. @xxx, will you join hundreds of local and state elected officials and ask @POTUS to raise refugee admissions? [Welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://Welcomingrefugees2021.org)

(5) Our community #WelcomeRefugees. I am calling on @XXX to sign on to tell @POTUS that [name of city/state] is ready to do our part to welcome refugees in 2021: [welcomingrefugees2021.org](http://welcomingrefugees2021.org)