

JFI/Share the Journey FY'19 Appropriations Requests: State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs¹

“Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women, and men who leave or are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more.”

-- Pope Francis, Message for 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Sept. 24, 2013

Catholic social teaching calls on us to assist the vulnerable and persecuted, including those forcibly displaced from their homes and countries, to ensure that all individuals are treated with human dignity. This belief informs these requests:

SFOPS TOPLINE REQUESTS:

SFOPs Migration and Refugee Assistance Account: \$3.6 billion

SFOPs International Disaster Assistance (IDA) Account: \$4.4 billion

SFOPs Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) Account: \$50 million

Accounts for Refugees and Displaced Persons	FY18 Enacted	FY19 President's Request	FY19 JFI Request	FY19 House Committee Proposed Funding	FY19 Senate Committee Proposed Funding
Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)	\$3,359,000,000 ²	\$2,800,375,000 ³	\$3,604,000,000	\$3,360,000,000 ⁴	\$3,432,000,000 ⁵
International Disaster Assistance (IDA)	\$4,285,312,000 ⁶	\$3,557,412,000 ⁷	\$4,427,786,000	\$4,285,312,000 ⁸	\$4,385,312,000 ⁹
Emergency Refugee and Migration (ERMA)	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$50,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000 ¹⁰

¹ This backgrounder is done in collaboration with Refugee Council USA.

² Includes \$2,431,198,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

³ Includes \$2,038,787 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁴ Includes \$2,363,234,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁵ Includes \$493,976,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁶ Includes \$1,588,778,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁷ Includes at least \$1,780,625 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding. An additional \$1 billion was recommended to the original \$2.5 billion total request, per the FY19 budget addendum.

⁸ Includes \$1,287,578,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

⁹ Includes \$584,278,000 in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

¹⁰ The Senate Committee reports maintains funding for ERMA because “The elimination of the ERMA account, as proposed in the President’s budget request, has not been justified.”

WHY ARE THESE ACCOUNTS ESSENTIAL?

The *Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) Account* is administered by the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to help families fleeing life-threatening situations find temporary protection in countries where they are displaced. This funding also supports the pursuit of the three durable solutions for refugees: i) voluntary repatriation back to their home country; ii) integration in a host country of asylum; and iii) third-country resettlement when the first two solutions are not viable. MRA activities include *Overseas Refugee Assistance* and *Refugee Admissions*.

Overseas Refugee Assistance helps maintain humane, stable conditions for refugees and host communities during the interim period until the refugee crisis can be resolved. We are currently facing the worst displacement crisis in recorded history, with over 68.5 million displaced persons worldwide, including over 25.4 million refugees. The Syria crisis alone has produced over 5 million Syrian refugees and there are other complex humanitarian emergencies involving displaced people from South Sudan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, and Burma.

Refugee Admissions remains a hallmark of U.S. global leadership as the U.S. has resettled more refugees than any other country. The resettlement program reflects our American values of freedom, opportunity, and compassion. Providing protection to people seeking safety is one of our nation's proudest traditions. This includes resettling Jewish refugees during World War II, Vietnamese refugees in the 1980s, and, recently, refugees from Sudan, Burma/Myanmar, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and elsewhere. Refugees undergo rigorous vetting prior to arrival and contribute greatly to American communities after resettlement. Given the unprecedented scope of today's global refugee crisis and the urgent need for U.S. leadership, JFI recommends that the United States admit at least 75,000 refugees in FY '19.

The *Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) Account* is an emergency draw-down account that is also administered by PRM. It provides an important "safety valve" during emergencies, allowing the United States to meet rapidly-occurring and unforeseen humanitarian needs. This funding is essential to allowing the U.S. to respond quickly and effectively to unanticipated crises.

The *International Disaster Assistance (IDA) Account* is administered by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within the Department of State's U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). IDA funds humanitarian assistance to people displaced by disaster, conflict, and war. Longstanding humanitarian crises continue in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Colombia, causing significant internal displacement and regional pressures. Meeting the needs of internally displaced persons, which would otherwise cause them to migrate, is one way to prevent their departure from countries of origin and can help alleviate the worldwide refugee crisis.

Besides supporting these accounts that help internally displaced people and refugees, *JFI supports the Department of State's efforts to address the root causes of forced migration* by reducing poverty and preventing violence through community based approaches funded through Development Assistance and Economic Support funds. Further, efforts that strengthen governance and the rule of law, and increase citizen security, including child protection systems, are essential to ensure the right not to have to migrate. For these same reasons, JFI also supports the development of mechanisms that incentivize advances in human rights and promote broad civil society consultation.