

Talking Points Flowing From 3 Asks

1– FY2019 Refugee Admissions Goal: We urge our elected officials to see that the Administration commits to resettling at least 75,000 refugees for FY2019.

Welcoming refugees is an American value as a nation built by refugees and immigrants; and a Catholic value, as followers of Jesus who calls us to welcome the newcomer.

The U.S. refugee resettlement program is

- a life-saving, protection program for those unsafe in their home or host country;
- a diplomatic tool to support key allies who are serving as refugee host countries,
- a strategic tool to help stabilize sensitive situations, and
- a leveraging tool for US global leadership encouraging other countries to get involved.

Only a small percentage of the world's refugees are considered for resettlement, particularly those who need its protection. We know that 75,000 is an achievable number based on 37 years of resettlement experience since the average annual number of refugees admitted has been 80,000. We continue to urge the U.S. to resettle refugees based on vulnerability, including those seeking to reunite with family, and to not exclude refugees based on religion or nationality.

2 – Refugee Admissions Accountability for FY 2018. We urge our Members of Congress to ensure that the Administration conducts robust ongoing processing of refugees already in the pipeline and continues to add new refugees to the pipeline. The projected number of refugees admitted to the U.S. by the end of FY2018 will be only 20,000 to 21,000 refugees, less than half of the 45,000 allowed by the FY2018 PD.

The administration has diverted almost all the key Refugee Corp staff who do overseas interviews and assigned them to do domestic U.S. asylum cases to address a serious backlog in asylum applicants. We urge both a robust asylum and a robust refugee resettlement system to reduce the asylum backlog and to maintain at least a normal level of asylum, such as 75,000.

3 -- Appropriations: We urge robust funding levels in the Labor, Health, and Human Services and State, Foreign Operations bills for accounts related to refugees and other forcibly displaced people.

Resettlement so that the most vulnerable refugees have access to this life-saving protection;

Forced displacement emergencies for IDPs so that those forced to flee their homes can be helped early on and not be forced to flee from their countries to neighboring countries as refugees; and

Overseas assistance for refugees and the countries who host them, so that refugees can live a safe, dignified life as they seek a durable solution to their displacement.

We thank the House and Senate for proposed levels of funding for the refugee accounts so far in the Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education and the State, Foreign Operations bills for FY2019. We consider those levels an important expression of support for welcoming refugees.