

Presidential Determination FY 2019: Enlarge the Resettlement Lifeboat and Fill Every Seat

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Introduction

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Agenda

- 2:00-2:05 Introduction and Catholic Social Teaching
- 2:05-2:10 Statutory authority for the Presidential Determination of Refugee Admission (PD)
- 2:10-2:15 History of the Presidential Determination
- 2:15-2:30 The PD decision making process, dynamics, and what is at stake in FY 2019
- 2:30-2:45 Call to action: PD Toolkit, Sign-on Letter, and JFI/Share the Journey Action Alert
- 2:45-3:00 Discussion and questions

Catholic Social Teaching--1

Welcoming strangers is at the heart of our Catholic faith life and experience:

- Jesus came into the world as a member of a refugee people. The Old Testament tells the story of the Jewish people fleeing slavery and persecution and seeking a new life in the promised land.
- Jesus and the Holy Family were forced to flee to avoid his murder.
- Jesus includes “welcoming the stranger” on the short list of how the nations will be judged in the New Testament (Matthew 25), just as the call to welcome is repeated over and over and over again throughout the Old Testament.

Catholic Social Teaching--2

- Every human being is created in God's image.
- All peoples, including pilgrims, aliens, exiles, refugees, and migrants of every kind, have the right to conditions worthy of human life [‘the right not to have to migrate’] and, if these conditions are not present, the right to migrate. Pope Pius XII
- We are called to address root causes of poor conditions while having solidarity with those forced to migrate at every stage of their journeys.
- Nations should work toward a “globalization of solidarity.”
- Our call is to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate newcomers.

Statutory Authority

The Immigration and Nationality Act, Sections 207(d)(1) and (e) requires that before the start of the fiscal year members of the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate and the House of Representatives be provided with the following information:

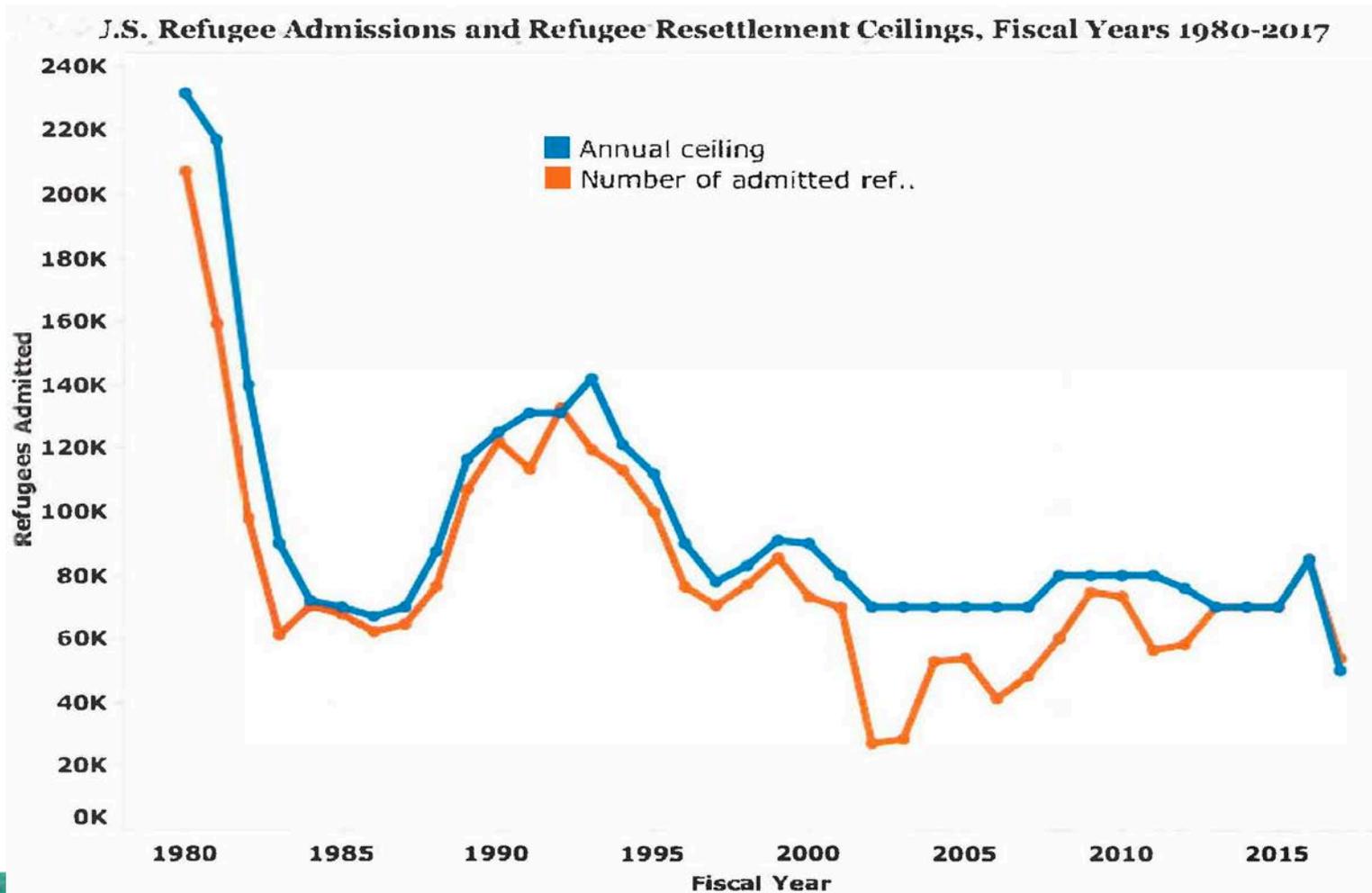
- (1) A description of the nature of the refugee situation;
- (2) A description of the number and allocation of the refugees to be admitted and an analysis of conditions within the countries from which they came;
- (3) A description of the plans for their movement and resettlement and the estimated cost of their movement and resettlement;
- (4) An analysis of the anticipated social, economic, and demographic impact of their admission to the United States;
- (5) A description of the extent to which other countries will admit and assist in the resettlement of such refugees;
- (6) An analysis of the impact of the participation of the United States in the resettlement of such refugees on the foreign policy interests of the United States; and
- (7) Such additional information as may be appropriate or requested by such members.

Statutory Authority--2

The Administration is also required to provide information

- about religious persecution of refugee populations eligible for consideration for admission to the United States (as required by Section 602(d) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292, October 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787) (IRFA)).
- about specific measures taken to facilitate access to the United States refugee program for individuals who have fled “countries of particular concern” for violations of religious freedoms, identified pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA, (as required by Section 305(b) of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333, October 18, 2004, 118 Stat. 1287)).

History: PD & Admissions 1980 to 2017



History: PD & Admissions 2016 to 2018

	PD	Actual Arrivals
• 2016	85,000	84,915
• 2018	45,000	21,000
• 2019	?	?

History: PD Factors

- Global refugee situation: 68 million displaced, 25.4 million refugees, 1.4 million needing resettlement;
- Number and rationale for providing resettlement protection: Africa, East Asia, Europe/Central Asia, Latin America, Near East/South Asia;
- Cost and impact of resettlement on welcoming communities: Congress has continued at FY2017/FY2018 levels;
- Role of other countries in resettlement: 34 besides the United States;
- Role of resettlement in foreign policy: support allies, stabilize sensitive regions, and be a catalyst to others; and
- Role of resettlement in protecting people from religious persecution: U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom's 16 Countries of Particular Concern (April 2018).

History: PD Factors-- Religious Persecution

Burma

Central African Republic

China

Eritrea

Iran

Nigeria

North Korea

Pakistan

Russia

Saudi Arabia

Sudan

Syria

Tajikistan

Turkmenistan

Uzbekistan

Vietnam

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State of Play for Refugee PD FY 2019

- Three executive orders have greatly impacted the refugee resettlement program (13769, 13780, 13815)
- Other policy and operational decisions have created further impacts: shifting of resources from resettlement to asylum; slow SAO processing.
- The FY2018 refugee admissions Presidential Determination (PD) was the lowest in history; and the Administration is on pace to admit less than half of the FY 2018 PD level.
- Congressional bi-partisan appropriators continue to propose funding levels to support 75,000.
- Long-time stakeholders are publicly coming forward, e.g. employers, local and state officials.
- This is still an existential time for refugees needing resettlement and those who serve them.

What is at stake this year?

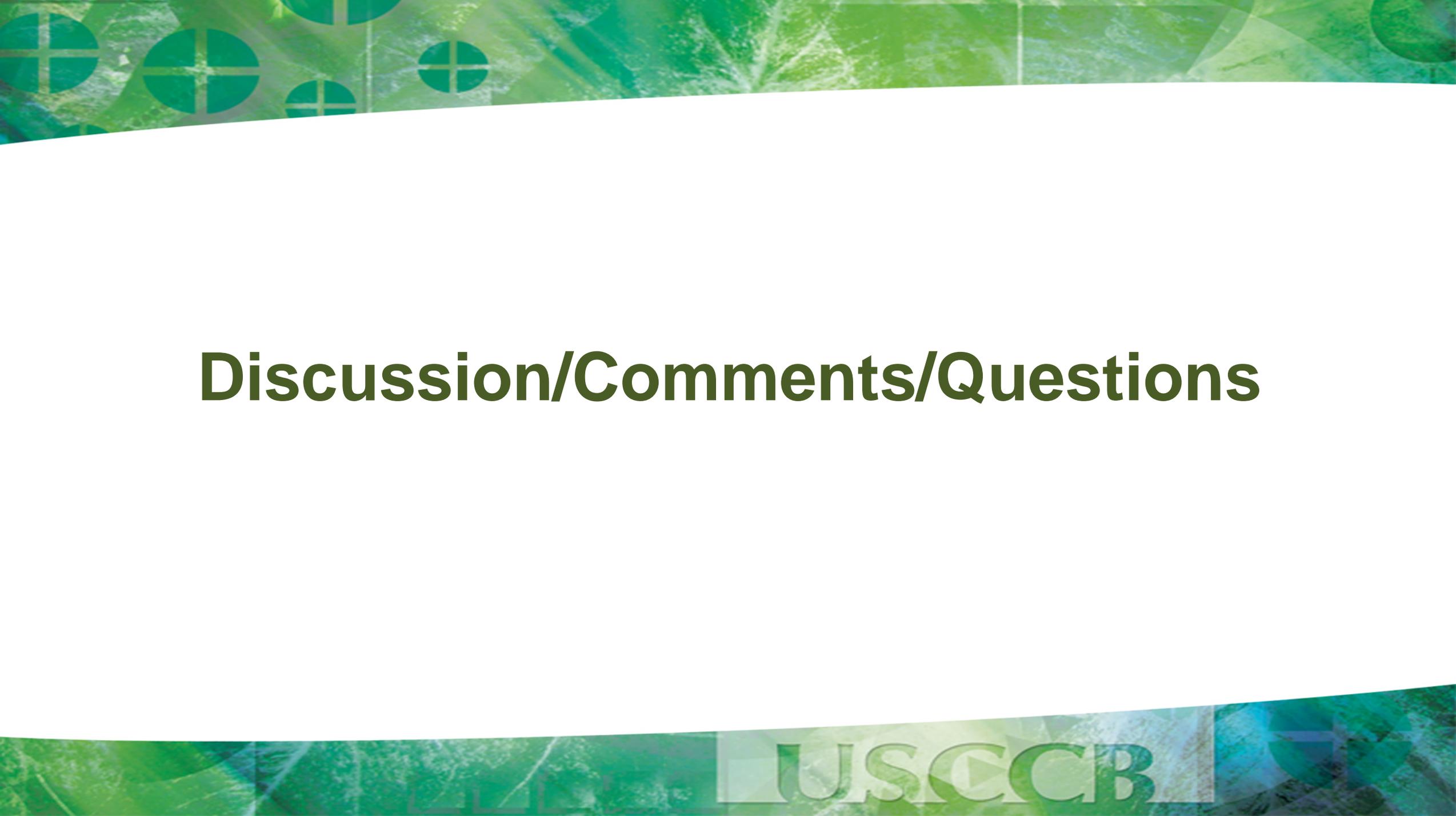
With each cut in the annual refugee admissions PD, the capacity of resettlement---a life-saving protection tool--- is cut back, like reducing the size of the life boat that rescues refugees. On top of that, with actual admissions being half used, it is like leaving half the seats on the shrinking life boat empty.

- From FY16 to FY18 the number of refugees PD was cut almost in half—from 85,000 to 45, 000.
- For FY18, actual arrivals for the year are projected to be around 21,000, less than half the FY2018 PD and only 25% of actual admissions just two years before.
- For FY 2019, Administration officials have mentioned that the range of the PD will be 0-45,000.
- Thank Congress for its continued strong appropriation measures for refugees, urge support for 75,000 actual arrivals, and urge ongoing strong support for all parts of the refugee protection system.

Call to Action

Engage in JFI Actions calling for a 75,000 refugee PD and robust refugee protection:

- Take action using the [Justice for Immigrants PD FY19 Toolkit](#) and do in-state, in-district visits with your Senators and Representative.
- [Sign on to the Catholic leaders' letter.](#)
- Join the [Share the Journey action alert](#) and send a letter to your Senators and Representative.



Discussion/Comments/Questions