

TOOLKIT FOR ACTION

Refugee Advocacy Days

September 1-3, 2020

Share this toolkit with your networks: bit.ly/RefugeeAdvocacy2020

Background: Refugee Council USA members are hosting Refugee Virtual Advocacy Days on **Tuesday, September 1st - Thursday, September 3rd, 2020**. The advocacy days will occur during a crucial moment just ahead of when Members of Congress and administration officials will be meeting to discuss the refugee admissions goal for FY 2021.

By September 30th, the administration is required by U.S. law to consult with leaders of the [House](#) and [Senate](#) Judiciary Committees before deciding how many refugees can be resettled to the United States in FY 2021. But all Senators and Representatives should hear from their constituents and express their support for refugees with committee members and the administration.

Our country can - and should - safely resettle more refugees and reunite more refugee families. Refugees contribute greatly to the United States in ordinary times, and have continued to show up for their new communities during the COVID-19 crisis, with many working on the frontlines of the pandemic, including 176,000 refugees serving in the healthcare field and 175,000 working as part of the food supply chain. Per CDC guidelines, all international travelers – including refugees – must undergo thorough medical checks for COVID-like symptoms prior to entering the U.S. and are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.

This administration has already cut refugee admissions by more than 80%, from the historic average goal of 95,000 to just 18,000 in FY 2020 – an all-time low. As people who care about refugees, we must send a strong message to Congress that their constituents want to build back the resettlement program by setting the FY 2021 refugee admissions goal at the historic norm of 95,000.

TOP 4 WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

1. **National Call-In Days:** From September 1st - 3rd, contact your Members of Congress and urge them to hold the administration accountable to hold meaningful consultations and restore the resettlement program historic norms.
2. **Amplify on Social Media:** Share this message on social media with this [social media toolkit & graphics](#) with digital actions.
3. **Engage Media:** Write letters-to-the-editor (LTEs) for your local media outlets.
4. **Join #RefugeesWelcome2021 Campaign:** Encourage your state and local elected leaders to express support for welcoming refugees by [signing onto this letter](#) - and amplify with this [#RefugeesWelcome2021 Social Toolkit](#).

You can also check out [additional resources](#) for more advocacy materials, talking points, and state-by-state backgrounders.

NATIONAL CALL-IN DAYS: Urge Congress to Hold the Administration Accountable to Resettling Refugees

Call 202-318-1612 three times to be connected with your 1 Representative and 2 Senators
Or you can [click here](#) to receive a phone call or send an email to connect with your Members of Congress

Sample Script: “I’m your constituent from [CITY/TOWN], and I urge you to hold the administration accountable to resettling refugees. The administration is required by law to consult with Congress by September 30th before deciding the refugee admissions goal for Fiscal Year 2021. In the last three years, the administration has cut refugee resettlement by more than 80%, from the historic average goal of 95,000 to just 18,000 – an all-time low. Our country can – and should – safely resettle more refugees and reunite more families. Refugees have contributed greatly to America in ordinary times, and have continued to show up for their new communities during the COVID-19 crisis, with many on the frontlines, including 176,000 serving as healthcare workers and 175,000 working in the food supply chain. Please do everything in your power to see that the administration meaningfully consults with Congress and builds back refugee admissions to the historic norm of 95,000. My community welcomes refugees, and I urge you to reflect the best of our nation by supporting refugee resettlement.”

After you Call and Tweet at your Members of Congress, Call and Tweet at Congressional Leaders who will be part of the Refugee Consultations with the Administration:

- Sen. Graham (R-SC), Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee: 202-224-5972 / @LindseyGrahamSC
- Sen. Cornyn (R-TX), Chair, Senate Immigration Subcommittee: 202-224-2934 / @JohnCornyn
- Sen. Feinstein (D-CA), Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee: 202-224-3841 / @SenFeinstein
- Senator Durbin (D-IL), Ranking Member, Senate Immigration Subcommittee: 202-224-2152 / @SenatorDurbin
- Rep. Nadler (NY-10), Chair, House Judiciary Committee: 202-225-5635 / @RepJerryNadler
- Rep. Lofgren (CA-19), Chair, House Immigration Subcommittee: 202-225-3072 / @RepZoeLofgren
- Rep. Jordan (OH-04), Ranking Member, House Judiciary Committee: (202) 225-2676 / @Jim_Jordan
- Rep. Buck (CO-04), Ranking Member, House Immigration Subcommittee: 202-225-4676 / @RepKenBuck

*To find out if your Senator and/or Representative also sits on the Senate or House Judiciary Committee, go to www.judiciary.senate.gov/about/members and <https://judiciary.house.gov/about/members.htm>.

AMPLIFY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Share this message with your [Senators & Representatives](#) on social media! Visit RCUSA’s [Refugee Advocacy Days Social Media Toolkit](#) with additional sample posts, [graphics](#), hashtags, and tips: bit.ly/RefugeeDigitalAction2020. Here are some sample posts below:

Hashtags

In all social media posts, please use the hashtag #ActionForRefugees.

You can add other hashtags as well. Key campaign hashtags include:

- #WeAreWelcomers
- #RefugeesWelcome
- #WithRefugees

Additional hashtags that can be combined with the main hashtags above are:

- #95KforUSA
- #Refugees

Sample Twitter Posts

Sample Post to a Lawmaker:

- Offering safe refuge is not a partisan issue. [Add the @TwitterName of your Senator, Representative, Governor, etc], we need to help build a future for #refugees. I urge you to hold the Trump administration accountable to resettling 95,000 refugees in FY 2021. #ActionForRefugees
- [@Twitter name of your Senator, Representative, Governor, etc.], [name of my community] stands with refugees! Show that #WeAreWelcomers by supporting refugee resettlement and calling the Trump administration to build back our resettlement program by setting the FY 2021 refugee admissions goal to the historic norm of 95,000#ActionForRefugees
- [City/State Name] is better because of our refugee neighbors. [@Twitter name of your Senator, Representative, Governor, etc.], show your support of refugees by calling the Trump administration to resettle 95,000 refugees in FY 2021. #ActionForRefugees

Sample Posts about the Contributions and Benefits of Refugees in Our Communities:

- #Refugees bring value and support to our country during difficult times. Right now, there are 176,000 refugees working in healthcare and 175,000 working in our country's food supply. #ActionForRefugees
[https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/us/pathologist-nursing-homes-coronavirus-testing-covid.htm](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/us/pathologist-nursing-homes-coronavirus-testing-covid.html)
- Every year, #refugees open businesses, revitalize towns, become citizens & give back to the communities that welcomed them/us. They/we deserve support in return! Take #ActionForRefugees today: <https://bit.ly/SupportRefugeesIN> #WeAreWelcomers
- Refugees bring their/our resiliency & experiences to help make our communities better. They/We understand how to solve problems during a crisis. #ActionForRefugees
- My community [or list your city/town/state] is better with refugees. They/we serve in hospitals and clinics, keep food on our shelves, run businesses & give back to their/our communities every day. #ActionForRefugees #WeAreWelcomers

Sample Facebook Posts

- The US Refugee Resettlement Program is a lifesaving, public-private partnership for refugees with no other means of finding safety. Refugees have a positive impact on our communities, and many are currently working on the frontline jobs to protect and support us during this challenging time. They deserve our support in return.
[https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/us/pathologist-nursing-homes-coronavirus-testing-covid.htm](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/us/pathologist-nursing-homes-coronavirus-testing-covid.html)
#ActionForRefugees #WeAreWelcomers
- During the worst refugee crisis in history, the Trump administration has slashed the U.S. refugee resettlement program by 80%. Not only is this a callous response to our global neighbors in need, it hurts us, too. Refugees bring their resilience, experiences, and talents to our communities and make them better places to live. Join me in urging Congress to restore our refugee resettlement program today: <https://bit.ly/SupportRefugeesIN> #ActionForRefugees #WeAreWelcomers

ENGAGE MEDIA

A well-placed piece in a local media outlet has the power to influence decision makers. Before or after your meeting, write a short letter to the editor for your local paper. The letter can reiterate our policy asks and call for action and leadership from your elected officials.

[Here](#) are steps to take to write and send the letter, plus sample LTEs that you can use or adapt for your experience and voice. Contact media@interfaithimmigration.org for help in drafting, pitching, and placing your LTE.

JOIN #REFUGEESWELCOME2021 CAMPAIGN

There has never been a more urgent time for state and local elected officials to demonstrate their support for refugees and the U.S. resettlement program. Last year, more than 400 local and state elected officials from 46 states [signed a letter](#) expressing their community's support for refugees, and this year, we hope to have signatories from all 50 states.

Please join us in encouraging your state and local elected leaders to express support for welcoming refugees as the President decides how many refugees to admit in the upcoming fiscal year by signing onto this letter: <https://welcomingrefugees2021.org/>. To contact your state officials, visit: contactingcongress.org/local and usa.gov/elected-officials. To tweet your officials, click to find the twitter handles for your [state legislators](#). **You can also share [this action alert](#) to quickly & easily email your state and local elected officials encouraging their signatures on the letter.**

We launched the **#RefugeesWelcome2021** campaign to put pressure on state and local elected leaders to sign this letter. Please join us by using our [#RefugeesWelcome2021 Social Toolkit](#) (with [graphics folder](#)).

For more information on the #RefugeesWelcome2021 campaign, please visit the links below:

- [Landing Page / Letter](#)
- [Information for Constituents](#)
- [Sign-On Form for Electeds](#)
- [Refugee Contribution Stories](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Talking Points

- Message guidance and tips for use in your meetings and with the media [available here](#): <http://bit.ly/RefugeeTalkingPointsFY21>.

Policy Asks

- Our list of actions that we want congressional offices to take: <http://bit.ly/RefugeeResettlementFY21>.

Leave-Behind Materials

- Send [these resources](#) to national, state, and local policy makers and their staff.

State-by-State Materials

- State profiles on resettlement are [available here](#).

COVID-19 Resources

- COVID-19 videos for refugees and immigrants in 11 different languages: [Arabic](#), [Burmese](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Farsi \(Dari\)](#), [Spanish](#), [Swahili](#), [Somali](#), [Kinyarwanda](#), [Nepalese](#), and [Rohingya](#)
- COVID-19 / Coronavirus Resources for Refugees: <http://bit.ly/COVIDHealthResources>
- Challenges Refugees Face in Accessing COVID Relief Provisions: <https://bit.ly/COVID19RefugeeChallenges>

Additional Toolkits

- CWS [Civic Engagement Toolkit](#)
- RCUSA [August Recess Toolkit](#)
- State Action Toolkit for a Refugee and Immigrant Inclusive Response to COVID-19: <https://bit.ly/StateCOVIDToolkit>