

Keep Our Nation's Doors Open to Refugees and Asylum Seekers

For over 70 years, JCPA has advocated on behalf of refugees and asylum-seekers who hope to build a better life for themselves and their children. Over the past two years, the Administration has instituted a number of sweeping changes to U.S. asylum and refugee policies, such as significantly reducing overall U.S. refugee admissions, entry for refugees from several predominantly Muslim countries, and significantly expanding detention for immigrants and asylum seekers.

Each year, the President must set an annual ceiling for refugee admissions by September 30. The U.S. refugee resettlement cap is currently set at just 30,000 for FY19, the lowest ceiling set by any president since the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program was established in 1980. It is unlikely that the U.S. will resettle even that many, despite the unprecedented refugee crisis. The United Nations estimates that the number of forcibly displaced people due to conflict, violence, and persecution is now 68.5 million, 25 million of whom are refugees.

Our immigration policy must balance national security concerns with the protection of civil and human rights. Closing our nation's doors to immigrants and refugees contradicts the fundamental American values of refugee protection, family reunification, and economic opportunity and the Jewish belief in "welcoming the stranger." JCPA and its network have always been deeply committed to maintaining a generous immigration system and have played an integral role in welcoming refugees in the U.S. for decades.

- **Cosponsor and support the GRACE Act (S. 1088/H.R. 2146) and other similar legislation that would set an annual refugee admissions floor of 95,000—the historic average.** This legislation would ensure the preservation of the refugee resettlement program and U.S. leadership in providing safe haven to persecuted people.
- **Support the NO BAN Act (S. 1123/H.R. 2214).** This legislation would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, repeal the discriminatory Muslim travel bans, and limit Presidential authority to enact similar bans in the future. [Click here to read the Jewish letter in support of the NO BAN Act.](#)
- **Provide the necessary oversight to ensure that the United States actually resettles 30,000 refugees in FY19.** This is particularly important because in FY18, with a Presidential Determination of 45,000, the U.S. only resettled 22,491 refugees. As a nation built by immigrants and refugees, the U.S. should seek to maximize, not minimize, the number of people we welcome and protect. Family reunification and generous refugee admissions must be cornerstones of our immigration policy.

For more information, please contact Tammy Gilden, Senior Policy Associate at the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, at tgilden@thejcpa.org.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) is the hub of the Jewish community relations network, representing over 125 local Jewish community relations councils and 17 national Jewish agencies. Together our network builds consensus on behalf of the entire Jewish community to promote a just and pluralistic American society, advocate for human rights around the world, and support Israel's quest for peace and security.