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Dear Florida Leadership: Protect Refugees

FLIC Condemns Historically Low Refugee Resettlement Allotment for 2021

National coalition calls on our elected officials to live up to our nation's values of refuge and welcoming

FLORIDA — Today, the Trump administration signed a Presidential Determination slashing refugee admissions to the United States to just 15,000 individuals for Fiscal Year 2021. This historically low number is unprecedented during any presidential administration, even undercutting the Trump administration's previous record low of 18,000 for FY2020. To date, the Trump administration has failed to meet its own goal, having only admitted approximately half of the 18,000 people allotted in the middle of a global crisis.

Now is a critical time for the faith and business community, state and local officials and law enforcement officers to make their support for the refugee resettlement program clear.

The following is a message from *Basma Alawee, a former refugee and current organizer with the Florida Immigrant Coalition:*

"While the administration continues to put up barriers and postpone refugee admissions, over 70 million displaced people globally are experiencing unthinkable suffering and hardship that has only been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. Their struggles vary and include food and housing insecurity; homelessness; lack of access to adequate health care and employment; fear of deportation or loss of legal protection; and more. These are families that are constantly living in a state of limbo with no clear

path for their futures. We cannot leave refugees and other marginalized groups behind as we work together to fight against the pandemic — it is both cruel and foolish.”

A refugee is a person who had to flee their home and is trying to belong to a community. I am a refugee that has started to put down roots in my community. I dedicated myself to volunteering, working, studying, and learning about my new home. There are close to 80 million displaced people in the world today. Every minute, people around the world are forced to flee their homes. I’m one of them.”

For those of us committed to welcoming refugees, it has been a challenging year. Even as more than 25 million refugees are in need of protection around the world--the highest number in recorded history, the administration has returned asylum seekers to harm and cut refugee resettlement to all-time lows And now they are considering zeroing out the program altogether. This cannot happen.

The administration has already banned refugees from seeking asylum if they travel through another country to reach the U.S. southern border. This, on top of multiple policies to keep asylum seekers out and return them to harm. Refugees from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador are seeking safety wherever they can - and without access to asylum many will die.

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The [Florida Immigrant Coalition](#) is a statewide alliance of over 60 member organizations, including farmworkers, students, service providers, grassroots organizations and legal advocates, who come together for the fair treatment of all people.