



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Kathy Gallagher, Employment & Human Services Director
Date: January 7, 2020

Subject: Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement: Support Without Endorsement

RECOMMENDATION(S):

SUPPORT without endorsement Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement;

CONSENT to refugee resettlement in Contra Costa County; and,

AUTHORIZE the Chair of the Board to execute and submit of a letter to the U.S. Department of State indicating the County's consent to refugee resettlement in Contra Costa County as per the terms of Executive Order 13888 on Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND:

On September 26, 2019, the President issued Executive Order (EO) 13888 requiring written consent from states and counties prior to the initial resettlement of refugees in their jurisdictions by the federal government. Pursuant to the Executive Order, on November 6,

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **01/07/2020** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor
Candace Andersen, District II Supervisor
Diane Burgis, District III Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV Supervisor
Federal D. Glover, District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: January 7, 2020

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: June McHuen, Deputy

Contact: Elaine Burres
608-4960

cc:

2019, the federal Department of State

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlining the consent requirements. The NOFO stipulated that the Resettlement Agencies must provide proof of written consent from the state governor's office and the chief executive officer of the county as a condition of refugee placement approvals and funding. The proposal submission deadline for Resettlement Agencies is January 21, 2020. Consistent with EO 13888, the consent letters will be published on the federal Department of State website. Effective June 1, 2020, refugees can only be resettled in locations where both state and local governments consent to their resettlement.

Refugee groups filed a lawsuit challenging the EO in U.S. District Court in Maryland. California Attorney General Becerra joined 12 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief. Oral arguments are scheduled for January 8, 2020. Participation in the implementation of Executive Order 13888 is not an endorsement of its legality.

Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay (JFCS) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) are the local Resettlement Agencies in Contra Costa. Services provided by these organizations include initial reception and housing assistance; cultural orientation; benefits enrollment; employment and career development services; legal, mental health, and parenting support services for refugees and immigrants in the East Bay. In the past three years, JFCS and IRC resettled 634 refugees in Contra Costa, with the large majority from Afghanistan.

Refugees are individuals who are forced to flee their home country due to persecution based on their race, religion, ethnicity, political opinion or social group. Resettlement is the last resort for refugees who cannot return to their home country and cannot rebuild their lives where they first fled. Refugees resettled by the U.S. State Department are lawfully present in the U.S., and undergo a thorough vetting process.

Refugees play an important role in California and Contra Costa County's economy. In 2015, refugees' businesses generated \$4.6 billion in income nationally and their spending power in California alone totaled more than \$17.2 billion. A 2017 draft report by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that refugees contributed \$63 billion more in tax revenue than they received in public benefits over the preceding decade.

Refugees who reside in California may qualify for CalFresh and Medi-Cal if they meet program requirements. Additionally, the Employment and Human Services Department administers Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI). RCA helps refugees by providing cash and medical assistance during their first eight months in the United States. CAPI is a State funded program that provides cash assistance for aged, blind and disabled legal immigrants and refugees who do not qualify for Federal Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Program (SSI/SSP).

Failure to provide consent per the requirements of the EO, and as set forth in the NOFO,

would threaten the long-term stability of the refugee resettlement program. Additional impacts could include a decrease in State and county refugee integration services, increased processing times for refugees in addition to added uncertainty and delays in economic and social integration processes. In addition, refugee families may experience extended separations.