

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-002

Resolution in Support of Multnomah County's Consent to Refugee Resettlement within Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. Multnomah County is home to a diverse and vibrant community of people representing many races, ethnicities, and nationalities, including immigrants and refugees from all over the world.
- b. More than 13 percent of Multnomah County's residents were born outside of the United States.
- c. Section 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and National Act defines a refugee as someone who has been forced to flee his or her country "because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion."
- d. Refugee resettlement is a last resort for individuals who have been forced to flee their home country.
- e. Individuals eligible for refugee resettlement have already been extensively and rigorously vetted by the Federal government for security and health concerns.
- f. Multnomah County has supported the arrival and integration of refugee families for many years and values the diversity, strength and resilience our immigrant and refugee communities bring to our nation.
- g. On March 16, 2017 Multnomah County adopted a resolution in support of becoming an active member of the national Welcoming America network, a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to leading a movement of inclusive communities across the nation.
- h. On September 26, 2019 President Trump issued Executive Order 13888 – Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement.
- i. Executive Order 13888 establishes that the policy of the United States in relation to resettling refugees into American communities, is "to cooperate and consult with State and local governments, to take into account the preferences of State governments, and to provide a pathway for refugees to become self-sufficient."
- j. Executive Order 13888 largely bars the placement of refugees in States and "localities" that have not consented in writing to refugee resettlement in their territories. This is a departure from the well-established legal framework that has been in place for decades.

- k. The Trump Administration has also narrowed the definition of “refugee” to individuals “who have been persecuted or have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of religion.” This definition of the term “refugee” moves away from the broader definition established in section 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and National Act, thereby decreasing the number of individuals who can apply for refugee status.
- l. In addition, the Trump administration has capped the number of refugees permitted into the Country at 18,000, the lowest number ever.
- m. This Executive Order is in direct opposition to Multnomah County’s commitment to create a safe and welcoming community for all.
- n. On December 16, 2019, Governor Brown responded to Executive Order 13888 with a letter to the Federal Government providing written consent to refugee resettlement within the State of Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

- 1. To continue the tradition of welcoming refugees into our communities.
- 2. To direct the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to provide the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration with written consent to refugee resettlement within Multnomah County upon passing of this resolution.

ADOPTED this 9th day of January, 2020.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Deborah Kafoury

Deborah Kafoury, Chair

REVIEWED:
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By *Carlos Calandriello*
Carlos Calandriello, Senior Assistant County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County Chair