



USCCB TALKING POINTS

- USCCB strongly opposes President Trump’s Executive Order that among other things:
 - Suspends visas, admissions and other immigration benefits for immigrants and non-immigrants for 30 days from Syria, Iraq and several other designated countries.
 - Imposes yet-to-be-determined vetting procedures for individuals seeking to enter the U.S.
 - Suspends virtually the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days. During this time period, the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Secretary of Homeland Security, will review the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) application and adjudication process.
 - Following the 120 days, the USRAP will resume admissions for nationals of certain countries for which the Secretary of DHS, DOS and the Director of National Intelligence have jointly determined that sufficient screening safeguards are in place.
 - Upon resumption of the program, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, will prioritize refugee claims for individuals who are religious minorities in their countries who are suffering from religious persecution.
 - Syrian refugee processing and arrivals are prohibited until it has been determined that Syrian resettlement to the U.S. is in alignment with the best interests of the United States.
 - The number of refugees admitted to the United States in 2017 is reduced from 110,000 to 50,000.
- The U.S. refugee resettlement program saves the lives of refugees while at the same time ensuring the safety of America.
- As Catholics and Americans we welcome refugee families that come to the United States to start their lives again in safety and dignity. It is closely tied to our identity and our values, as Catholics and Americans, to welcome vulnerable refugee families, regardless of their nationality or religion. The U.S. resettlement program has its historical underpinnings in the actions of the Catholic Church and other faith communities. Churches, synagogues and other communities of faith continue to stand in partnership to help refugees of all faiths find safety and hope as they start their lives as new Americans. Refugee resettlement is the living embodiment of the religious commitment to “welcome the stranger.”

- The millions of volunteers, members of community groups and religious congregations that support and engage in welcoming refugees come from across the political spectrum. Most support refugees based on deeply-held religious, moral or ethical convictions.
 - State by state demonstrations of welcome:
 - www.interfaithimmigration.org/welcoming-refugees-state-by-state-reference/
- We strongly support protection of religious minorities, including Christians, but we recognize that people of many faiths and nationalities are also persecuted and need protection. We support protection for all vulnerable refugees, regardless of nationality or religion.
- USCCB and its Catholic Charities partners strongly support having a refugee program that is safe for refugees and safe for the communities that welcome them. Based on our decades of experience welcoming refugees, we have a strong, safe program. It is that way because the government has been continually strengthening it over the life of the program, something we very much support and want to continue.
- Refugees already go through extensive vetting. They must pass through a series of security screenings, including biographic and biometric checks, medical screenings, forensic document testing, and in-person interviews. The information examined to confirm a refugee's identity is checked against law enforcement and intelligence databases, including those of the National Counterterrorism Center, Department of Defense, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of State, and Department of Homeland Security. If there is any doubt about who a refugee is, he or she will not be admitted to the United States.
- The world is experiencing the largest forced migration crisis in recorded history. As a world leader, the United States should welcome more refugees now, not less. Providing protection to people seeking safety is one of our nation's proudest and longest standing traditions, including resettling Jewish and other European refugees during World War II, Vietnamese refugees in the 1980s, and more recently refugees from the Sudan, Burma / Myanmar, Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. Welcoming refugees puts us on the right side of history, as the United States is committed to freedom and hope.
- Welcoming refugees makes America safer and stronger. Resettlement is a strategic program whereby we welcome a small number of the most vulnerable refugees and share the humanitarian responsibility with key strategic allies in countries and regions that are disproportionately affected by forced displacement. It not only saves refugees' lives but helps to bring stability and security to geopolitically sensitive regions.
- By demonstrating international leadership on refugee resettlement, the United States has been able to convince our friends and allies to provide additional support for refugees around the world. The vast majority of the world's refugees live in countries that neighbor those that they have fled. These refugee-hosting countries require infrastructure support and international commitments to resettlement in order to keep their doors open. It is in the United States' best interest, as we seek regional stability in the Middle East and elsewhere, to

help these countries both by providing humanitarian aid and resettling some of the refugees they are hosting.

- This executive order will result in families remaining separated temporarily and possibly permanently. American families who make up the very fabric of communities around the country will be kept separated from their relatives who only want to be reunited with their loved ones safely in the United States. Many refugees, immigrants, and U.S. citizens are waiting to be reunited with a sister, brother, parent or child through the refugee resettlement program. Temporarily and possibly permanent separation of these families will cause extreme hardship on families, especially in circumstances where vulnerable family members are in extreme danger.
- A temporary ban on Iraqi visas could directly endanger the lives of the interpreters and translators who served alongside U.S. forces in Iraq. By denying this population of visas, these individuals and their families may be targeted by our enemies and killed for their service to our country.
- Resettled refugees are eager to give back to the country that has welcomed them and make significant economic and cultural contributions to their communities. Newly-arrived refugees have been the driving force behind the rejuvenation of many cities across the United States. Those granted refuge in the U.S. successfully support their families, pay taxes, and contribute to the country in myriad ways.
- Refugees are employed in a wide range of sectors in the U.S. economy, from the hospitality and foodservice industry, to the teaching profession, to the fields of engineering, nursing and medicine.
- Albert Einstein, Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, and Sergey Brin, the founder of Google, are former refugees whose accomplishments demonstrate what the U.S. has to gain from welcoming refugees.

RESOURCES

[RCUSA refugee 101 backgrounder](#)

[RCUSA background on the security screening process](#)

[Refugee Resettlement State Profiles](#)

[Examples of Refugees' Contributions to Economy & Communities](#)

[Examples of Communities Welcoming Refugees](#)

[Letters and articles, national and state-by-state, demonstrating welcome for refugees](#)

[Letter from former Secretaries of the Department of Homeland Security](#)

[Letter to Congress from 20 Former National Security Officials](#)

[Letter from 800 faith leaders affirming welcome for refugees of all religions](#)

[In-Process quotes from faith leaders](#)

[In-Process stories of refugees impacted](#)

[Letter signed by nearly 1,700 rabbis in support of refugee resettlement](#)