

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 7, 2019

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Kevin K. McAleenan  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
245 Murray Lane S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear President Trump, Secretary Pompeo, and Acting Secretary McAleenan,

As Members of the U.S. House of Representatives' Bipartisan Congressional Refugee Caucus, we write to express our concern regarding reports of proposed drastic cuts to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). We oppose any proposals that would diminish the U.S. refugee resettlement program, as this would be in direct conflict with Congressional intent in passing the 1980 Refugee Act,<sup>1</sup> and inconsistent with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.<sup>2</sup>

In conversations with members of Congress and their staff—administration officials have indicated that they expect to reach their goal of 30,000 refugees for FY 2019, or come very near, by the end of the fiscal year. In fact, as of July 12, 2019, the United States has admitted 22,456 refugees this fiscal year,<sup>3</sup> which would indicate that the United States has the ability and capacity

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<sup>1</sup> Codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1184 and 1524.

<sup>2</sup> Codified at 8 U.S.C. § 1157.

<sup>3</sup> Refugee Processing Center, *Arrivals by Region*, (July 12, 2019), <http://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals>.

to resettle at least the historically low ceiling of 30,000 refugees in 2020. Additionally, since the creation of the United States refugee resettlement program in 1980, the United States has committed to resettling an average of 95,000 refugees each year, and has admitted an average of 85,000 refugees annually.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, we believe that the United States is capable of resettling much more than 30,000 refugees in 2020.

Cutting resettlement numbers would leave thousands of refugees who were deemed eligible to travel to the United States stranded in host countries. As of today, nearly 9,000 refugees are approved to travel to the United States, and more than 29,000 refugees have completed their USCIS interview.<sup>5</sup> Amongst these individuals seeking resettlement are Iraqis who face persecution for serving alongside U.S. troops, Yazidi survivors of religious persecution by ISIS, pro-democracy leaders, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and others who remain in danger in host countries and require resettlement. By diminishing the U.S. refugee resettlement program, we would be turning our backs on these vulnerable individuals.

In light of today's global refugee crisis, with more than 68 million people displaced and 25 million refugees worldwide,<sup>6</sup> U.S. leadership on refugee protection has never been more important. The vast majority of refugees find safe haven in neighboring countries, despite presenting exceptional challenges to their hosts. While the United States provides humanitarian support to these nations, financial assistance is not a substitute for our responsibility to resettle refugees.

As elected officials and Americans dedicated to the United States' longstanding commitment to refugee resettlement, we oppose any additional cuts to this critical program as well as any proposal to lessen its important role in the United States. The administration is obligated by law to consult with Congress when determining an appropriate number of refugee admissions each fiscal year<sup>7</sup>. We request that the administration set a Fiscal Year 2020 refugee ceiling that reflects America's historic leadership in refugee resettlement and protection, promotes our diplomacy, and protects our national security interests.


Sincerely,

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<sup>4</sup> Migration Policy Institute, *U.S. Annual Refugee Resettlement Ceilings and Number of Refugees Admitted, 1980-Present* (2018), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/us-annual-refugee-resettlement-ceilings-and-number-refugees-admitted-united>.


<sup>5</sup> *Id* at 1.

<sup>6</sup> U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, *Statistical Yearbook for 2018* June 19, 2018), <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>.



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Zoe Lofgren  
Co-Chair  
Congressional Refugee Caucus




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Mario Diaz-Balart  
Co-Chair  
Congressional Refugee Caucus




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Joe Neguse  
Co-Chair  
Congressional Refugee Caucus




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Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



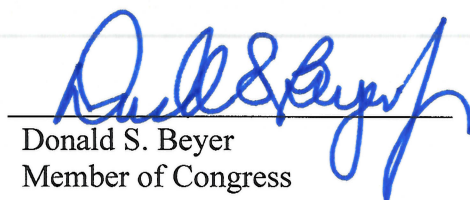
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Ami Bera  
Member of Congress




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John Katko  
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Donald S. Beyer  
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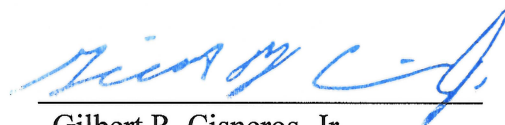
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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress




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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



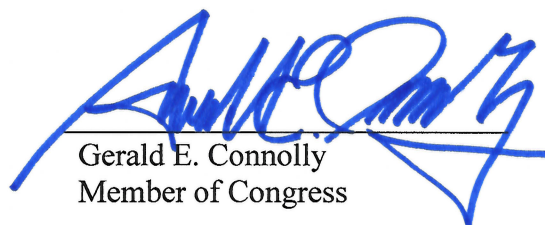
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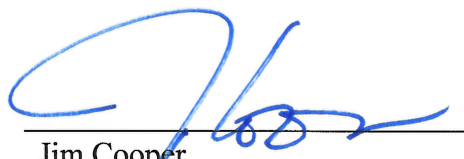
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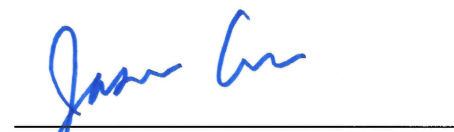
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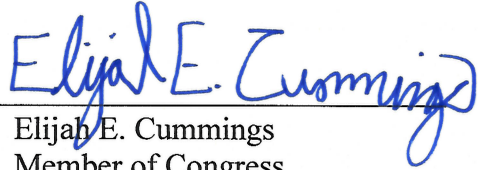
Jim Cooper  
Member of Congress




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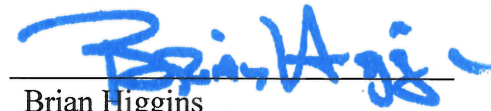
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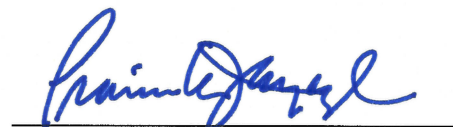


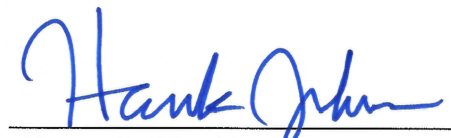
  
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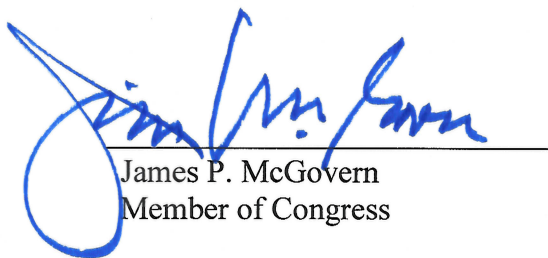
  
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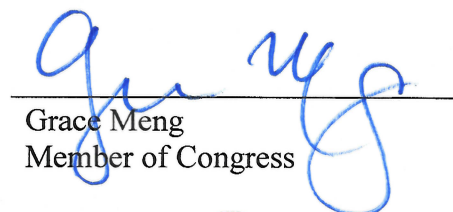
  
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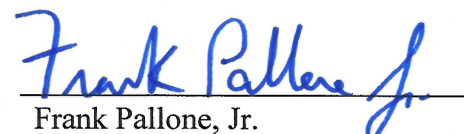
  
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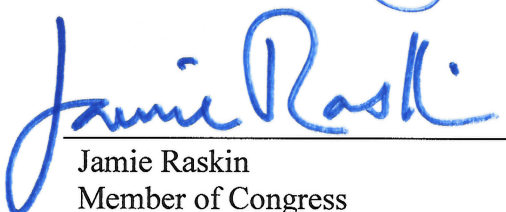
  
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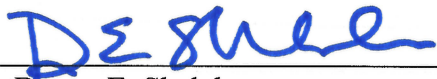
  
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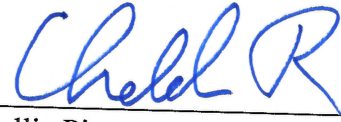
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