

February 27, 2020



**Hearing: The Current State of the U.S. Refugee Program
Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship of the House Committee on the Judiciary**

Today, an unprecedented 70.8 million people around the world have been displaced by war, humanitarian crisis, extreme poverty, natural disasters, political repression, and religious persecution. Some 25.9 million are refugees; most are children. On average, one person is forcibly displaced every two seconds; forced from their homes and quite literally fleeing for their lives.

The United States has a long and proud history of welcoming immigrants and sheltering refugees. Women religious have been blessed to be able to accompany immigrant and refugee communities across this country for almost 300 years and they continue to welcome those who come to this country seeking safety after passing through the U.S. government's rigorous screening processes.

As Americans we firmly oppose the continued attempts by this administration and some members of Congress to dismantle the U.S. refugee resettlement program. As Catholic sisters we strongly object to President Trump's efforts to limit our ability to heed the scriptural command to welcome the stranger and care for those in need.

U.S. refugee resettlement is at an all-time low. President Trump set the FY2020 Presidential Determination (PD) at an unconscionably 18,000, far below the 95,000 average admissions between 1980 and 2017. The administration's disregard for our nation's moral responsibility places vulnerable refugees, including women and children, in extreme danger and violates our national values and religious beliefs.

We call on Congress to recommit our nation to providing leadership in response to the global refugee crisis; to funding refugee resettlement in the U.S. and refugee protection overseas; and to working with the international community to address the root causes of forced migration.

We urge you to support H.R. 2146 the *GRACE Act* which would set a minimum refugee admissions goal of 95,000 each year and increase accountability by mandating quarterly reports on admissions and H.R. 2214 the *NO BAN Act* which would repeal the bans on Muslims, refugees, and asylees.

We promise you our continued prayers as together we seek to fulfill our moral obligations.

LCWR is an association of leaders of congregations of Catholic women religious in the United States. The conference has nearly 1300 members, who represent more than 38,800 women religious in the United States. Founded in 1956, LCWR assists its members to collaboratively carry out their service of leadership to further the mission of the Gospel in today's world.