

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN NEW PALTZ, NY

WHEREAS there are more refugees in the world today than at any time since World War II, and half of the world's refugees are children;

WHEREAS refugees are fleeing armed conflict and human rights abuses in Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central America, and other regions;

WHEREAS there are more than 3 million refugees from sub-Saharan African, almost 4 million Afghani and Somali refugees, and nearly 5 million Syrian refugees, among many other refugees;

WHEREAS more than half of the world's refugees are hosted by only ten countries, and many of these countries do not have adequate resources to keep refugees fed, housed, or safe, leaving some refugees to survive on less than fifty cents a day;

WHEREAS ninety-five percent of Syrian refugees are hosted by only five countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, and one in four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee;

WHEREAS there is a continued lack of funding for humanitarian aid for host countries, and food rations and medical aid have been repeatedly cut for refugees;

WHEREAS refugees who need to be resettled include torture survivors, people with severe medical conditions, LGBTI individuals, children alone, and women and children at risk – all of whom who cannot return home and cannot stay in their host country due to their extreme vulnerability;

WHEREAS the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has determined that 1.19 million refugees are in need of immediate resettlement, but less than 200,000 resettlement places are available worldwide;

WHEREAS refugees in need of resettlement represent only .3 percent of the world's population;

WHEREAS we applaud the historic, bi-partisan tradition of the United States in welcoming refugees, in keeping with our national values and respect for human rights;

WHEREAS we commend the United States for leading the world in refugee resettlement, admitting 85,000 refugees in 2016, pledging to admit 110,000 refugees in 2017, and resettling more than 14,500 Syrian refugees since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011, but note the ability of and urgent need for our country to do more;

WHEREAS a refugee does not get to choose to be resettled in the United States or the country of his or her choice;

WHEREAS, even if a refugee is a candidate for resettlement in the United States, he or she must still be found admissible under U.S. immigration law;

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WHEREAS every single refugee must undergo a security vetting process that is lengthy, extremely detailed, and very safe, taking 18 to 24 months and involving multiple law enforcement and intelligence agencies;

WHEREAS, refugees are the most vetted individuals to enter the United States and are not permitted to travel to the U.S. until all security screenings have been successfully completed;

WHEREAS Church World Service, as the organizations responsible for resettling refugees in the mid-Hudson Valley, is starting to resettle refugees in this region;

WHEREAS numerous education institutions, community organizations and religious institutions have declared their support for resettling refugees in New Paltz, NY;

RESOLVED, New Paltz Village and Town Councils jointly declare their support for the resettlement of refugees no matter their religion, race, nationality, or country of origin, in New Paltz and calls upon other Mid-Hudson Valley communities to join them in supporting a stronger national effort to resettle the most vulnerable refugees.