



August 20, 2018

The Honorable Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Secretary Nielsen:

As a nation that stands as a beacon of hope and stability in the world, the United States of America has always welcomed refugees and immigrants. We are a country bound together through cherished values, including diversity and helping those in need. Since our founding, refugees have added strength to our communities, and have contributed to our nation's success economically, socially, and culturally. **And so, I write today to urge the White House to continue to resettle refugees to America and honor the 45,000 admissions ceiling in 2019.**

Salt Lake City is a welcoming city. It was only a few generations ago that refugees fleeing religious persecution to practice their Mormon faith came to the Salt Lake Valley in search of a new life. They built new homes and a community, creating opportunity and hope for the future. Being a safe haven and place of refuge is deeply woven into culture of Utah.

As Mayor, I'm proud of residents and families who continue to step forward with open arms to welcome their new neighbors. Hundreds of volunteers have provided mentorship, life skills, and friendship to new Americans through a program in my office, with more volunteers joining week after week. In Salt Lake City, we're in this together, and we will continue to lift each other up and provide refuge for those in need.

Refugees are forced to flee their homes because they face persecution on account of their religion, ethnicity, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. Over 65 million people are displaced globally, the largest displacement crisis in recorded



history, including over 22 million refugees. Resettlement offers a chance for less than 1% of the world's refugees to reach safety in a third country when no other options remain.

Since 1994, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and other resettlement agencies have worked in Utah to help newcomers from around the world who have escaped life-threatening circumstances to begin building new lives for themselves and their families. Over 65,000 resilient new Utahns have proved to be an asset to their new communities since our state began resettling refugees – made possible by over 5,000 resident volunteers who have stepped forward in Salt Lake City to support new Americans.

Resettlement to the United States is available only for those who demonstrate the greatest and most immediate need for protection and takes place after eligible refugees undergo rigorous selection, security vetting and medical screening processes. These individuals are seeking safe haven – a life free from violence and suffering. It is our moral imperative to support them.

I urge the White House to continue to resettle refugees to our great country and honor the 45,000 admissions ceiling in 2019. Salt Lake City and the State of Utah has demonstrated the economic and social benefits of being a welcoming city and state to refugees and new Americans.

If you have any questions about the status of our work in Salt Lake City, Utah or if there is any other way we can be of assistance please do not hesitate to reach out. I can be reached at mayor@slcgov.com or (801) 535-7704.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqueline M. Biskupski".

Jacqueline M. Biskupski
Mayor