

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

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor  
Health and Human Service, Education  
and Related Agencies  
2413 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
HT-2, the Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations  
and Related Programs  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Carter  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
Committee on Appropriations  
B-307 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,  
and Chair Carter and Ranking Member Roybal-Allard:

As you consider funding for Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19), we write to urge you to support U.S. national security, foreign policy, economic, and humanitarian interests by maintaining robust funding for international humanitarian assistance for refugees and other populations. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program is a longstanding bipartisan humanitarian program that enables the United States to provide lifesaving protection to some of the world's most vulnerable people. Forcibly displaced people lack access to the most basic necessities of life, including food and nutrition, clean water, safe shelter, healthcare, education, livelihood, and protection from conflict, war, and violence. Beyond these grave humanitarian concerns, the presence of large populations of forcibly displaced persons is an urgent strategic and security concern for the nations and regions in which they live. U.S. funding helps to ensure that the basic human needs of persons fleeing persecution are met while they are displaced, supports permanent solutions to their displacement, and supports the countries hosting them.

## ***Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter***

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Committee ensure we can meet the needs of these vulnerable communities by allocating \$1.9 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee and Entrant Assistance (REA) account, \$3.604 billion for the Department of State's Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account, \$50 million for the Department of State's Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account, \$4.4 billion for the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account, and explore options for enhancing funding for the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### **Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education:**

The Refugee and Entrant Assistance (REA) account in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (LHHS) appropriations bill funds the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), which helps states and local communities welcome and support refugees and other vulnerable populations on their path to self-sufficiency. In addition to refugees, ORR also serves increasing numbers of unaccompanied children, asylees, Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients, Cuban and Haitian entrants, victims of human trafficking, and victims of torture. In particular, there is an increasing need for services for trafficking and torture survivors, yet funding has remained stagnant same for years. We request that Congress allocate \$1.9 billion for the agency to adequately serve all of the populations within its mandate and respond to unanticipated needs.

### **State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs:**

The Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account funds the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). This account provides overseas assistance to displaced refugees, supporting refugee admissions, and funding lifesaving services in humanitarian emergencies. The crises in Syria and Iraq continue to escalate dramatically, and there are likewise serious humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Burma, and Central American countries. Therefore, we request \$3.604 billion, which will be critical to ensure that PRM can continue to service currently displaced populations while responding to numerous emerging humanitarian crises.

Escalating violence and instability in many parts of the world have placed increasing demands on the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account—an emergency draw-down account that provides an important “safety valve” during emergencies. The ERMA authorized level has not been increased since the mid-1990s. We request the Committee fund this account at \$50 million in order to enhance our country's ability to respond quickly to unanticipated crises, and expeditious, draw-down authority provided to the Secretary of State.

The International Disaster Assistance (IDA) account funds humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons. Meeting the needs of internally displaced persons is one way to prevent the need for them to flee their countries of origin and become refugees. We request that the Committee allocates \$4.4 billion in order to meet the needs of growing numbers of persons worldwide who are displaced within their own countries, including those inside Syria and Iraq.

*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*

**Homeland Security:**

The Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) plays an important role in processing applications for refugees, asylees, and other humanitarian programs. Currently, USCIS is fee-funded by applicants for non-immigrant visas and other immigration applications. Thus, USCIS faces the challenge of increased backlogs and delays in the processing of refugee and asylum applications. We urge appropriators to work with USCIS and other agencies involved in the refugee screening to identify whether additional funds could enhance USCIS's ability to ensure timely processing of refugee and asylum applications, including the carrying out of security screening

Our first priority is the safety of the American people. We remain deeply committed to safeguarding the public from terrorist attacks, just as we are committed to providing refuge to some of the world's most vulnerable people. These goals are not mutually exclusive, and can be pursued in harmony. That's why, even as the United States accepts more refugees we do so only after subjecting them to the most rigorous screening and security vetting of any category of traveler to the United States.

We deeply appreciate your support for these services and your consideration of these requests, as we seek to provide this critical funding to serve and protect some of the world's most vulnerable people and maintain our legacy as a global humanitarian leader.

Sincerely,

 Rep. Juan Vargas Member of Congress	 Rep. Julia Brownley Member of Congress	 Rep. Bradley S. Schneider Member of Congress
 Rep. David N. Cicilline Member of Congress	 Rep. John K. Delaney Member of Congress	 Rep. Alcee L. Hastings Member of Congress
 Rep. Ted W. Lieu Member of Congress	 Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. Member of Congress	 Rep. Adam B. Schiff Member of Congress

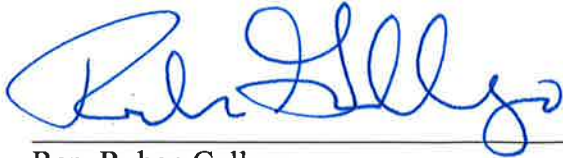
*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



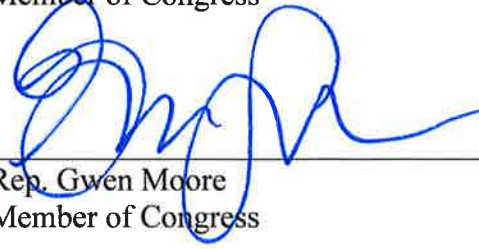
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



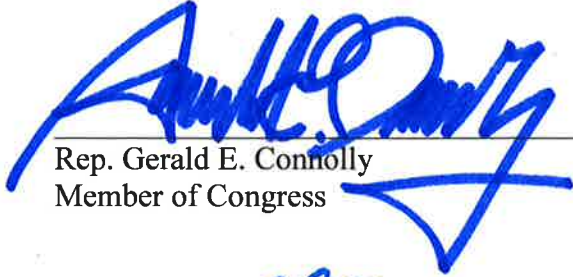
Rep. Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



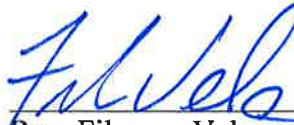
Rep. Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



Rep. Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



Rep. Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



Rep. Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress



Rep. Anthony G. Brown  
Member of Congress



Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Rep. Salud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress



Rep. Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



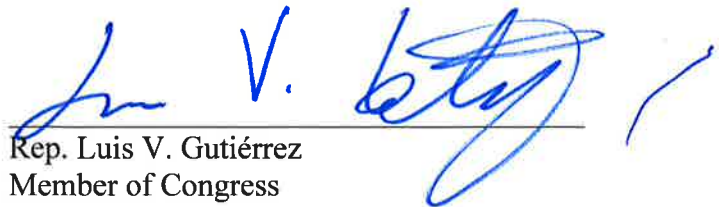
Rep. Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



Rep. J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



Rep. Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Rep. Luis V. Gutiérrez  
Member of Congress



Rep. James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress



Rep. John A. Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



Rep. Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



Rep. Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress



Rep. Val B. Demings  
Member of Congress




Rep. Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



Rep. Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



Rep. Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



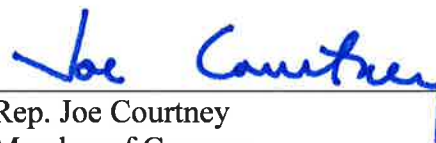
Rep. Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Rep. Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Rep. Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



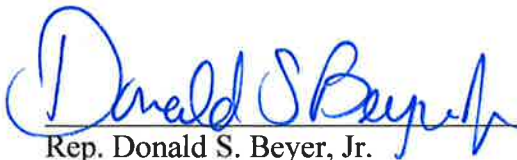
Rep. Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



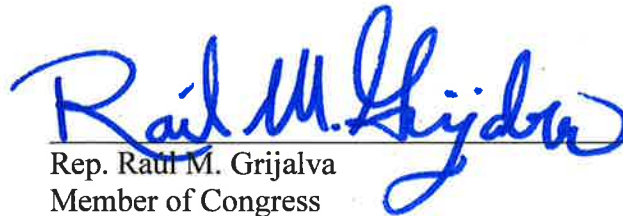
Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress



Rep. Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



Rep. Donald S. Beyer, Jr.  
Member of Congress

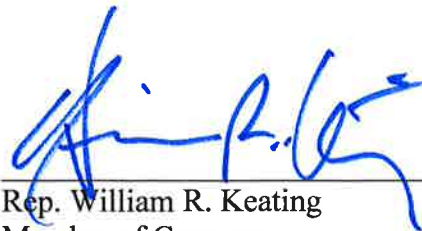


Rep. Raul M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



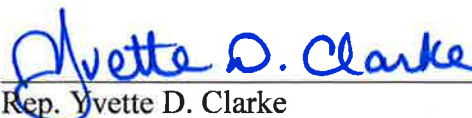
Rep. Alan S. Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Rep. William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



Rep. Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



Rep. Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Rep. Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Rep. John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



Rep. Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress



Rep. Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress



Rep. Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



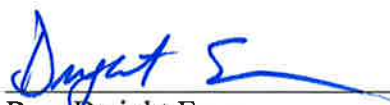
Rep. Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Rep. John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

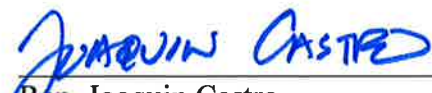


Rep. Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Rep. Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*

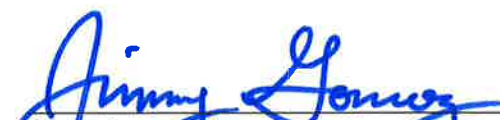
  
Rep. Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Ben Ray Luján  
Member of Congress


  
Rep. Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. André Carson  
Member of Congress


  
Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress


  
Rep. Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress

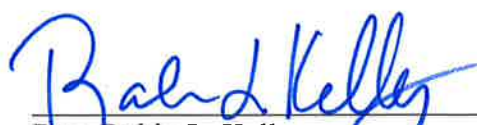
  
Rep. Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress


  
Rep. Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Al Green  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Denny Heck  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



Rep. Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



Rep. Ruben J. Kihuen  
Member of Congress



Rep. Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



Rep. Beto O'Rourke  
Member of Congress



Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



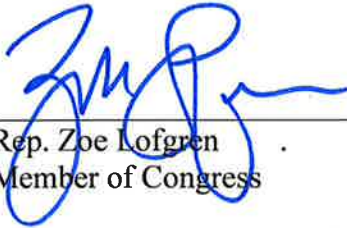
Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III  
Member of Congress



Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Rep. Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Rep. Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Rep. Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Rep. Doris O. Matsui  
Member of Congress



Rep. Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress



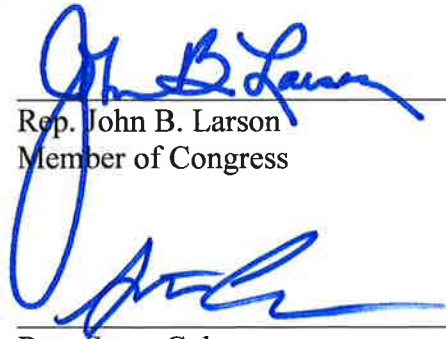
Rep. Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress



Rep. John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



Rep. Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress



Rep. Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



Rep. Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress



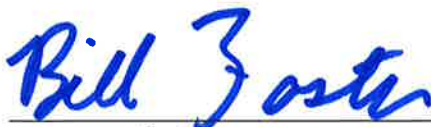
Rep. Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



Rep. Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



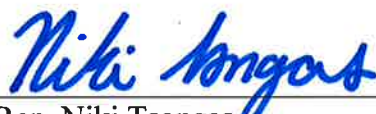
Rep. Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



Rep. Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



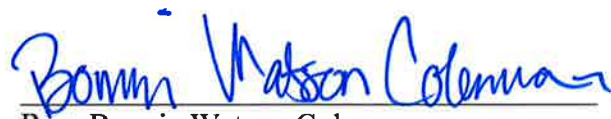
Rep. Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress



Rep. John Lewis  
Member of Congress



Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



Rep. Timothy J. Walz  
Member of Congress



Rep. Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter



---

Rep. Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Brenda L. Lawrence  
Member of Congress



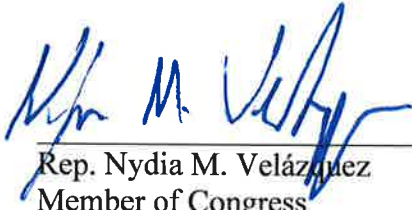
---

Rep. Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Elizabeth H. Esty  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



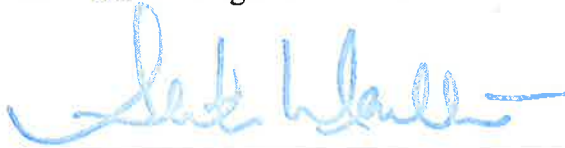
---

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Cedric L. Richmond  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



---

Rep. Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress

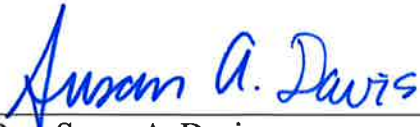
*Refugee Assistance Appropriations Letter*



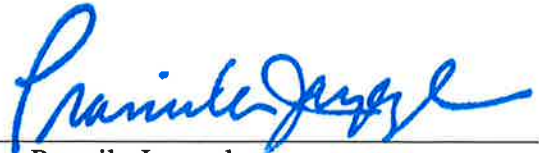
Rep. Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress



Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress



Rep. Susan A. Davis  
Member of Congress



Rep. Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



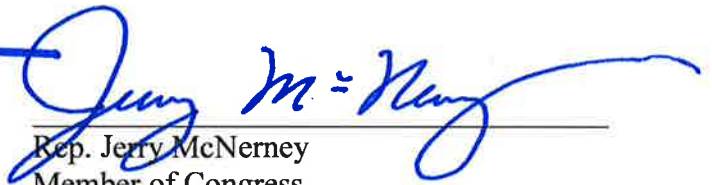
Rep. Alma S. Adams  
Member of Congress



Rep. A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress



Rep. Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress