



Legislation Text

File #: RES 19-1703, **Version:** 1

Recognizing the contributions of refugees to the City of Saint Paul and supporting the resettlement of refugees in Saint Paul.

WHEREAS, Minnesota and Saint Paul, specifically, have long benefited from welcoming refugees into our community, and

WHEREAS, 95% of refugees coming to Minnesota are reuniting with family members, and,

WHEREAS, more than 85% of refugees who have been in the country for 16 to 25 years have taken the step of becoming United States citizens, and

WHEREAS, people who arrive in Minnesota with refugee status own homes, start businesses, and become valued members of our Saint Paul community, and

WHEREAS, refugees here five years or less have a medium household income of roughly \$22,000, but by the time a refugee has been in the country at least 25 years, their median household income reaches \$67,000: \$14,000 more than the median income of U.S. households overall, and

WHEREAS, the approximately 94,000 people who have arrived with refugee status in Minnesota as of 2015, contributed: \$380.70 million in Federal Taxes and \$2227.20 million in State and Local Taxes, and

WHEREAS, an estimated 77.1% of refugees are working-age compared to the 49.7% of the U.S.-born population, and

WHEREAS, the average workforce participation rate of refugees is 81.8% well above the national average of 62%, and

WHEREAS, since 1975, the U.S. has resettled over 3 million refugees with annual admissions figures ranging from a high of 207,000 in 1980 and a low of 22,491 in 2018, and

WHEREAS, immigration really could help us sustain the economic growth and the quality of life that we have become accustomed to, and

WHEREAS, each day, an estimated 44,000 people across the world are forcibly displaced from their homes due to violence, persecution, or war, and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Refugee Agency reports that over 68.5 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, 25.4 million of whom are registered refugees, and

WHEREAS, more than half of those registered are children, and

WHEREAS, the refugee resettlement program in the U.S has historically been a humanitarian, bipartisan program, and

WHEREAS, each fall the President, after consultation with Congress, sets the number of refugees who will be resettled to the United States in the upcoming fiscal year - this number is known as the "Presidential Determination", and

WHEREAS, the President has reduced the number of refugees set in the "Presidential Determination" each year since 2017 and he has set the number for fiscal year 2020 at 18,000, and

WHEREAS, 18000 is the lowest Presidential Determination ever set by the United States and reducing the Presidential Determination to such a low number will have a negative impact on the residents of Saint Paul and the economy of Saint Paul, and

WHEREAS, in his statement announcing the Presidential Determination, the President has also stated that Refugees will only be resettled in Communities that are willing to accept them, and

WHEREAS, given that the Presidential Determination has been set so low, the President is going to allow Cities and States to opt out of receiving refugees, and Saint Paul has a long history of welcoming refugees, and

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the St. Paul City Council recognizes the contributions that Refugees have made to the City of Saint Paul and endorses the City accepting refugees in fiscal year 2020 and continuing its long history of welcoming refugees to Saint Paul.