

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 22, 2018

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to you with concern about the Trump Administration's recent announcement of a steep cut in the refugee admissions target for Fiscal Year 2019. A Presidential Determination of just 30,000 refugee admissions for the current year represents the lowest number ever set in the nearly 40 years since the program began. This is at odds with your previous statement of support for the refugee program and your commitment to meaningfully consult with Congress regarding the Presidential Determination.

At your confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, you stated that "America has an important role with respect to refugees," and you pledged that "you have my full commitment that we'll work on these issues together." However, your recent announcement of an Administration decision to further reduce refugee admissions undermines the U.S. role as a leader in refugee resettlement and is counter to the commitment you made to Congress.

The global community currently faces one of the largest refugee crises the world has seen. More than 25 million people around the world have fled their homes and countries due to war, famine, and persecution. These are some of the world's most vulnerable individuals, and more than half of them are children. Yet in Fiscal Year 2018, the U.S. resettled only 22,491 refugees, in stark contrast to the annual average of more than 80,000 refugees resettled per year since the enactment of the 1980 Refugee Act.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is a vital tool that promotes stability around the world and helps protect U.S. national security. We have a strong tradition of bipartisan support for robust refugee admissions. The USRAP exhaustively screens applicants through multiple federal agencies via a two-year process that ensures that the refugees admitted pose little risk to national security. In fact, national security experts from both political parties have publicly affirmed that reducing refugee admissions makes Americans less safe¹.

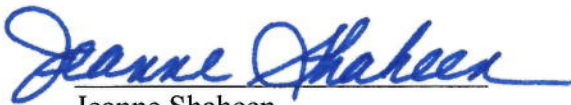
The reductions in refugee admissions threaten the position of the United States as a world leader in humanitarian assistance and undercuts our global leadership. We have been the world's leader in refugee resettlement and humanitarian aid; when we do not fulfil our commitments to the most

¹ <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/fact-sheet-national-security-validators-refugees.pdf>;
<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/STATEMENT-ON-AMERICAS-COMMITMENT-TO-REFUGEES.pdf>

vulnerable populations, we cede that role. We cannot ask our partners to accept more refugees when we are not doing so ourselves.

We urge the Trump Administration to reconsider this decision and instead reaffirm the U.S.'s commitment to a robust refugee admissions program.

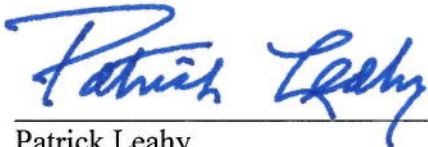
Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



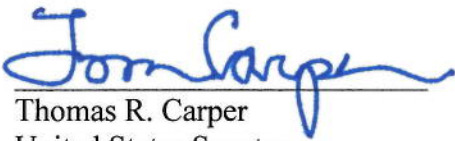
Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator



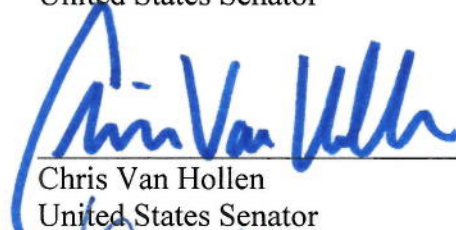
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



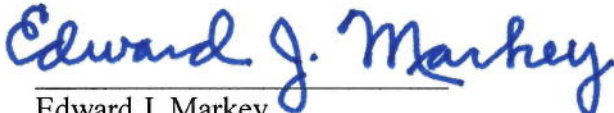
Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



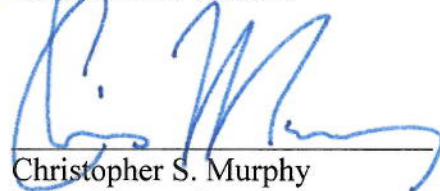
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



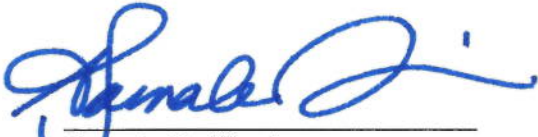
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



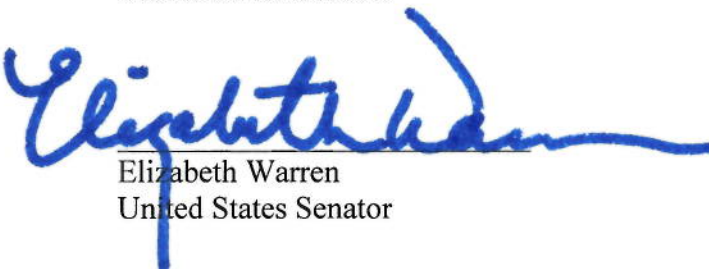
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



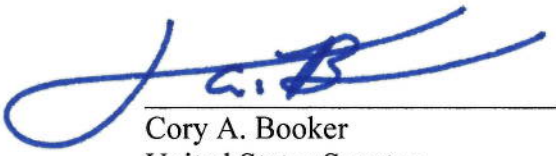
Jack Reed
United States Senator



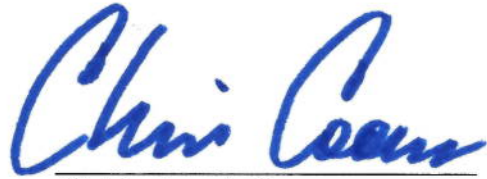
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



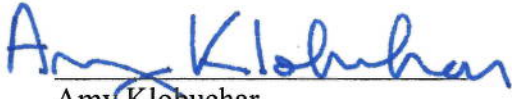
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator