



EL PASO COUNTY STATE OF TEXAS

RESOLUTION



WHEREAS, forty years ago the Refugee Act of 1980 became law in the United States of America and created the framework for refugee resettlement in the United States, cementing our commitment to human decency and enhancing a cornerstone of the American Dream: the ability to find refuge in a land of opportunity where we recognize that all people are created equal, endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, the United States has an extensive history of welcoming refugees and has previously led the world in the number of refugees welcomed and resettled in our country having resettled 3 million of the more than 4 million refugees resettled worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the last number of years have proved challenging with nativist and anti-American values dominating our immigration system and federal bureaucracy, leading to a slashing of the number of refugees welcomed into our country from an average 95,000 annually to 18,000; and

WHEREAS, as the Biden Administration reaffirms our global commitment to helping those who are forced to flee their home countries due to war, violence, and/or persecution, the administration should consider the successes of the Refugee Act of 1980 and build upon it as we meet the challenges of this age and what leads an individual to become a refugee; and

WHEREAS, post-settlement, the inclusion of refugees in America has led to greater diversity and social wealth at the community level and at the national economic level as well; in 2015 alone, more than 151,000 refugee entrepreneurs generated \$44.6 billion in business income; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the difficulties of people on the move and, we now face mounting pressure locally to ensure we prepare with the resources needed to ensure our brothers and sisters from afar are safe and healthy as they make their way to loved ones and friends already in the United States through El Paso; and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration and the federal government must not only reverse previously implemented policy and work to ensure policies and resources are in place for ethical and humane treatment of migrant refugees, they must also assist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local governmental entities as we support the federal government through this process; and

WHEREAS, a letter addressing testing and care of migrants was sent to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, on behalf of community leaders, calling upon the federal government to address the urgent need to provide testing and care to migrants who may be released into our communities in the near future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the El Paso County Judge and Commissioners Court that we forward this resolution to and call upon our federal delegation to help us adequately collaborate and serve, while ensuring the health and safety of all of our constituents as well as that of our brothers and sisters seeking refuge in this land of opportunity in which they will undoubtedly contribute socially, culturally, and economically to the beautiful tapestry that are these United States of America.

SIGNED, this 22nd day of February 2021

Commissioner Carlos Leon, Pct. 1

Commissioner David C. Stout, Pct. 2

Commissioner Iliana Holguin, Pct. 3

Commissioner Carl L. Robinson, Pct. 4

Ricardo A. Samaniego, County Judge