



Durbin Statement On Biden Administration's Decision To Raise Refugee Admissions Target

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today released the following statement after the Biden Administration announced it would raise the Fiscal Year 2021 refugee admissions target to 62,500:

“Facing the greatest refugee crisis in our time, the United States must return to our longstanding bipartisan tradition of providing safety to the world’s most vulnerable refugees. Raising the cap on refugee admissions will give tens of thousands of refugees – who have undergone extensive vetting and lengthy delays – a chance to start a new life in America. I applaud the Biden Administration for this humane decision.”

Last week, Durbin led 33 of his Senate colleagues in a [letter](#) to President Joe Biden asking him to issue an updated presidential determination with an increased refugee admissions target for the remainder of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 as soon as possible. The Senators also urged President Biden to set a target of at least 125,000 refugee admissions in FY 2022 and to set the refugee admissions target at 62,500 for this fiscal year, as the Administration proposed to Congress in February.

In February, Durbin [participated](#) in a statutorily-required refugee consultation between the Biden Administration and House and Senate Judiciary Committee leadership. This mid-year consultation is required by law before the Administration can raise the number of refugees to be admitted during the current fiscal year.

Since the enactment of the Refugee Act of 1980, the United States resettled an average of more than 80,000 refugees per year. However, the Trump Administration set the

annual refugee admissions target at disgracefully low numbers for four years in a row. Last fiscal year, the Administration set a target of only 18,000 refugees and just 11,814 refugees were admitted.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were more than 80 million people displaced worldwide in 2020, a record high. Among this displaced population are 26 million refugees – the highest number in history – half of whom are children. UNHCR estimates that 1.4 million refugees are in urgent need of resettlement.