



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: 12/17/19
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item:
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Director(s): Bernard Melekian, Assistant County Executive Officer
Contact Info: Bernard Melekian, Assistant County Ex
SUBJECT: Response to Presidential Executive Order 13888 regarding Refugee Resettlement

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive a report on Presidential Executive Order 13888 of September 26, 2019 “*On Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement.*”; and
- B. Provide consent for resettlement of refugees within the County of Santa Barbara and authorize the County Executive Officer to sign the required letter to that effect; and
- C. Determine that the action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) because it is a governmental administrative activity that will not result in any direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

Under Presidential Executive Order 13888, dated September 26, 2019, the US Department of State will no longer place refugees in local jurisdictions until both the jurisdiction and the governor of the state consent to such resettlement. The International Rescue Committee is a refugee resettlement agency for the Los Angeles region, which includes Santa Barbara County. They have requested that the county provide written authorization to the Secretary of State. This authorization must be granted prior to December 25, 2019.

This matter is brought forward by the CEO's Office at the request of Supervisor Williams. The Board is asked to authorize the County Executive Officer to sign the requested letter.

Background:

The Refugee Admissions Program was established by the Refugee Act of 1980 and is managed by the Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services. Since 1980, refugees have successfully resettled across the United States with the assistance of communities, volunteers, local non-profits, and faith-based organizations.

Resettlement is a humanitarian protection tool developed by the United States and other countries as a last resort for refugees who cannot return to their home country and cannot rebuild their lives in the country to which they first fled. Refugees undergo thorough background screenings prior to their arrival in the United States.

Refugees entering the United States are placed by the Department of State in various localities, generally with the assistance of Refugee Assistance Agencies such as the International Rescue Committee. In September of this year, the President issued Executive Order 13888, which made such placements contingent on written permission from both the affected jurisdiction **and** the governor of that state. Data as to which cities and counties have actually done so as of this writing is not available, although Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors submitted the requested letter on December 3, 2019. While Governor Newsom has not yet signed the authorization on behalf of the State of California, it is anticipated that he will do so prior to the deadline.

Copies of the correspondence from the International Rescue Committee as well as the requested letter are attached to this report.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Attachments:

- a) Letter from the International Rescue Committee dated November 8, 2019
- b) Letter from the International Rescue Committee dated November 21, 2019
- c) Draft letter of authorization

Authored by: Bernard Melekian, Assistant County Executive Officer