

Honorable Mayor and Council, thank you for permitting me to comment on the important topic of Refugee Resettlement in _____. You may not know, but last year _____ refugees were resettled here with a total of _____ over the past 8 years.

While I think helping refugees is a good thing and immigration under controlled conditions has made our country great, there are many things about the RR Program that I find troubling. I will only have time tonight to scratch the surface because this is a complex and secretive program, I hope you will place this topic as an agenda item for further study and action.

The RR Program started 35 years ago. The UN, for the most part, chooses the refugees who come here and the placements are refined by one of nine voluntary agencies, often church related groups. These agencies are almost all completely taxpayer funded. Think of this operation as the way FED EX moves packages through hubs. This is somewhat the way the people are moved.

In many cases, a local community is not even aware of a number of refugees moving in until school starts in the fall and there are new students speaking a variety of languages, all needing special language services. After

the “package” is delivered and settled in a new home and lined up with government assistance including the paperwork to initiate the process of bringing in more family members, the agency is out of the picture and the local community has to fill the void as long as these refugees are not self-sufficient. And at five years out the majority of them still receive benefits.

Michigan has received more refugees per capita than any other state. Across the nation the cost of the RR Program is \$8 billion annually. This is big business. The taxpayer funded church groups have six figure salaried executives sitting in their plush Washington DC offices deciding how much of a burden is going to be placed on local communities. Can we say no? or not this many right now because we have our own citizens with needs? Probably not. It is a secret. We have had to file a freedom of information request to get the information that we should have already had access to.

And who are we bringing in? Many think they are the persecuted Christians in the Middle East we see on the news. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Statistics show

that the refugees are predominantly Muslim. The Christians in the Middle East are in the storm of a genocide and being completely wiped off the map. There are very few left in the cradle of Christianity where Christian worship in Mosul has gone on for 2000 years until last year. This is genocide, just like the Armenian genocide 100 years ago or the more recent Holocaust with extermination of Jews. We cannot stand by and allow this to go on.

What can we do? The first thing is to start to exert local control. We can make a stand and decide if we want to take in more refugees and what kind of refugees we want to help. This should not be a decision made by the UN and Washington DC. We need some citizen input and we need to explore all options. Maybe it is more culturally sensitive and cost effective to help refugees shelter in a place of safety within their own country.

I request that the Refugee Resettlement topic be placed on an upcoming formal agenda with the goal of approving a Resolution reflecting the will of We, the people of _____ . Thank you.