A RESOLUTION TO SECURE LENAWEE COUNTY
AND PROTECT ITS RESIDENTS FROM
THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

WHEREAS: Refugees are placed in Michigan through the Federal Refugee Resettlement Program, a federal-taxpayer-funded program that contracts with vendor agencies to coordinate placements and welfare benefits for refugee families coming into our country[i], and

WHEREAS, State records show that federal vendors operating in Michigan have requested a total of at least 4060 refugees be resettled into Michigan in FY 2016[ii], and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has called for the resettling of at least 10,000 Syrian refugees in the United States this fiscal year[iii], and

WHERERAS, Federal vendors have, thus far this fiscal year, resettled more Syrian refugees in Michigan than any other state[iv], and the arrival numbers are expected to surge dramatically given the federal vendors' preparations[v], and

WHEREAS, the FBI and other homeland security agencies have testified before Congress that refugees from failed states such as Syria cannot be adequately vetted to ensure that they do not have terrorist ties because the necessary records do not exist[vi], and

WHEREAS, Intelligence officials have testified before Congress that terrorists are seeking to use the refugee program to enter the United States[vii], and

WHEREAS, Federal immigration law requires that local governments be consulted with prior to placement of refugees in their communities and that they be involved in defining their local capacity for refugee placements[viii], and

WHEREAS, Federal reports indicate that there continue to be major gaps in communication between federal vendors and local governments and schools prior to the placement of refugees[ix], and

WHEREAS, the Refugee Resettlement process creates significant unfunded financial burdens for receiving states, counties and local communities to provide public assistance to meet refugee needs for schools, law enforcement, housing, and health care, etc.[x], and

WHEREAS, there is pending federal and state legislation to reform the Refugee Resettlement Program requiring federal vendors to operate with more transparency, to more fully involve local governments in placement decisions, and to report to the state police all situations which could be related to security risks or human trafficking events[xi],

BE IT RESOLVED that Lenawee County will not actively participate in the Refugee Resettlement Program until the Program has been significantly reformed, and until it has been demonstrated that Lenawee County has the capacity to absorb refugees without diverting funds from needy County residents or exposing its residents to unwarranted security risks.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be provided to each municipality and school district within this county, and to all elected state and federal officials representing Lenawee County or portions thereof.

ADOPTED THIS ___ DAY OF _____, 2016.

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Lenawee County Board of Commissioners, Chair

[i] Federal Refugee Resettlement Program https://refugeeresettlementwatch.wordpress.com/2015/11/25/fact-sheet-provided-to-house-of-representatives-briefing-november-12-2015/ (U.S. House of Representatives briefing November 12, 2015)

[ii] MDHHS FOIA Request and Response on FY2016 plans
http://www.refugeeresettlementmonitormichigan.org/foiadocuments.htm

[iii] Obama calls for at least 10,000 Syrians this fiscal year
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/11/world/middleeast/obama-directs-administration-to-accept-10000-syrian-refugees.html?_r=0;
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/10000-syrians-congress-refugee-groups_us_55f2eb12e4b077ca094eb7df

[iv] Michigan has received more Syrians than any other state this fiscal year
https://refugeeresettlementwatch.wordpress.com/2016/04/01/6-months-in-to-fiscal-year-1282-syrian-refugees-admitted-to-us-obama-is-thousands-short-of-goal/;
http://www.wrapsnet.org/Reports/InteractiveReporting/tabid/393/EnumType/Report/Default.aspx?ItemPath=/rpt_WebArrivalsReports/Map%20-%20Arrivals%20by%20State%20and%20Nationality (where you can retrieve an updated report from 10/1/15 to 3/31/16 for Syria)

[v] Syrian surge is now underway
https://refugeeresettlementwatch.wordpress.com/2016/04/06/announcement-from-us-embassy-in-jordan-syrian-refugee-surge-to-america-is-now-underway/;
http://bigstory.ap.org/article/7541e848938d43f0b2051cc215426b3a/first-syrians-leave-us-under-surge-resettlement-program

[vi] FBI unable to vet Syrian refugees http://dailycaller.com/2015/10/21/fbi-director-admits-us-cant-vet-all-syrian-refugees-for-terror-ties-video/ (discussing FBI Director James Comey's testimony on Syrian refugees before Congress, House Committee on Homeland Security, 10/21/15; providing video excerpt of Comey's testimony)

[vii] ISIS infiltrating refugees http://nypost.com/2015/12/08/isis-trying-to-infiltrate-us-via-syrian-refugee-program-goper/ (reporting on statements made by the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee)

[viii] Refugee Act of 1980 requires consultation and consideration of absorptive capacity
https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-94/pdf/STATUTE-94-Pg102.pdf

[ix] GAO reports gaps in communication among stakeholders http://www.gao.gov/assets/600/592975.pdf

[x] Unfunded mandates for states https://refugeeresettlementwatch.wordpress.com/2015/08/13/barnett-fog-of-ignorance-and-misinformation-around-this-program-is-medias-fault/ (guest column by Don Barnett, Fellow at the Center for Immigration Studies)

[xi] Federal legislation https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4731
Michigan legislation
http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(xy104ewr0yiyiq0ugveryi3k))/mileg.aspx?page=BillStatus&objectname=2016-HB-5528
https://legislature.mi.gov/(S(yebowqtvvgsnhpgms5jnxaaw))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2016-HB-5529