

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS AND
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**Legal Action to Oppose Giving State and Local Governments Veto Power Over
Refugee Resettlement Efforts**

On September 26, 2019, President Trump issued Executive Order 13888 (EO 13888), requiring written state and local government consent before initial resettlement of refugees into any community under the Department of State's Reception & Placement program. In effect, EO 13888 gives state and local officials—not including city officials—veto power over refugee resettlement efforts to ban refugees from settling in their respective communities.

In November 2019, a coalition of refugee resettlement groups sued the Trump administration in federal court in Maryland seeking to block EO 13888. In January 2020, the groups won a preliminary injunction blocking the order. The Federal government has appealed the decision to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. The City of Los Angeles and the Public Rights Project are drafting an amicus brief in support of the preliminary injunction and have invited Los Angeles County (County), among other local jurisdictions, to join as a party to the brief.

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EO 13888 strikes at the heart of America's status as the Land of Opportunity. Refugees flee their countries and cannot return due to a genuine and well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or speech expressing a political opinion contrary to the established government. Among the most vulnerable people in the planet, refugees exhibit extraordinary determination, strength, and sacrifice in their journey to our shores. Once settled, they contribute those qualities to the communities that receive them. Unfortunately, EO 13888 invites a relatively small group of officials, in power in selected locations, to refuse to receive refugees across broad swaths of our nation. Put differently, EO 13888 could add xenophobic insult to refugees' injuries. By signing onto the brief, the County can help prevent this injustice.

California consistently ranks in the top five among states receiving refugees. For federal fiscal years 2011 through 2017, for example, about 41,439 refugees settled in California. Of those, 10,395, or about 25%, settled in the County. The County embraces refugees. In fact, the County's Department of Public Social Services, through its Refugee Resettlement Program and Refugee Employment Program, provides assistance to refugees settled in the County. Refugees form a part of our country's rich cultural diversity. To allow any government to reject new refugees would inflict new and undue harm on these recent arrivals to the United States, many of whom seek to start their lives anew in communities where they already have a support system of friends or relatives.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct County Counsel to join the amicus brief supporting the plaintiffs in the case of *HIAS, Inc., et al. v. Trump*,

seeking to uphold the preliminary injunction in order to preserve refugee resettlement opportunities throughout the United States.

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