

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

Proclaim June 2024 as Refugee Awareness Month in Los Angeles County

When leaving their native countries, refugees make tremendous sacrifices to flee war, human rights violations, and political, religious, or other persecution. In June, we collectively celebrate the strength, courage, and perseverance of millions of refugees around the world. When seeking refuge, many look to the United States as a pathway to freedom and safety for themselves and their families. As a result of their life changing decisions, refugees contribute to the enrichment of our country, society, and communities.

According to the California Department of Social Services, over 3,000 refugees arrived in Los Angeles County in the last five years (April 2019 through March 2024). Refugees come from many parts of the world including but not limited to Central American and Afghanistan. Additionally, from February 2022 to March 2024, there have been nearly 12,600 approved “Uniting for Ukraine” financial supporters from Los Angeles County, which has prompted a monthly average of approximately 1,500 adult Ukrainian humanitarian parole participants in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Refugee Employment Program (REP).

In partnership with DPSS, local refugee resettlement agencies and other refugee service organizations have supported various refugee populations with English language, educational,

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and employment training, health care services, housing assistance, and personal and career goal development, to achieve economic stability and mobility.

Local refugee service organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Catholic Charities of Los Angeles;
- Church World Service;
- Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Service;
- International Institute of Los Angeles;
- International Rescue Committee;
- Islamic Circle of North America;
- Jobs Vision Success SoCal;
- Refugee Forum of Los Angeles; and
- Uplift Charity.

As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees annually proclaims June 20th as “World Refugee Day” and the California Department of Social Services declares June as “Immigrant Heritage Month”, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors stands strong to recognize and commemorate the invaluable contributions that refugees make to Los Angeles County.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Join local refugee service organizations, the Departments of Consumer and Business Affairs’ Office of Immigrant Affairs, Public Health, and Public Social

Services to proclaim June 2024 as “Refugee Awareness Month” throughout the County of Los Angeles;

2. Commend the invaluable efforts of local refugee service organizations to help refugees and immigrants navigate the complexities of resettlement, fostering a sense of belonging and dignity, and ultimately empower them to become contributing members in their new communities;
3. Recognize and celebrate the significant contributions of refugees and immigrants, to not only honor their experiences and sacrifices, but also promote greater understanding, empathy, and solidarity within the Los Angeles County; and
4. Direct the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs Office of Immigrant Affairs, Department of Public Health, and Department of Public Social Services to highlight the critical work of the organization serving refugees and/or the significant contributions of refugees to our communities through social media and other public messaging efforts.

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