



# Recommendations to rebuild and strengthen the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

RESCUE  
COMMITTEE 2020

Rebuilding the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and returning America to its historic role as leader in resettlement will take a concerted, long-term effort. A future administration has the unique opportunity to not only rebuild but to usher in needed reforms, which will lay the groundwork for a robust admissions program for years to come.



Wilson/Fish program supports innovative methods of addressing gaps in the refugee program and increases case management for individuals.

Implement improvements in financing such that resettlement partners have broader flexibility to innovate and to partner with local or other organizations, including with shared private sector financing.

Elevate the status of ORR within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to eliminate barriers to reform and prevent stagnancy.

#### **Cultivate stronger relationships with state and local government officials on refugee resettlement**

Reinstate annual ORR consultations and work with a White House Office of New Americans or a refugee coordinator role to create formal and informal channels for information sharing and relationship building. Provide sufficient funding for investments in state capacity building.

#### **Allow flexibility in achieving integration outcomes**

Recognize that initial resettlement needs and approaches vary by population and location context and allow programs to be designed accordingly. Create opportunities for higher-skilled refugees to become recertified or access extended learning even if at the expense of early employment. Evaluate outcomes rather than initial inputs.

## Research and data

#### **Conduct an in-depth study on the USRAP**

The last study examining the USRAP was commissioned in 2005 by the Department of State and another such study is needed to move the program forward. Such a study should include analysis on both the overseas and domestic aspects of the USRAP and make recommendations regarding how to best help refugees integrate and thrive in the U.S. The study should center refugee voices and investigate how services affect client wellbeing, situation, and experience.

#### **Develop mechanisms for comprehensive and longitudinal data collection**

Impartial, reliable, long-term data is needed on refugee contributions, needs, program outcomes, and secondary migration in order to identify the successes and gaps.