



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

January 10, 2020

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

On behalf of the State of Texas, I write in response to Executive Order 13888, on Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement, as issued by President Trump on September 26, 2019.

Texas is one of the most welcoming states for refugees seeking to escape dangers abroad. Since FY2010, more refugees have been received in Texas than in any other state. In fact, over that decade, roughly 10% of all refugees resettled in the United States have been placed in Texas. Even today, the process of resettling continues for many of these refugees.

In addition to accepting refugees all these years, Texas has been left by Congress to deal with disproportionate migration issues resulting from a broken federal immigration system. In May 2019, for example, around 100,000 migrants were apprehended crossing this state's southern border. In June 2019, individuals from 52 different countries were apprehended here. And in FY2018, the apprehensions included citizens from disparate countries like China, Iran, Kenya, Russia, and Tonga. Texas continues to have to deal with the consequences of an immigration system that Congress has failed to fix.

At this time, the state and non-profit organizations have a responsibility to dedicate available resources to those who are already here, including refugees, migrants, and the homeless—indeed, all Texans. As a result, Texas cannot consent to initial refugee resettlement for FY2020. This decision does not deny any refugee access to the United States. Nor does it preclude a refugee from later coming to Texas after initially settling in another state.

Texas has carried more than its share in assisting the refugee resettlement process and appreciates that other states are available to help with these efforts.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Greg Abbott
Governor

GA:jsd