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November 26, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

This letter is in reference to Executive Order 13888, "On Enhancing State and Local involvement in Resettlement." I write to affirm that Bexar County, Texas will continue to take part in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). As County Executive of Bexar County, Texas, I consent to initial refugee resettlement in Bexar County, Texas as per the terms of the Executive Order. My consent is valid unless or until withdrawn.

By definition, refugees are individuals who have been forced to flee their home country due to persecution based on their race, religion, ethnicity, political opinion, or social group. Resettlement is the last resort for refugees who cannot return to their home country and cannot rebuild their lives where they first fled.

The United States is one of 27 resettlement countries, and has the most extensive refugee vetting in the world. Refugees undergo biometric screenings, medical checks, in-person interviews with specially trained officers from the Department of Homeland Security, and interagency checks involving DHS, the State Department, Department of Defense, FBI, and the National Counter Terrorism Center.

The USRAP is a prime example of a public-private partnership between the federal government, state and local governments, local non-profit organizations, and volunteers that provide refugees with the tools of self-reliance housing, community orientation, English-language classes, and job placement. Every day, community members in Bexar County, Texas are volunteering with resettlement offices to help refugees integrate and thrive.

Even before Congress enacted the Refugee Act of 1980, faith communities across the United States built what we know today as the USRAP, welcoming refugees from World War II, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Rwandan genocide, and the Syrian refugee crisis, just to name a few. In


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addition, faith communities are still deeply involved in refugee resettlement. This is part of our nation's heritage and we are proud to welcome refugees.

Refugees are resilient, hard workers whose innovative skills have contributed greatly to our state. They have opened businesses, revitalized towns, and are productive members of our community. Multiple studies demonstrate that refugees are economic contributors and job creators.

For these reasons and more, Bexar County, Texas will continue to welcome refugees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nelson W. Wolff", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nelson W. Wolff  
Bexar County Judge

Enclosure

CC:  
Principal Deputy Assisatnt Secretary Carol T. O'Connell  
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Mitigation  
U.S. Department of State