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REFUGEE ACTION COALITION OF COLORADO RESPONDS TO FY27 PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION ON REFUGEE ADMISSIONS

**RACC calls for restoration of a robust, equitable U.S. Refugee Admissions Program
that responds to global humanitarian need**

Denver, CO—The Refugee Action Coalition of Colorado (RACC) strongly objects to the Trump Administration’s [Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2027](#), which caps refugee admissions at just 17,500 and directs that available admissions be allocated primarily to Afrikaners from South Africa.

The determination continues an approach RACC has opposed throughout the past year: restricting access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for refugees around the world while arbitrarily creating preferential pathways for one population. Last fall, the Administration established an unprecedentedly low FY26 refugee ceiling of 7,500, with admissions primarily allocated to Afrikaners and certain other populations. In May, it raised that ceiling to 17,500 through an Emergency Presidential Determination that reserved all 10,000 additional places for Afrikaners. Ultimately, approximately 95% of refugees admitted through USRAP in FY26 were Afrikaners. RACC objected to both actions and called for refugee admissions to reflect humanitarian need and provide meaningful access to vulnerable displaced people from across the globe.

Rather than reversing course in FY27, the Administration has made that deeply restrictive approach the foundation of another year of U.S. refugee policy. The new determination maintains the 17,500 ceiling established through the FY26 emergency action and again prioritizes Afrikaners, who do not meet the internationally accepted criteria of refugees as persons outside their home country “who cannot return because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.” Meanwhile, the broader suspension of USRAP remains in effect, with other refugees admitted only through limited exceptions determined by the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security. Already-admitted refugees are also being subjected to heightened scrutiny and re-vetting, including policies that put some at risk of detention, while newly enacted restrictions are [stripping many refugees and other humanitarian immigrants of access to basic healthcare](#) and other critical supports that promote successful community integration and economic self-sufficiency.

“For decades, Coloradans and other Americans across the political spectrum have welcomed refugees and benefited from the positive economic, humanitarian, and security impacts of resettlement,” says Paula Schriefer, President & CEO of Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, a Denver-based nonprofit and co-founder of RACC. “This FY27 Presidential Determination doubles down on a deeply flawed approach that virtually eliminates resettlement of actual refugees in favor of individuals who do not meet internationally accepted eligibility requirements. With a record number of over 41 million refugees worldwide, the policy of the Trump Administration is both disgraceful and contributes to greater global instability.”

For more than four decades, the U.S. refugee resettlement system offered people fleeing persecution an opportunity to rebuild their lives in safety while strengthening communities across the United States. RACC members see those contributions firsthand in Colorado. As we emphasized in [response to the initial FY26 Presidential Determination](#) and the [Emergency Presidential Determination issued in May of 2026](#), refugee

Coloradans raise families, fill critical workforce roles, pay taxes, and contribute immensely to the economic and civic life of communities across our state.

RACC also rejects the false choice between welcoming Afrikaners who qualify for refugee protection and welcoming refugees from elsewhere in the world. Our concern is not with offering safety to any population facing legitimate persecution; it is with operating a refugee admissions system that gives meaningful access primarily to one population while closing pathways for others facing persecution and displacement. USRAP has historically served refugees from diverse regions and circumstances, and RACC continues to call for its restoration as a robust humanitarian program responsive to need. This principle was central to RACC's response to the FY26 emergency determination and remains equally important today.

"The Presidential Determination set for FY27 is not worthy of our great nation. It does not reflect the intent of current law that has effectively guided refugee resettlement in the US for the past 4 decades. Nor does it accurately account for the American people's humanitarian capacity to offer refuge for some of the world's most persecuted individuals and families. The FY27 PD is too small, too exclusionary and too short-sighted. In short, I believe it is shameful." - Ron Buzard, Managing Director, ECDC African Community Center

RACC calls on Colorado's Congressional delegation and other leaders to use their oversight and legislative authority to:

- **Press for restoration of a fully functioning U.S. Refugee Admissions Program** with a robust refugee admissions goal that reflects global humanitarian need, and prioritize refugees who have endured lengthy waits for resettlement, including those whose cases were disrupted by the suspension of USRAP.
- **Defend the integrity of the Refugee Act of 1980 and congressional oversight of refugee admissions**, including meaningful consultation with Congress regarding annual admissions goals.
- **Protect federal investments in refugee processing, resettlement, and integration** so that communities have the infrastructure necessary to welcome newcomers and help refugee families thrive.

These asks build on RACC's previous call for a refugee admissions goal of at least 125,000, as well as our longstanding demands to prioritize vulnerable refugees stranded in the resettlement pipeline and protect federal investments in resettlement and integration. The 125,000 benchmark is also reflected in the proposed GRACE Act, while national refugee advocacy partners are currently calling for a robust admissions goal and full restoration of refugee processing and resettlement on an equitable, nondiscriminatory basis.

At a time of profound displacement and humanitarian need, the United States has both the capacity and a longstanding framework for providing refuge to people fleeing persecution. Colorado communities remain ready to welcome refugees and recognize the valuable contributions they make to our state. RACC will continue advocating for a refugee admissions program that honors that tradition and gives people from across the world a fair opportunity to find safety and rebuild their lives.

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The [Refugee Action Coalition of Colorado \(RACC\)](#) advocates for and with refugees to promote a welcoming community and to advance opportunities where refugees thrive. [Learn more](#), [apply to join RACC](#), and connect on [Facebook](#).