



# Endorsement: Joe Biden, President & Kamala Harris, Vice President

*Voice for Refuge is proud to endorse Joe Biden for President of the United States and Kamala Harris for Vice President.*

Joe Biden—a longtime U.S. Senator from Delaware and Vice President under Barack Obama—is the Democratic nominee in an election that is perhaps the most important in our lifetime. **Refugees have come under assault under President Trump.** From the blatantly racist, Islamophobic, and xenophobic Muslim, African, Refugee, Immigration, and Asylum Bans, to cutting refugee admissions by more than 80%, to the unconscionable separation of children from their parents at the border, Trump has been on a rampage to keep refugees out and denigrate their rights. This is an extraordinary violation of the most basic virtues of human kindness. The lives of refugees and the ability of people fleeing persecution to access protection are critical moral issues that must drive which candidates we support.

Joe Biden's record, worldview, and campaign promises are the exact opposite of Trump's. Biden's commitment to refugees goes back decades, as he was an original co-sponsor of the Refugee Act of 1980, which established the U.S. refugee resettlement program and asylum system.<sup>1</sup> It's clear that Biden's advocacy and passion for refugee protection remain with him today, as he has pledged to restore and rebuild America's legacy of welcome.

Biden supports legislation that would repeal Trump's Muslim, African, Refugee, Immigration, and Asylum Bans,<sup>2</sup> and a Biden administration would protect families seeking asylum.<sup>3</sup> While Trump has slashed refugee admissions to an historic low of 18,000, Biden has committed to raising the U.S. refugee admissions goal to 125,000, reflecting both historic norms and the urgent need to address the worst displacement crisis in world history.<sup>4</sup> This commitment is an improvement over the Obama administration's goal of 110,000 admissions and would reunite families that have been separated for years.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S.643 - Refugee Act of 1979. congress.gov,

<<https://www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/senate-bill/643/cosponsors?searchResultViewType=expanded>>.

<sup>2</sup> Joe Biden, My Statement on World Refugee Day. Medium, 06/20/2020.

<<https://medium.com/@JoeBiden/my-statement-on-world-refugee-day-fddb4abddfd5>>.

<sup>3</sup> The Biden Plan for Securing Our Values as a Nation of Immigrants. Biden for President, 2020. <<https://joebiden.com/immigration/>>.

<sup>4</sup> Dahlia Lithwick, How Biden Plans to Undo Trump's Nativist Agenda. The Slate Group, 06/29/2020.

<<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/06/biden-refugee-plan.html>>.

<sup>5</sup> Barack Obama, Presidential Determination -- Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2017. The White House, 09/28/2016.

<<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/28/presidential-determination-refugee-admissions-fiscal-year-2017>>.

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# On the Issues: Joe Biden v. Donald Trump

Issue	Donald Trump	Joe Biden
<b>Refugee Resettlement</b>	Cut refugee admissions by 80% to 18,000 - an historic low. Dismantled the refugee resettlement program, keeping families apart and people in harm's way. <sup>6</sup>	Cosponsored the Refugee Act of 1980 to create the resettlement program. Will rebuild the program and welcome 125,000 refugees per year. <sup>7</sup>
<b>Muslim Bans, African Bans, Refugee Bans, Immigration Bans, Asylum Bans</b>	Created these immoral and xenophobic bans <sup>8</sup> which separate families, and blatantly disregards court orders that have blocked their implementation.	Has spoken out against these bans and pledged to repeal them. <sup>9</sup> Hosts listening sessions with people impacted by these racist and xenophobic policies.
<b>Families and individuals seeking asylum</b>	Turns away people seeking protection, separates children from their parents, and detains asylum seekers in deplorable conditions that have led to death, <sup>10</sup> alleged forced sterilization, <sup>11</sup> and abuse.	Will welcome asylum seekers, reunite families, invest in community-based alternatives to detention, and restore morality and equity to the U.S. asylum system.
<b>State and Local Refugee Resettlement Ban</b>	Signed an executive order to allow states and localities to reject refugees (which, fortunately, a court has stopped at least temporarily). <sup>12</sup>	Will reject discrimination against refugees and collaborate with states and localities to support refugees and the communities that welcome them.
<b>Temporary Protective Status (TPS)</b>	Ended protections for over 300,000 TPS holders from many nationalities, forcing them to return to unsafe situations. While the courts have protected some (but not all) TPS holders, Trump continues to attack TPS.	Will restore and expand TPS and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to protect individuals who are impacted by environmental or man-made crises so they can remain with their families and communities.
<b>Dreamers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)</b>	Has tried to end DACA - which would lead to the deportation of undocumented youth - despite court orders to protect DACA recipients.	Has pledged to preserve DACA so that undocumented youth can remain in the United States, and also to extend protections to their families.
<b>Talking about refugees, asylum seekers, and other immigrants</b>	Uses dehumanizing and xenophobic rhetoric such as: "We cannot allow all of these people to invade our Country. When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came." <sup>13</sup>	Lifts up immigrants as a strength of America: "On this World Refugee Day, we all must stand together and recommit to building a more inclusive and welcoming America. That's how we will restore the soul of our nation." <sup>14</sup>
<b>RANKING</b>	<b>ANTI-REFUGEE EXTREMIST</b>	<b>PRO-REFUGEE LEADER</b>

<sup>6</sup> "U.S. Annual Refugee Resettlement Ceilings and Number of Refugees Admitted, 1980-Present." The Migration Policy Institute. <<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/us-annual-refugee-resettlement-ceilings-and-number-refugees-admitted-united>>.

<sup>7</sup> "The Biden Plan for Securing Our Values as a National of Immigrants." <<https://joebiden.com/immigration/>>.

<sup>8</sup> Timeline of the Muslim Ban. ACLU. <<https://www.aclu-wa.org/pages/timeline-muslim-ban>>.

<sup>9</sup> Biden pledges to end Trump's 'Muslim ban' on his first day in office."

<<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/20/biden-pledges-to-end-trumps-muslim-ban-on-his-first-day-in-office.html>>.

<sup>10</sup> "Deaths at Adult Detention Centers." <<https://www.aiaa.org/infonet/deaths-at-adult-detention-centers>>.

<sup>11</sup> "Whistleblower Alleges 'Medical Neglect,' Questionable Hysterectomies Of ICE Detainees."

<<https://www.npr.org/2020/09/16/913398383/whistleblower-alleges-medical-neglect-questionable-hysterectomies-of-ice-detainee>>.

<sup>12</sup> "Judge Blocks Trump's Executive Order Allowing Local Officials To Reject Refugees."

<<https://www.npr.org/2020/01/15/796658527/judge-blocks-trumps-executive-order-allowing-local-officials-to-reject-refugees>>.

<sup>13</sup> Donald Trump, Twitter, Inc., 10/29/2018. <<https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1010900865602019329?lang=en>>.

<sup>14</sup> Joe Biden, "My Statement on World Refugee Day." <<https://medium.com/@JoeBiden/my-statement-on-world-refugee-day-fddb4abddfd5>>.

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# On the Issues: Kamala Harris v. Mike Pence

Issue	Mike Pence	Kamala Harris
<b>Refugee Resettlement</b>	Supports Trump's cuts to refugee admissions, while claiming to care about people fleeing religious persecution. Trump has cut the number of religious minorities resettled in the U.S. to an all-time low. <sup>15</sup>	Opposes Trump's cuts to refugee admissions, and wrote a letter signed by many Senators urging more refugees to be resettled <sup>16</sup> . On her first trip as a Senator, Harris visited Syrian refugees. <sup>17</sup>
<b>Muslim Bans, African Bans, Refugee Bans, Immigration Bans, Asylum Bans</b>	Supports these immoral and xenophobic policies, and as governor, tried to ban Syrian refugees from Indiana. <sup>18</sup>	Opposes these immoral bans, has co-sponsored legislation to repeal them, and will help Biden end them. <sup>19</sup>
<b>Listening to and uplifting the voices and concerns of refugees</b>	Supports the Trump Administration's pattern of denigrating people seeking a better life from other countries, and not listening to their voices or concerns.	Has and will continue to actively listen to the voices and concerns of refugees and asylum seekers, as she did as California's AG and in the U.S. Senate. <sup>20</sup>
<b>Dreamers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)</b>	Voted against the Dream Act, and has worked with the Trump Administration to try to end DACA and deport undocumented youth. <sup>21</sup>	Supports the Dream Act and will help Joe Biden preserve DACA and extend protections to their families.
<b>RANKING</b>	<b>ANTI-REFUGEE EXTREMIST</b>	<b>PRO-REFUGEE LEADER</b>

Kamala Harris, Biden's running mate for Vice President, is also a champion for refugees. Harris is the daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica, and has gone above and beyond to make herself and her office available to refugees, both as California's attorney general and as a U.S. Senator. Harris has shown up at pro-refugee protests, rallies, and vigils, and has personally met with many refugees, asylum seekers, and other immigrants to find out how to best advocate alongside them. She has also co-sponsored five pieces of pro-refugee legislation and signed multiple pro-refugee letters, including one that she wrote and encouraged other Senators to sign that opposed Trump's reductions to refugee resettlement.<sup>22</sup> Harris has also authored legislation to provide legal services to children and adults seeking asylum.<sup>23</sup> Harris has been a vocal and active opponent of Trump's Muslim, African, Refugee, Immigration, and Asylum Bans and has called for increased refugee

<sup>15</sup> "Closed Doors." World Relief and Open Doors. <[https://worldrelief.org/content/uploads/2020/07/Closed-Doors-Report\\_Final.pdf](https://worldrelief.org/content/uploads/2020/07/Closed-Doors-Report_Final.pdf)>.

<sup>16</sup> "FINAL Jud Letter on Refugee PD." <<https://www.leahy.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/11.06.19%20FINAL%20Jud%20Letter%20on%20Refugee%20PD.PDF>>.

<sup>17</sup> "Sen. Kamala Harris visits troops, refugee camp in Middle East"

<<https://abc7.com/politics/sen-kamala-harris-visits-troops-refugee-camp-in-middle-east/1885500/>>.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Rodrick, Mike Pence's Refugee Problem. Rolling Stone, 01/25/2017.

<<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/mike-pences-refugee-problem-124345/>>.

<sup>19</sup> Voice for Refuge Scorecards: Kamala Harris. <<https://www.voiceforrefuge.org/senate-scorecards/kamala-harris/>>.

<sup>20</sup> Jeff Stein, Kamala Harris's immigration gamble. Vox Media, 09/01/2017.

<<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/11/1/16554958/kamala-harris-immigration-california>>.

<sup>21</sup> House Vote 625 - Approves DREAM Act. Pro Publica, 12/08/2010. <<https://projects.propublica.org/represent/votes/111/house/2/625>>.

<sup>22</sup> "FINAL Jud Letter on Refugee PD." <<https://www.leahy.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/11.06.19%20FINAL%20Jud%20Letter%20on%20Refugee%20PD.PDF>>.

<sup>23</sup> Jeff Stein, Kamala Harris's immigration gamble. Vox Media, 09/01/2017.

<<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/11/1/16554958/kamala-harris-immigration-california>>.

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resettlement, expressing that the United States has a profound responsibility to welcome people fleeing persecution.<sup>24</sup>

By contrast, Trump's Vice President Mike Pence has a shameful record on refugees. As governor, Pence signed an executive order barring the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Indiana. A federal judge ruled that it "clearly constitute[d] national origin discrimination."<sup>25</sup> The Trump / Pence administration has gutted the refugee resettlement program and engaged in racist and Islamophobic rhetoric and policies that have negatively impacted refugees and exacerbated the rate of hate crimes against our refugee, Muslim, and immigrant neighbors. Pence has fully supported Trump's cuts to refugee admissions, while claiming to care about people fleeing religious persecution. Under the Trump / Pence administration, the number of religious minorities resettled in the United States is at an all-time low. Harris serving as Vice President would be a powerful repudiation to Pence's anti-refugee stance. She and Biden deserve the support of every pro-refugee voter in the upcoming election.

For all of these reasons, Voice for Refuge is proud to endorse Joe Biden for President of the United States and Kamala Harris as Vice President. This November's presidential election is critical for refugees, immigrants, and many marginalized communities including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals. The Biden / Harris ticket is the clear choice for voters who care about the lives of displaced people and want to see the United States exercise moral leadership abroad and at home. Refugee protection is a matter of morality and values. We encourage all eligible voters to cast their ballots - by mail or in person - for the Biden / Harris ticket this election. Make sure you're registered and vote as early as possible. Resources on voting can be found [here](#). The future of refugees—and our nation's values—are at stake.

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<sup>24</sup> Harris et al, Harris, Feinstein, Colleagues Call for a National Commitment to Refugee Resettlement on Third Anniversary of Trump's Travel Ban. U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, 01/28/2020. <<https://www.harris.senate.gov/news/press-releases/harris-feinstein-colleagues-call-for-a-national-commitment-to-refugee-resettlement-on-third-anniversary-of-trumps-travel-ban>>.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen Rodrick, Mike Pence's Refugee Problem. Rolling Stone, 01/25/2017. <<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/mike-pences-refugee-problem-124345/>>.

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