



# Voice for Refuge Scorecards for United States House of Reps. and Senate

September 2020

Voice for Refuge Action Fund seeks to hold policy makers accountable to supporting policies that improve the lives of refugees and access to humanitarian protection. For our first scorecard, we have examined the records of U.S. Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, taking into account if they have co-sponsored pro-refugee or anti-refugee legislation, if they have signed onto pro-refugee letters, and the statements they have made about refugees on their websites and social media platforms. Based on that information, we have ranked each Senator and Representative as either a Pro-Refugee Leader, Pro-Refugee, Uncommitted, Anti-Refugee, or an Anti-Refugee Extremist. A comprehensive list of scores can be [downloaded here](#). Our next scorecards will focus on Governors and select state legislatures.

Especially as these are our first scorecards, we encourage refugees and community supporters of refugees to recommend additional legislation, letters, or demonstrations of support that we should consider including in our analysis. Please email such suggestions to [info@voiceforrefuge.org](mailto:info@voiceforrefuge.org).

## Pro-refugee legislation factored into our analysis include:

- [S.1088](#) / [H.R.2146](#), The Guaranteed Refugee Admission Ceiling Enhancement (GRACE) Act, which would set a minimum annual refugee resettlement goal of 95,000, in keeping with the historic average.
- [S.2936](#) / [H.R.5210](#), The Refugee Protection Act, which would drastically reform and improve the U.S. refugee resettlement program and the U.S. asylum system and increase access to humanitarian protection.
- [S.1123](#) / [H.R.2214](#), The National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants (NO BAN) Act, which would terminate the Trump administration's refugee, Muslim, and asylum bans and prevent such discriminatory measures in the future.
- [S.3470](#) / [H.R.4928](#), The New Deal for New Americans Act, which would establish programs that welcome immigrants and make English language learning, workforce development, and U.S. citizenship more accessible.
- [S.3645](#) / [H.R.6537](#), The FIRST Act, which would reduce the use of inhumane detention facilities for asylum seekers and other immigrants.

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- [H.R. 2347](#), The Border and Refugee Assistance Act, which would improve access to asylum and protection for refugees fleeing domestic violence and gangs, as well as refugees from Central America.
- [S.Res.254](#) / [H.Res.444](#), A resolution commemorating June 20th as "World Refugee Day," which recognizes the contributions of refugees and urges the U.S. Government to increase refugee resettlement.
- [S.Res.32](#), A resolution recognizing January 27, 2019, as the anniversary of the first refugee and Muslim ban, and urging the President to demonstrate true leadership on refugee resettlement.
- [S.Res.484](#), A resolution recognizing January 27, 2020, as the anniversary of the first refugee and Muslim ban, calling on Congress to defund the Migrant Protection Protocols, and urging the President to restore refugee resettlement to historic norms.
- [S.Res.545](#) / [H.Res.902](#), A resolution commemorating March 17, 2020, as the 40th anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980, including the amendments made by that Act, at a time when the need for bipartisan support of the refugee resettlement program of the United States is critical to the survival of the program.

### Anti-refugee legislation factored into our analysis include:

- [S.1103](#) / [H.R. 2278](#), The "Reforming American Immigration for a Strong Economy Act," which would cap resettlement at 50,000 refugee per year, end the Diversity Visa program, and drastically reduce access to family reunification.
- [S.1494](#), The "Secure and Protect Act," which would remove protections for victims of human trafficking, asylum seekers, and unaccompanied children, drastically scaling back refugee protection.
- [H.R.3360](#), The "Asylum Reform and Border Protection Act," which would make it more difficult for asylum seekers to access and maintain protection, and would deport people back into harm's way.

There have not been votes on any of these bills, and thus we have assessed whether or not a Senator or Representative has co-sponsored these bills to determine their support.

### Letters factored into our analysis include:

- A bipartisan Senate [letter](#) to the Secretary of State expressing opposition to the 30,000 refugee cap in Fiscal Year 2019, at the time an historic low, given the average annual goal of 95,000 refugees.
- A Senate [letter](#) urging President Trump to increase the refugee admissions goal for Fiscal Year 2020.
- A bipartisan Senate [letter](#) to the Secretaries of the Department of State, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Homeland Security, expressing opposition to proposals that would have eliminated refugee resettlement in FY 2020.
- A bipartisan House [letter](#) expressing opposition to reported proposals that would have eliminated refugee resettlement in FY2020.

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- A House Democrats [letter](#) expressing opposition to reduce refugee resettlement to 18,000 in FY 2020, an historic low.
- A Senate [letter](#) to the Secretaries of the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security requesting an oversight briefing on the low refugee admissions cap, changes in resettlement policy, and Executive Order that would have allowed states and localities to ban refugees (now enjoined).
- A bipartisan Senate [letter](#) to the Secretaries of the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security, urging refugee resettlement to resume and asking oversight questions to enquire about the refugee resettlement program.
- A House Republicans [letter](#) urging the Trump Administration to uphold our nation's longstanding commitment to assisting refugees.

In addition, the House scorecards reflect membership in the Bipartisan Congressional Refugee Caucus.

*Many thanks to Kate Fin, our Refugee Scorecard Developer and Leader, who conceptualized and led the implementation of these scorecards.*

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