

Governor Brian P. Kemp
The Office of the Governor
203 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334

December 9, 2019

Dear Governor Kemp,

As evangelical Christians from throughout the state of Georgia, we're writing to urge you to allow refugees to continue to be resettled to Georgia through the U.S. refugee admissions program. Under an executive order signed by President Trump in September, resettlement will happen only in states and localities whose leaders provide written consent to allow refugees to be resettled in the state/locality. Georgia evangelical churches and ministries have been active in serving newly arrived refugees for decades, and we pray you will not restrict the ability for us to love our global neighbors in this way.

Over the past decade, roughly 23,600 individuals from various countries have been resettled in Georgia. Many refugees resettled by the U.S. refugee resettlement program are Christians or other religious minorities who were persecuted for their faith in countries without our country's constitutional commitment to religious freedom. Others were persecuted for their political opposition to authoritarian regimes or because of their ethnicity. Regardless of their background, refugees are human beings made in God's image, with inherent dignity and potential, and we have been blessed by their arrival in Georgia; we desire to continue to be able to extend love to these new neighbors as an exercise of our Christian faith.

Refugees resettled by the U.S. State Department are lawfully present in the U.S. from the moment of their arrival. Each one undergoes a thorough vetting process abroad before being approved for resettlement; in fact, the vetting process for refugees is the most thorough screening our federal government has for any category of immigrant or visitor coming to the U.S.. The vetting process is remarkably successful: since the Refugee Act of 1980, no refugee resettled to the U.S. has taken a single American life in an act of terrorism. We can be secure and compassionate in welcoming refugees.

Refugees also play an important role in Georgia's economy. With a remarkably low statewide unemployment rate of just 3.6%, labor shortages pose a significant threat to ongoing economic growth. Refugees are employment authorized from the day they arrive and are eager to embrace the dignity of work, a right that was generally denied them in the countries from which they came. Various studies have found that, in the long-term, refugees contribute significantly more in tax revenues than they cost taxpayers in the form of initial resettlement assistance or public benefits. Refugees also make significant contributions to local economies in that they have a particularly high rate of entrepreneurship, higher than other immigrants and the native-born population.

Furthermore, if refugees are no longer allowed to be resettled to Georgia, it would disrupt the reunification of many families who have been waiting years to be reunited. Many refugees are resettled to Georgia because they already have family members in the state. If Georgia restricts their resettlement, many will likely exercise their lawful right to simply move to Georgia immediately after being resettled in another state so as to join their family – but in doing so, they

will move away from vital employment assistance, language acquisition and cultural adjustment resources offered by their resettlement organization. Refugees can best integrate into the U.S. and quickly become financially self-sufficient when supported both by their family and by a local resettlement office.

As our state's governor, we urge you to keep the option open for local communities within Georgia to continue to receive newly arrived refugees. As always, we are committed to praying for you as you lead our state.

Sincerely,

Rev. Samuel A Aleman, Senior Pastor, Iglesia Bautista Internacional, Decatur
Rev. John Blackmon, Senior Pastor, Meansville Baptist Church
Rev. Rhonda Frye, Pastor, Battlefield Parkway Nazarene, Ringgold
Rev. Chad Hale, Senior Pastor, Georgia Avenue Church, Atlanta
Rev. Dr. Peter Nehsahn, Sr. Pastor, Caring Believers Bible Fellowship, Stone Mountain
Rev. Liz Pearson, Tucker
Rev. Gene Prince, Senior Pastor, Resurrection Anglican Church, Woodstock
Stewart Brodrick, Pastor, Adrian New Life Church of the Nazarene, Dublin
Matthew Browne, Parish Pastor, Trinity Anglican Church Eastside, Decatur
Christopher Case, Pastor, Resonate Church, Atlanta
Hunter Cummings, Lead Pastor, Chattanooga Valley Church of the Nazarene, Flintstone
Trent DeLoach, Lead Pastor, Clarkston International Bible Church
Andrew Esqueda, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry, Presbyterian Church USA,
Atlanta
Kathryn Groce, Pastor, All Souls Fellowship Church, Decatur
Darren Hughes, Community Engagement Pastor, Bridgepoint Church at Toco Hills,
Decatur
Dave Lambert, Pastor, Celebration Fellowship, Decatur
Kaylan Paxton, Lead Pastor, FBC Cordele
Mike Smith, Family Pastor, Dublin First Church of the Nazarene, Dexter
Dan Taylor, Senior Pastor, Alma First Church of the Nazarene
Tim Tharp, Pastor, Mt Olive Church of the Nazarene, Wrightsville
Seth Thompson, Pastor Fairview Church of the Nazarene, Rossville
Danny Abell, Reliant Church, Dallas
Prasad Abraham, Celebration Fellowship, Lilburn
Lisa Adams, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta
Kendal Adamson, White Stone Fellowship, Dallas
Anna Aikens, Atlanta Vineyard Church
Mark Amspough, Senior Pastor, Dalton 1st Church of the Nazarene
Amy Armour, Decatur
John Arnold, Atlanta Vineyard Church
Jerry Baker, Lawrenceville
Ryan Barbee, Eagles Landing First Baptist Church, Stockbridge
Caroline Barbour, Clarkston
Priscilla Benitez, Clarkston
David Bentley, Clarkston International Bible Church
Sarah Bentley, Clarkston International Bible Church
Tara Berry, Communications Director, All Souls Fellowship Church, Decatur

Brian Bollinger, Celebration Fellowship, Clarkston
Zach Bradley, Senior Pastor, Brookhaven Pres
Micah Branch, Cumming
Janel Burnett's, Chickamauga
Jesse Caldwell, United Methodist Church, Atlanta
Kristen Carr, InterVarsity USA, Atlanta
James Carroll, Deacon, Journey Church of Atlanta, Clarkston
Amanda Carter, Kennesaw
Chip Carter, Kennesaw
Benjamin Cawood, Atlanta Christian Church
Robin Chalk, Alpharetta
Dr. Julie Chambliss, Global Frontier Missions, Tucker
Eunice Chay, City Church Eastside, Decatur
Jenny Church, Celebration Fellowship, Tucker
Matthew Clason, First Alliance Church Toccoa
Amy Clear, Grace Midtown, Atlanta
Josh Clemons, Director, OneRace, Atlanta
April Coleman, First Presbyterian Church, Augusta
Joshua Coleman, First Presbyterian Church, Augusta
Karen Conkle, C&MA, Toccoa
Doug Conkle, Envision Atlanta, Clarkston
Jennifer Contino, Resonate Atlanta, Clarkston
Joseph Cook, Cochran
Raquel Cooke, Gracepointe, Gainesville
Mary Corbett, Chickaumauga
Dennis Cox, Cherokee Presbyterian, Canton
Travis Cramer, Buford
Lindsay Croft, Acworth
Kirstin Davis, Clarkston
Patti Davis, Ethne, Augusta
Joshua Deaton, Gospel Hope Church, Clarkston
Paulette DeHart, ESL Teacher, Bethany Baptist Church, Snellville
Andrew DeJarnette, Resonate Atlanta, Clarkston
Kim DeRamus Lareau, Licensed Professional Counselor, Grow Counseling, Decatur
Eyelachew Desta, Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Clarkston
Benjamin DeWitt, United Methodist Church, Lawrenceville
Eveie DeWitt, All Souls Fellowship, Atlanta
Karyn Durand, Roswell
David Eades, Dalton
Terry Earl, Clarkston International Bible Church, Clarkston
Stacy Elder, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Tucker
Laura Ellis, Northshore Fellowship, Lookout Mountain
Alisha Ensor, Children's Ministry Director, All Souls Fellowship, Atlanta
Ruth Evans, Executive Director, Unite, East Point
Tyler Farmer, Hunter Rosd Baptist Church, Cataula
Joshua Faulkner, Founder/CEO, Relentless Pursuit International, Inc, Hampton
Ruth Felt, Grayson United Methodist, Loganville
Daniel Ficarrotta, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta
Jonathan Fleming, Dalton

Elizabeth Freeman, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Woodstock
Beth Gore, ESL Coordinator, The International Link, Augusta
Marilyn Griffin, Nazarene, Jonesboro
Ann Guckert, Marietta First United Methodist Church
Jonathan Guiles, Tucker
Ryan Gutowski, Senior Pastor, Awaken Community Church, Columbus
Dr. Daphne Haddad, Professor Emeritus of Education, Covenant College, Lookout Mountain
Priscilla Hammond, Tucker
Cameron Hamrick, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta
Mokhles Hanna, Senior Pastor, Jesus the Light of the World Arabic Church, Lilburn
Belinda Harris, College Park, Georgia
Katelyn Harrison, Clarkston
Noel Hart, Atlanta
Phyllis Hart, Region 1 ESL Coordinator, Georgia Baptist Mission Board, Rossville
Susie Helton, Refugee Sewing Society, Fort Oglethorpe
Alken Hill, Clarkston International Bible Church, Lilburn
Emily Hill, Clarkston International Bible Church, Lilburn
Jim Hollandsworth, Executive Director, Path Project, Monroe
Doug Horton, Gainesville
Cathy Houle, Forsyth United Methodist Church
Jamie Hughes, Marietta
Sarah Hughes, Bridgepoint Church at Toco Hills, Clarkston
Amanda Hughes, Retired Elder, Gainesville First Church of Nazarene, Cleveland
Austin Humbles, Deacon, Chattanooga Valley Presbyterian Church, Rossville
Katharine Hurlburt, The Factory, Kennesaw
Ryan Hurlburt, Assistant Director, CULTURELink, Inc., Kennesaw
Eden Hutchins, Sandy Springs
Dr. Annette Ingram, Antioch Baptist Church, Carrollton
Timothy Isaacson, Executive Director, Immigrant Hope - Atlanta, Brookhaven
Lori Jackson, Finance Manger, All Souls Fellowship, Decatur
Jalissa Jassu, Renovation Church, Atlanta
Tristin Jewell, Christ Place Church, Cleveland
Joy Johnson, World Relief, Atlanta
Deanna Johnson, Truett McConnell University, Cleveland
Jamie Jones, Thomasville
Jason Kang, Atlanta
Dr. Kelly Kapic, Presbyterian Church in America, Lookout Mountain
Hani Keddo, 1977, Clarkston
Eric Ketcham, The Navigators, Clarkston
George Khalil, CEO, Route 78 Coffee Company, Monroe
Karen Khalil, CoFounder, Route 78 Coffee Co, Monroe
Jaewoo Kim, Proskuneo Ministries, Stone Mountain
JW James Kim, Team Jesus, Roswell
Lori Kim, Executive Director, City Hope Community, Lilburn
Jongdae Kim, Servant Korean Evangelical Church of Atlanta
Emily Klingman, Gospel Hope, Clarkston
Tracie Klinke, Attorney, Kennesaw
Natalie Knight, Church of the Nazarene, Wrightsville

Jared Koldoff, Gainesville
 Beth Lancaster, Clarkesville
 David Leatherman, Church of the Nazarene, Rocky Face
 Jennifer Lee, Administrative & Communications Assistant, Helen First Baptist Church
 Megan LeVan, Peachtree City Christian Church, Newnan
 Mary Leverett, First Baptist, Barnesville
 Kate Lindsey, Ethnē Health, Clarkston
 Sean Lindsey, CMO, Ethnē Health, Clarkston
 Andrew Lipsey, Christ Covenant Church, Marietta
 Lee Lo, Ekklesia Atlanta Christian Fellowship, Decatur
 Laura Lowe, Evans
 Dr. S Lowery, Evangelical United Methodist, New Holland
 Rachel Lowery, First Baptist Atlanta, Decatur
 Lynn Luster, Atlanta
 Killa Marti, On Mission Church, Smyrna
 Amber Martin, Augusta
 Brad Mauldin, Trinity Anglican Church, Atlanta
 Becky McCabe, CAMA Services, Toccoa
 Andrea McMahon, Site Manager, Friends of Refugees, Lawrenceville
 Eric Michiels, Dwelling place, Woodstock
 Sherri Miller, Sharpsburg First Church of the Nazarene, Newnan
 Sarah Miller, Newnan
 Donna Milner, Region 5 Coordinator, Georgia Baptist Mission Board Literacy Missions Team, Fitzgerald
 Steve Moore, 12Stone Church, Lawrenceville
 Sherry Moore, 12Stone, Lawrenceville
 Chris Moore, Campus Church, Lawrenceville
 Suzanne Morris, Intown Community Church, Tucker
 Chantal Mucyo, Immigration Specialist, World Relief, Stone Mountain
 Chris Mullis, Senior Pastor, Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church, Cohutta
 Wylene Myers, Hoschton
 Vanessa Nguyen, Compassion Christian Church, Lawrenceville
 Christina Nichols, Redeemer Community Church, Atlanta
 Everett Nichols, Warner Robins
 Eric North, All Souls Fellowship, Decatur
 Adam Nykamp, Clarkston International Bible Church, Norcross Georgia
 Elisabeth O'Brien, Marietta
 Elena O'Neil, New City Fellowship, Lookout Mountain
 Pam Otts, CEO, Widows Oil Ministry, inc., East Dublin
 Lequvia Ousley, Gospel Hope Church, Lithonia
 Tamara Owens, Church of the Nazarene, Savannah
 Christina Paul, John's Creek
 Rebecca Pennington, Professor, Covenant College, Flintstone
 Mark Perkins, Catalyst, One Collective, Clarkston
 Brigitta Perkins, Christ Family Church, Dahlonega
 Kristine Pike, Newnan
 Kyle Poole, District Superintendent, GA District Church of the Nazarene, Locust Grove
 Carlena Prophet, Tribe Church Atlanta, Peachtree Corners
 Sarah Quezada, Atlanta

Brad Reynolds, International Worker, The Alliance, Dacula
Steven Rho, Resonate Church, Atlanta
Timothy Rhodes, Open Table Community Church, Chamblee
LeRonne Riddick-Seals, Atlanta
Douglas Rohan, Deacon, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta
Julia Rohan, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta
Ximena Roth, Atlanta Vineyard Church
Kyra Ruddell, We Welcome Refugees, Kennesaw
Allison Russell, All Souls Fellowship, Decatur
Steven Saffels, Eagles Landing First Baptist Church, McDonough
Patricia Sale, Clairmont Presbyterian Church, Atlanta
Chelse Sanborn, Ethne Health, Atlanta
Jerilyn Sanders, The Chalmers Center, Flintstone
Jim Schaubroeck, Jonesboro
Ruth Scott, Blueprintchurch, Newnan
Ellen Sechrest, CBF, Decatur
Jennifer Sersaw, Dallas
Denise Smith, CEO & Founder, Peace Of Thread, Grayson
Elizabeth Southers, Dunwoody Baptist Church, Atlanta
Elizabeth Stewart, Decatur
Jane Stewart, Lookout Mountain
Ashley Stoll, Fayetteville
Teandra Storey, Gospel Hope Church, Snellville
Amanda Sullivan, Global Frontier Missions, Stone Mountain
Theresa Taube, Open Table Community, Atlanta
Tara Tharp, Church of the Nazarene, Wrightsville
James Tooley, Retired Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Adrian
Brian Trundle, Nazarene, Ringgold
Tafanie Van Wyngarden, All Souls Fellowship, Tucker
Abby VanGorder, McDonough
Alleen Veth, Atlanta
Philip Wade, All Souls Fellowship, Tucker
Jonathan Waldroup, Music Director, Resurrection Anglican Church - Woodstock,
Acworth
Lisa Walker, Director of Multicultural Ministries, The Evangelical Methodist Church, Hull
Nicole Walters, Sharpsburg
John Ward, Director of Mobilization, Encompass World Partners, Tucker
Elaine Watkins, Ringgold
Denna White, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Roswell
Sarah White, Gospel Hope Church, Clarkston
Katie Whittenburg, Christ UMC, Ringgold
Emily Williams, Grace New Hope, Dacula
Kierra Williams, Kingston
Hannah Wolf, Resonate Atlanta, Tucker
Denise Wood, Crossroads Presbyterian, Ellenwood
Hannah Woodson, Stockbridge Community Church, McDonough
Michael Wright, Bethany Baptist Church, McDonough
Joseph Yawn, Stone Mountain
Lindsey Yoder, Peachtree Corners

EVANGELICAL
IMMIGRATION **table.**

world relief 

Ruth Youn, Buford