

Governor Eric Holcomb  
Office of the Governor  
Statehouse  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

December 9, 2019

Dear Governor Holcomb,

As evangelical Christians from throughout the state of Indiana, we're writing to urge you to allow refugees to continue to be resettled to Indiana 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. Indiana 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 12,900 individuals from various countries have been resettled in Indiana. 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 Indiana; 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 Indiana's economy. With a remarkably low statewide unemployment rate of just 3.3%, 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 Indiana, it would disrupt the reunification of many families who have been waiting years to be reunited. Many refugees are resettled to *Indiana* because they already have family members in the state. If Indiana restricts their resettlement, many will likely exercise their lawful right to simply move to Indiana 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 Indiana to continue to receive newly arrived refugees. As always, we are committed to praying for you as you lead our state.

Sincerely,

Rev. Roberta Cansler, Senior Pastor, The Mission Church of the Nazarene, Hammond  
Rev. Martha Hampton, Senior Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne  
Rev. Troy Nanninga, Senior Pastor, American Reformed Church, DeMotte  
Rev. Lana Robyne, Pastor, First UMC, West Lafayette  
Debi Alexander, Neighborhood Ambassadors, Indianapolis  
Deborah Allenbaugh, Board Member, Living Grace Church, Merrillville  
Robert Aram, Faith Missionary Church, Carmel  
Samantha Baker, Cultivate Church, LaOtto  
Debra Baker, Chaplain, Franklin  
Whitney Blessing, Greenfield  
Wayne Bloomquist, Indianapolis  
Elisabeth Bloomquist, Northview Life Binford, Indianapolis  
Stephanie Buzzell, Christian, Newburgh  
Heath Buzzell, Christian, Newburgh  
Elizabeth Carter, City of Lights, Indianapolis  
Abigail Carter, Fortville First Church of The Nazarene, Fortville  
Sean Chambers, Evangelical Community Church, Bloomington  
Neil Cox, Public Information Officer, ReadyIndy, Carmel  
Rachel DeMuth, Lay Person, Church of the Nazarene, Indianapolis  
Jill Denney, Broadway Christian Church, Fort Wayne  
Kris Dunlop, Traders Point Christian Church, Brownsburg  
Amy Edwards, Kokomo  
Shanda Eickelberger, Indianapolis  
Steve Eisinger, Director of Local International Ministries, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
David Eisinger, Indianapolis  
Joan Eisinger, Evangelical Free Church of America, Indianapolis  
Daryl Emowrey, Senior Pastor, Calvary Lutheran Church, McCordsville  
Elizabeth Essink, Indianapolis  
Benjamin Fischer, Broadway Christian Church, Fort Wayne  
Lisa Fischer, Broadway Christian Church, Fort Wayne  
Jose Flores, Retired Minister, Iglesia Bautista Betesda Indianapolis, Marion  
Renee Foor, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
Melody Foster, Mishawaka  
Chris Frank, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
Janice Gantz, Whiting  
Robert Gargiulo, Pastor, North Manchester Church of the Nazarene, Huntington  
Bonnie Gerstung, Fellowship Missionary Church, Fort Wayne  
Leanna Giltmier, Riverside Covenant Church, West Lafayette

Shane Good, Pastor, English Lake Church, North Judson  
 Erin Good, Pastor, English Lake Church, West Lafayette  
 Jamie Goodwin, Doctoral Student, Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indianapolis  
 Richele Groeneweg, Fellowship Missionary Church, Fort Wayne  
 Beau Hamner, Outreach Pastor, College Wesleyan Church, Marion  
 Gidget Hamner, College Wesleyan Church, Marion  
 Katie Hamon, Holy Family Episcopal Church, Noblesville  
 Caleb Hansen, Fellowship Missionary Church, Fort Wayne  
 Scott Harris, Board Member, Anchor Community Church, Fort Wayne  
 Cora Herbkersman, Vineyard Church, Spiceland  
 Carl Hetler, Pastor, Broadway Christian Parish, South Bend  
 Melissa Ho, Carmel  
 Cindy Holloway, Upland Community Church  
 Tina Stoltzfus Horst, Founder, Coaching Mission International, Goshen  
 Rachel Houck, Grace Missionary Church, Mooresville  
 Christina Howard, Cambridge City  
 Lucy Hrivnak, Sunday School Teacher, Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church,  
 Valparaiso  
 Lindsay Hudkins, Pastor, Horizon Ministries, Bremen  
 Dani Huntley, College Park, Westfield  
 Danielle Huntley, Westfield  
 Craig Ito, Indianapolis  
 Susan Jaeger, Indianapolis  
 Margaret Johnston, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
 Charles Kelley, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
 Nathan Kingsley, Pastor of Student Ministries, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
 Rachel Klink, Upland  
 Keri Kornelsen, Northview Church, Fishers  
 Kari Kuster, Pastor, Agape international, Carmel  
 Morgan Lane, Zion Community Church of the Nazarene, Bloomington  
 Jessica Lembelembe, Grace Community Church, Indianapolis  
 Katy Lines, Pastor, Englewood Christian Church, Indianapolis  
 Drew Lyon, Pleasant View Bible Church, Warsaw  
 Thomas Macy, Pastor of Shepherding, Faith Church Indianapolis  
 John Thomas Mail, M.D., Faith Missionary Church, Indianapolis  
 Luis Martinez, Pastor and Multiethnic Director, Iglesia de Fe / Faith Church, Westfield  
 Chad McCool, Pastor, Prairie Park Baptist Church, Terre Haute  
 Ralph McCoy, Pastor, Lafayette  
 Amy Mitchell, Director, Faith International English Classes, Indianapolis  
 Jennifer Mohr, Faith Church, Indianapolis  
 John Mohr, Faith Missionary Church, Indianapolis  
 Lacey Montour, Kingsway Christian Church, Indianapolis  
 Susan Moore, St. Luke's Methodist, Indianapolis  
 Matthew Morley, Fellowship Missionary, Fort Wayne  
 Joanne Murillo, Church of the Nazarene, Elkhart  
 Jenn Ndlovu, Broadway Christian Church, Spencerville  
 Josh Needler, Volunteer, Immigrant Connection at College Wesleyan Church, Marion  
 Christine Newman-Aumiller, Holy Redeemer, Fort Wayne  
 Rachel Paul, Upland

Rebecca Puffer, Trinity Lutheran Church, Valparaiso  
Sebastian Radelich, Mishawaka  
Kim Rickelman, Indianapolis  
Roger Ringenberg, Emeritus Professor, Taylor University, Fort Wayne  
Kirsten Roe, AgInno Institute, West Lafayette  
Nancy Rossiter, Fellowship Missionary Church, Ft. Wayne  
Stephanie Rupp, Fort Wayne  
Sally Rushmore, Former Director and Teacher Trainer, Faith International English  
Classes, Indianapolis  
Stephen Sawada, Faith Church, Indianapolis, Zionsville  
Benjamin Schlegel, Pastor, Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo  
Jeffrey Schultz, Pastor, Faith Church, Carmel  
Michelle Shewan, Carmel  
Julie Short, Park Place Church of God, Anderson  
Cristina Spear, Cicero Christian Church, Noblesville  
Steve Spurlock, Lawrenceburg  
Sonja Stevens, UPCI, Muncie  
Zach Szmara, Senior Pastor, The Bridge Community Church, Logansport  
Amy Tescher, Anderson First Church of the Nazarene  
Marc Trembly, Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Valparaiso  
Allison Van Oss, Assistant Director, Compass International Family Center, Valparaiso  
Noemi Villa, Living Word Church, Munster  
Dawn Waltz, Faith Church, Carmel  
Tom Waltz, Faith Church, Carmel  
Diana Weaver, Soma Church, Indianapolis  
Sharlin Wieland, Leo  
Daryl Winger, Muncie Alliance Church  
Dr. Chris Wood, Physician, Traders Point Christian Church, Zionsville  
Chester Wood, Retired Professor, Faith Church 91st and College, Indianapolis  
Emily Wymore, Fort Wayne  
Melizza Zygmunt, New Hope Church (Missionary Church), Valparaiso