File #: 19-0431, **Version:** 1

Item:
Durham County Support for Refugee Resettlement

Date of BOCC Meeting: September 9, 2019

Request for Board Action:
The Board is requested to review and vote on the attached letter of support for resettling refugees in our states and communities.

On August 21, it was reported that the administration is considering a policy that would give states and cities the ability to veto the resettlement of refugees in their communities. Current resettlement policies help assure that states and local communities are active, indispensable partners in the resettlement process. Refugee placement, however, has always been under the jurisdiction of the federal government, given their exclusive authority over foreign and immigration policy.

If press reports are accurate, the proposed policy would be inconsistent with the Refugee Act of 1980 <https://www.archivesfoundation.org/documents/refugee-act-1980/> and even the US Constitution. It would not only seek to prevent the initial resettlement of refugees, but, if taken to its logical conclusion, would require restricting their freedom of movement, and could more broadly impugn the right to freedom of movement of other individuals in the United States - a right held by all legal residents.

Such a policy would improperly disrupt the refugee resettlement program - an important public-private partnership - from carrying out its crucial humanitarian responsibility of protecting refugees and reuniting refugee families.

Approved letters must be signed by September 9, 2019 and forwarded to key administration officials and Congress.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: This item aligns with Goal 1: Community Empowerment and Enrichment.

Resource Persons: Wendy Jacobs, Chair, Board of County Commissioners

County Manager's Recommendation: The County Manager recommends that the Board review and vote on the attached letter of support for resettling refugees in our states and communities.

County Manager: _____