



Welcoming Points

- We all want to make sure that our nation and communities are safe places of freedom and opportunity. The tragic events in Paris are being denounced by Syrian refugees who are fleeing violence. It is more important than ever that our leaders help the American public respond with compassion and ensure that America remains a beacon of freedom and opportunity.
- The Department of Homeland Security ensures refugees face rigorous screening before their arrival. Refugees are the most scrutinized and vetted individuals to travel to the United States, undergoing numerous security checks by intelligence agencies, including bio-metric tests, medical screenings, and in-person interviews with Department of Homeland Security officials.
- By definition refugees are people and families who are here because they face a threat to their safety in their former homes. They know personally the horrors of these situations.
- Families from Syria that are seeking a better life embody American values that have guided our country since its founding. They've defied all odds to arrive in a safe place and our leaders have the opportunity to reaffirm our American values by responding with compassion. Packing up everything and moving to a new place takes courage and resilience – the same values that define us as Americans.
- Every day, communities around the country and across the globe are recognizing that being welcoming makes them more economically competitive and vibrant places for all residents.
- Nationwide, **research has shown that refugees are contributors to local economies**; for every dollar spent helping refugees start a new life in the U.S., there is significant economic return to communities.
- For example, a report in Tennessee found that refugees contributed almost twice as much in tax revenues as they consumed in state-funded services in the past two decades.
- And in a recent study in Columbus, Ohio, resettlement agencies spent about \$6 million a year, but from that investment, the central Ohio community reaps an annual economic impact of \$1.6 billion, including nearly \$36 million in spending.
- By working together, we can make sure that our community stands on the better side of history. When we look back 10 or 20 years from now, we will remember that we weren't hindered by our fears. Instead, we invited diverse new neighbors to join us in building a stronger community, and we all became better for it.