



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUN 1 2015

Dear Mr. Gowdy:

Thank you for your letter of May 4 and your continued interest in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). As noted in our letter of May 1, consultation with communities is essential when we designate a new refugee resettlement site in the United States. In the case of the new site in Spartanburg, South Carolina, a number of consultations were held and will continue to be held. The aim is to ensure newly arrived refugees receive the assistance necessary to find jobs, enroll children in school, and become strong members of the Spartanburg community.

For specific answers to many of the questions in your letter, we would refer you to the local World Relief affiliate that is leading the consultations. This organization, led by Mr. Jason Lee, met with your staff in August 2014. We understand Mr. Lee has been seeking another meeting with your office. He is eager to detail the community consultations that have occurred to date and answer questions about refugee populations that are under consideration for resettlement, the role of Good Neighbor Teams, and refugee access to benefits and employment services. Such a meeting would provide more in-depth information about the consultation process and the support World Relief has for this program among many citizens of Spartanburg. Dorothy Addison of Governor Haley's office can also answer questions about the role of the State of South Carolina, as the Spartanburg site was approved by the State. Ms. Addison can clarify, if needed, the process by which the State approves new refugee sites. She can also provide you with information about longer-term assistance that is available to refugees through programs administered by the State.

You inquired about background checks for incoming refugees. As noted in our previous correspondence, all refugees of all nationalities considered for admission to the United States are subject to the highest level of security checks of any category of traveler to the United States. The specific details of these checks are classified.

The Honorable
Trey Gowdy,
House of Representatives.

Together with our colleagues from DHS/USCIS and other relevant U.S. agencies, we have provided classified briefings for Congressional committees on the refugee security screening process. If you or your staff would like such a briefing, we would be pleased to arrange it.

In terms of the one-time per capita grant from the Department of State to the affiliate that resettles the refugee, this amount is guaranteed for every refugee brought to the United States as part of the USRAP. If a situation occurs whereby the local agency is no longer able to offer settlement services, newly arriving refugees would be placed in another location in the United States where services are available. Most refugees who are already resettled in the area will have become self-sufficient. In the event they are not, they may benefit from those federal or state-funded services for which they are eligible.

The Department of State conducts an annual proposal acceptance and approval process for the Reception and Placement (refugee resettlement) Program. As part of this process, we require the local agencies to conduct community consultations and discuss proposed refugee arrival numbers, populations, services, and capacity for the following federal fiscal year. The Department of State solicits input from each state, and requires that the state refugee coordinator indicate his or her support and/or concerns for programs in their state. Input is often received from other stakeholders, including elected officials, and is considered during the proposal review process.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you this additional information regarding the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. The World Relief affiliate in Spartanburg, as well as its national headquarters, stands ready to discuss with you the details of its Spartanburg program. We are happy to help you liaise with it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Frifield".

Julia Frifield
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs