



*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

March 15, 2016

Judiciary Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,200 Catholic health care systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, sponsors, and related organizations, I am writing to express our opposition to the “Refugee Program Integrity Restoration Act” (HR 4731) and urge you to reject changes to the U.S. refugee program that would harm individuals already ravaged by war and displacement, and undermine our nation’s traditional role as a beacon of hope and safety throughout the world.

Our Catholic health ministry was founded upon a tradition of helping the poorest and most vulnerable among us, and is called to advocate on behalf of such vulnerable populations. Along with our partners in the wider Catholic community, we respond to the Church’s call to welcome immigrants and refugees who seek our outreach and assistance and to ensure that our nation’s laws and public policies do not hinder them. As Pope Francis recently stated, the tragedies of war and economic hardship have led to migrations constituting a “humanitarian crisis” that must be acknowledged and addressed.

Unfortunately, HR 4731 would drastically reduce and cap refugee admissions; place refugees under continual surveillance after they have arrived; and create new procedures that would significantly and potentially indefinitely delay resettlement for many refugees whose lives are in danger, including but not limited to Central Americans, Syrians and Iraqis. The bill also would allow state and local governments who "disapprove" of refugees to veto resettlement in their



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localities, and keep refugees from adjusting to Lawful Permanent Residency until they have been here for three years. It would additionally revoke the refugee status of any refugee who returns to their country of origin even if only briefly for a funeral or family emergency. The effect of these harmful provisions would be to decimate refugee resettlement in the U.S.

I urge you to express support for refugee resettlement by opposing the Refugee Program Integrity Restoration Act. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of CHA's advocacy staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Rodgers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Rodgers

Sr. Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy