



## Congressional Refugee and Immigration Priorities Post-Election

Church World Service is a 78-year old humanitarian organization representing 37 Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox communions, as well as refugee resettlement, home study and post release services, and asylum seeker case management offices and affiliates across the United States. As we prepare for a presidential administration that promises to deport immigrants en masse and restrict access to safety and legal migration pathways, the 118th Congress has the opportunity in its final weeks to take action.

CWS urges Congress to affirm the value of refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants – and uphold our nation’s commitment to creating a compassionate and humane system of welcome. With an unprecedented [130+ million](#) forcibly displaced people worldwide, including more than 37 million refugees, bold leadership is needed now more than ever. **Before the end of its term, CWS urges the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress to act on the following priorities:**

**1. Protect funding for vital refugee and newcomer accounts.** In ongoing [emergency supplemental](#) and [Fiscal Year 2025 budget negotiations](#), Congress should support:

- **Emergency funding for the Refugee and Entrant Assistance (REA) account**, which funds the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). ORR funds go directly to local communities, supporting them in offering critical integration services like employment classes and school-based support for refugee children and their families. ORR is currently facing an emergency shortfall of \$2.9 billion and, without supplemental funding, will need to end or significantly slash programming.
- **Robust funding for accounts supporting overseas humanitarian protection and refugee processing**, such as the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) account, and additional funding to support Operation Enduring Welcome.
- **Continued funding for the Shelter and Services Program (SSP) and the Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP)**, which provide critical support to communities welcoming asylum seekers.

**2. Support legislation and authorizing language that welcomes refugees and guards against harmful restrictions**, including the following legislation and authorizing language that may come to a vote this session:

- **The Fulfilling Promises to Afghan Allies (FPAA) Amendment** to the National Defense Authorization Act. This amendment is nearly identical to the Afghan Adjustment Act (S. 2327 and H.R. 4627), and would provide a clear path to permanent status for Afghan parolees who remain in limbo.
- **Authorization language to restore access to refugee services and benefits to arriving Ukrainian and Afghan parolees.** Though Congress initially responded to the fall of Kabul and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine by authorizing Afghan and Ukrainian humanitarian parolees to receive certain ORR resettlement services and mainstream benefits like TANF and SNAP, it has since allowed both populations’ eligibility to lapse, cutting off newly-arriving Afghans and Ukrainians from support.
- **Legislation and authorizing language to protect crucial refugee support programs and offices** and inoculate against efforts to end them. This includes the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) Authorization Act (H.R. 8386) and authorizing language codifying the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and the Lautenberg refugee family reunification program.

**3. Reject any efforts to include or codify harmful asylum restrictions.** Ongoing efforts to include harmful border and immigration restrictions in funding legislation – including those that seek to codify Title 42-style expulsions or otherwise return individuals to danger without offering them due process – must be categorically rejected. Instead, Congress should robustly fund USCIS to accelerate refugee and asylum processing, parole renewals, and work authorizations. Congress should also insist that funding for the Shelter and Services Program (SSP) and the Case Management Pilot Program (CMPP) is included in upcoming funding measures to keep our welcoming infrastructure for asylum seekers intact.

**4. Hold the Biden administration accountable.** Congress can and should urge the Biden administration to take action before Inauguration Day, including by calling on President Biden to:

- **Offer more stable protection to those currently here with only temporary protections and most at risk of being returned to danger,** including by establishing a streamlined re-parole process for those who have entered via the Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, Venezuelan (CHNV) parole program (as it did for Ukrainian and Afghan parolees), and to redesignate and extend TPS for nationals of countries including Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Haiti.
- **Expedite processing of immigration benefits and applications,** including by ramping up processing of key immigration services and benefits like Employment Authorization Documents, applications for Temporary Protected Status, and naturalizations.
- **Rescind the “Securing the Border” rule and instead invest in alternate and more effective border solutions.** The Securing the Border rule has created chaos and disorder at the Southwest border and unlawfully returned asylum seekers to danger without offering adequate due process.