January 31, 2018

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write, as the Board of Directors of Bethany Christian Services and its president, to express our support for refugees. At Bethany, we believe that the United States should provide help and acceptance to all who have suffered from war at the hands of terrorist organizations, to victims of sex trafficking, slavery, and violent conflicts, and to refugees from all countries.

With over 65.6 million forcibly displaced persons in the world - including 22.5 million refugees, half of whom are children - we respectfully request that the U.S. protect at least 85,000 refugees annually. We hope that you set this annual goal for how many refugees will be offered safety, protection, and a chance at a new life. Capping refugee admissions at just 45,000 would be the lowest ceiling in the history of the modern U.S. refugee program and could have devastating results for highly vulnerable refugees such as unaccompanied minors, individuals with urgent medical needs, torture survivors, and persecuted religious minorities.

The United States signed the International Treaty on the Status of Refugees in 1967. This treaty committed our nation to protecting people facing persecution. Throughout our nation’s history, the American people have demonstrated their commitment to protecting refugees. These same refugees have bolstered our economy, paid taxes and, have served in our military.

The United States has the world’s most thoroughly vetted resettlement and assistance programs, successfully serving more than three million refugees to American communities since 1975.

Refugee assistance is vital to the healing process for refugee children who have suffered from war, sex and slavery trafficking, and severe abuse by terrorist organizations. Bethany Christian Services supports policies that promote the interests of refugee children - including alternative care models like placing children in foster care or with their families, rather than holding in detention, whenever possible. Moreover, children should be exempt from any moratorium on refugees from certain nations. America has always been a beacon of hope for refugee children and families, and robust support for our refugee assistance programs will serve to enhance that well-deserved reputation around the world.

Bethany Christian Services has provided refugee services for over 40 years. We have placed children from refugee camps, who have lost both parents, into loving, stable families, served families resettling in the United States, and have a network of over 400 businesses who employ these refugees - helping them become productive and loyal citizens. We raise millions of dollars from churches, businesses, and individuals to help refugees. Our nation has a historic compassion for refugees, and their contributions to our communities have been woven into the fabric of our great nation.
Our faith and God's loving kindness to us and this nation compel us to support refugees. We ask that you view the refugee and immigration crisis through the eyes of those seeking refuge from persecution. America can and should be that place of refuge. We recommend that the policies of the United States reflect a commitment to helping refugees.

Thank you for considering our views and experience and for your leadership of our nation.

Sincerely,

Chris Palusky
President & CEO

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