

Guide for Congressional Outreach for Individuals and Campus Communities

On January 20, 2025, the current administration signed an executive order that pauses refugee resettlement indefinitely. The executive order mentions that there may be case-by-case exceptions for travel, but we do not have information from the State Department about this process or how to request an exception from the pause. Because Welcome Corps on Campus operates under the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, this pause also impacts Welcome Corps on Campus cases.

This guide suggests ways that you can engage with members of Congress and a few ideas on how you can share your support for refugee resettlement, including programs like Welcome Corps on Campus, with your representatives.

How to Contact Your Senators and Representatives - -

- **Find your member of Congress.** [This website provides information about your elected officials. Enter your home address under “How to Contact Your Member”](#) to find their website or phone number.
- **Visit the official website of the member of Congress.** You can call their office in your state or in Washington, D.C. Using the link above, you can also find email addresses to raise your concerns.

Making a Phone Call

Who will I talk to?

The people answering the phone are usually staff assistants or interns. You should expect these staff to be friendly and polite. Remember -- their office represents you in Congress! Most calls take one or two minutes. Sometimes you will leave a voicemail. If you would rather leave a voicemail than talk to a person, you can call after office hours.

What do I say?

Start by sharing your name and where you live, which makes it clear that you live in the member's district.

In your message, you should share why welcoming refugees matters to you, your campus, your community, etc. Let them know the specific ways that refugees and your campus benefit, and why continuing refugee resettlement, including Welcome Corps on Campus, is so important to you and your campus.

Some points that you might highlight include:

- Refugee students and scholars enrich our campuses, bringing their talents, skills, and perspectives to our classrooms and communities.
- Congress already approved and funded resettlement, including private sponsorship initiatives like Welcome Corps on Campus.

- Refugee resettlement provides a safe, legal pathway for vetted refugees who can contribute to the workforce, including high-demand fields, such as healthcare and STEM.
- Refugee students and scholars integrate into their new communities, making significant social, cultural and economic contributions to our campus and community.
- Welcome Corps on Campus is a first-of-its-kind public-private partnership that empowered campus communities to provide the financial and integration support for refugee students to resettle and enroll in U.S. higher education institutions.
- Campuses like mine are ready and willing to welcome and support refugees
- Resume the U.S. Refugee Admissions Process, or offering a categorical exemption for refugee students or scholars who seek to join U.S. higher education institutions

Sample Script

Hello, my name is _____. I live in [city] in [member of Congress]'s district. I am calling you today to express my support for refugees, especially refugee students. My campus community has come together to welcome refugees to our community and campus.

At _____, we...

- Share about what you and your campus do to welcome and support refugees
- Share about what refugees or refugee students contribute to your community
- Share more about why you and your campus invest in refugees

President Trump's executive order suspends U.S. refugee resettlement indefinitely. I believe that refugee resettlement, including through the Welcome Corps on Campus, is good for the United States. We have a long history of welcoming people to this country, and refugees have so much to offer us.

Refugees are vital contributors to our campus, community and economy. Resettlement is also a vital tool to protect people who are persecuted for their beliefs or identity, including Afghan allies.

I urge [member of Congress] to demonstrate your support for refugee resettlement and Welcome Corps on Campus.

Thank you for your time today.

What else can I do?

- You can also ask for a written response to your call. This requires the Senator or Representative's office to develop a thoughtful response to your request.
- Ask other sponsors in your group or members of your community to make their own phone calls.
- You can also get others to join you in making a call. When groups of people are calling at the same time, an office is forced to take note!