



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan, Assemblymember Jon Rivera Call On Biden Administration To Rebuild Refugee Resettlement Program

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SENATOR SEAN RYAN, ASSEMBLYMEMBER JON RIVERA CALL ON BIDEN ADMINISTRATION TO REBUILD REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

385 State and Local Officials from Across the Country Urge President Biden to Prioritize of Refugee Resettlement in 2023

BUFFALO – On Thursday, September 8, 2022, New York State Senator Sean Ryan and Assemblymember Jon Rivera were among 385 elected officials from across the country who [sent a letter](#) urging President Joe Biden to provide the resources needed to restore the United States’ refugee resettlement infrastructure and allow the nation to resettle more refugees in 2023. Despite President Biden’s commitment to allowing 125,000 annual refugee admissions, the country is on pace to resettle fewer than 25,000 refugees in 2022 due to an underfunded resettlement process.

During the Trump administration, new restrictions on refugee resettlement caused serious damage to the country’s refugee resettlement infrastructure. In April 2021, Senator Ryan and Assemblymember Rivera joined several of their colleagues and refugee resettlement agencies across Upstate New York to [urge President Biden to undo the Trump-era restrictions and raise the cap on refugee admissions](#) for the remainder of the fiscal year. The cap was later increased, but the United States still resettled the lowest number of people in the history of the refugee program in FY 2021.

When the Trump administration made devastating cuts to refugee admissions, New York stepped up and became the first state to provide funding to support refugee integration with the creation of the New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program in 2017. Because of this proactive action, New York has been able to maintain much of the service infrastructure – particularly in Upstate New York, where agencies are ready and able to accept more new arrivals. This year’s state budget delivered [a record \\$6 million in funding for the program](#).

Communities across New York – especially Upstate cities like Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Albany – have seen their economies greatly enhanced by refugee admissions during the last two decades. The significant decrease in refugee resettlement in recent years has negatively impacted these communities.

Senator Sean Ryan said, “Welcoming people displaced from their homes is a moral imperative for a nation whose strength stems from its diversity. But not only that – here in Buffalo and throughout New York, the economic contributions of immigrants and refugees provide enormous economic benefits. President Biden’s commitment to restoring refugee admissions was an important first step after the restrictive policies put in place by the previous administration, but the incremental progress of 2022 has left more work to do. There are still millions of people in need of resettlement services, and it is vital that we follow through with the support required to reach the goals the President put in place.”

Assemblymember Jon D. Rivera said, “The previous federal administration eviscerated refugee resettlement structures and caused long-term damage to refugee populations across the nation by enacting enormous cuts to refugee admissions. While New York has been proactive in ensuring that refugee agencies are sufficiently funded, more must be done at the federal level to restore our nation’s resettlement program so that it has both the resources and flexibility to respond to humanitarian crises when they arise.”

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