

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CITIES 2

COMMITTEE MEMBER

AGING
ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME AND CORRECTION
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS

**THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK**



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May 9, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

The May 5 announcement from Mayor Adams's regional liaison to the Hudson Valley that hundreds of newly arrived asylum-seekers would be relocated to two locations in our region, the hamlet of Orangeburg, Rockland County and Town of Newburgh, Orange County, is extremely distressing. As you know, many of these asylees have left Venezuela to escape violence, poverty, and political oppression. Through no fault of their own, these men, women, and children are being used as proxies for a wider partisan battle among the Biden administration, Republican border states, and New York. These political games need to end.

New York City's decision to send several hundred unemployed men of indeterminate age to the two communities referenced above is an opportunity to do just that. According to Mayor Adams's spokespeople, the decision to relocate asylees to the Hudson Valley bears on a decision by FEMA to award New York City a smaller-than-expected amount of an initial \$350 million tranche of emergency funding directed to states and local governments to ease the crisis at our southern border. Yet this decision ignores the \$450 million available to cities like New York in the second round of funding as well as the \$1 billion the state has appropriated to provide shelter, food, and other services.

If state funding of at least \$1 billion is to be obligated to pay for some or all of the costs associated with the asylees and migrants, then in my view it should be allocated more widely than just New York City, the only municipality mentioned by the budget. Communities such as Newburgh are too small to bear the costs of unforeseen changes to the three- to four-month timeline mentioned by the Adams administration, especially if, but not only if, there are significant delays to the work-permit waiting period, currently estimated at around 180 days per recipient.



Once again, there does not appear to be a Plan B. I simply find it incredible that New York, the most resource-rich state in the country with a \$230 billion budget, cannot provide adequate services like housing, healthcare, and employment training in its largest sanctuary city, instead sending individuals miles away from the help they need. Our immigration system is broken, and this latest episode furthers the disrepair.

I therefore urge you to allocate the \$1 billion in the fiscal year 2023-24 state budget with these community impacts in mind. Leaders at the local, state, and federal levels all predict a surge of individuals at the southern border in late spring and summer once the Title 42 measure is lifted on May 11. There is no time to waste with partisan bickering and gamesmanship. Please release the funding immediately to Town of Newburgh and other municipalities which will address the growing crisis in our midst.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R.G. Rolison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Robert G. Rolison
NYS Senate, 39th District