

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: APRIL 13, 2022

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: NATHAN HAMBURGER, CITY MANAGER

BY: RAMIRO ADEVA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: APPROVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A PILOT PROGRAM TO EXTEND CASE MANAGEMENT FOR REFUGEES FROM 90-DAYS TO ONE YEAR

While local resettlement agencies in California are doing their best to serve refugees, fleeing from war torn countries, it remains a daunting task to find permanent housing and employment within the short period of time the federal government currently offers financial assistance, which is only enough to subsidize the first 90-days of case management. Once the 90-days expires, case management ceases, and many refugee families are faced with the uncertainty of what to do next with little to no guidance.

In March, the City was notified of the presence of approximately 30 Afghan refugee families temporarily residing in the community. Many of the families expressed fear and concern for themselves and their children as they were being faced with a fast-approaching 90-day deadline and the threat of having no caseworker assistance to find a permanent home.

Though there has been progress made to resettle some Afghan refugees, the challenge ahead will be increasingly difficult with the expected arrival of refugees from Ukraine.

As a result, there is currently a pilot program being proposed to the State Senate Budget Committee that seeks to add nine months of financial assistance from the State, on top of the 90-days of federal assistance, to fund a total of one-year for case management. The proposed duration of the pilot program is two-years, with an investment of \$39,750,000 each year.

The attached Letter of Support would be in favor of this two-year pilot program aimed at providing adequate case management resources necessary for successful resettlement of the over 30,000 newly arrived Californians, including those refugee families that have been temporarily located in Agoura Hills.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff respectfully recommends the City Council approve the draft Letter of Support for a pilot program to extend case management for refugees from 90-days to one year.

Attachment: Draft Letter of Support



"Gateway to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area"

April 13, 2022

RE: Support for CA Extended Case Management (CECM) with an investment of \$79,500,000.

Dear Chair Skinner and the Senate Budget Committee,

The City of Agoura Hills joins in the effort of asking the legislature's support for an investment in a new California Extended Case Management (CECM) program, which will transform the lives of over 30,000 newly arrived Californians by introducing a PILOT program to expand case management services for up to one year with an investment of \$39,750,000 per year over a two-year duration, a total investment of \$79,500,000.

The CECM program builds off of the existing infrastructure for case management in our state and can be expanded to meet the needs of this current moment with the humanitarian crises unfolding. The program will serve eligible refugees, humanitarian parolees, asylum seekers, asylees and trafficking victims (hereinafter "clients"), ensuring each client will have one full year of assistance. Case managers will help clients integrate into the fabric of the state and build a foundation for future success. The services they provide will include housing assistance, health care access, job readiness and training, financial literacy education, cultural orientation, English language training and school enrollment.

The Refugee Program and other similar programs serving humanitarian parolees, asylum seekers, asylees and trafficking victims provide case management help for these new California residents for just 90 days. For many, that simply is not enough time to lay the groundwork for a new life in a new country. We know that case management for refugees is life changing. Studies show that with proper support, refugees successfully resettled bring remarkable contributions to the economy and social fabric of the state. We also know that the longer support is provided, the better the outcomes.

The unanticipated evacuation of thousands from Afghanistan seeking refuge and their resettlement in California and the new announcement that the US will welcome 100,000 Ukrainians has left us struggling with how to rebuild the underfunded resettlement system. The Bay Area, Sacramento, LA, and San Diego are home to some of the largest Afghan and Ukrainian communities in the country.

Given the moment, now is the time for California to invest resources in the California Extended Case Management Program. It will ensure case management services are

provided not just for 90 days, but for a full year, to 30,750 eligible individuals who resettle in California. With it, we can immeasurably improve the lives of these new residents in our state. And with it, we can reaffirm what we all know to be true: California Welcomes.

We thank the committee's consideration for this important investment to meet the needs of new Californians.

Sincerely,

Deborah Klein Lopez
Mayor