



## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Title:** To express the City of Columbus' commitment as a place of refuge for those fleeing violence in Syria

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11/24/2015	1	CITY CLERK	Attest	
11/24/2015	1	MAYOR	Signed	
11/23/2015	1	COUNCIL PRESIDENT	Signed	
11/23/2015	1	Columbus City Council	Adopted	Pass

To express the City of Columbus' commitment as a place of refuge for those fleeing violence in Syria

**WHEREAS,** The City of Columbus is proud to be an ethnically diverse city and home to one-quarter of Ohio's foreign-born population; and

**WHEREAS,** More than 100,000 of the region's residents are New Americans; and

**WHEREAS,** The people of Columbus have a long history of opening their arms and homes to the vulnerable and disadvantaged; and

**WHEREAS,** The conflict in Syria has caused a refugee crisis, which the City of Columbus will not ignore; and

**WHEREAS,** More than seven million Syrians have been displaced from their homes by war, many referred to the United States of America for resettlement are the most vulnerable from Syria's collapse: torture survivors, people with special medical needs, women who head households and children; and

**WHEREAS,** The number of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria to other countries has now eclipsed four million people, confirming the Syrian refugee crisis as the single largest refugee crisis in a generation; and

**WHEREAS,** President Barack Obama has committed to accepting 10,000 Syrian refugees in the United States within the next year; and

**WHEREAS,** those wishing to come to the United States must apply through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Refugee Agency, and are subject to the highest level of

security checks of any category of traveler to our country; and

**WHEREAS**, Refugees are vetted by the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center/Intelligence Community, the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and are subject to recurrent vetting; and

**WHEREAS**, Refugees from Syria are subject to additional screening that verifies what caused them to flee their homes; and

**WHEREAS**, The intense background and medical checks required of refugees can take up to two years to complete; and

**WHEREAS**, Half of all Syrian refugees brought to the United States are children, a quarter are adults, and approximately two percent are single males of combat age; and

**WHEREAS**, The Refugee Act of 1980 declared it "the historic policy of the United States to respond to the urgent needs of persons subject to persecution in their homelands" and gave the President of the United States the power to handle an "unforeseen" emergency refugee situation" such as one involving "grave humanitarian concerns"; and

**WHEREAS**, Syrian refugees should be treated with dignity, care and compassion that every human being deserves; and

**WHEREAS**, Refugees legally admitted to the United States require housing and support such as counseling, education, health care, food, security, case management and legal assistance; and

**WHEREAS**, The City of Columbus has shown its historical commitment to placing deserving families throughout our neighborhoods and community; now therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

That the City of Columbus affirms its commitment to be a place of refuge for those fleeing the conflict in Syria.

That all city departments, local businesses, and charitable and non-profit organizations are urged to work with all governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide shelter and sustenance for refugee families relocating to Columbus and integrating into our community.