The GRACE Act

The Guaranteed Refugee Admission Ceiling Enhancement Act (GRACE Act), introduced by Sen. Markey (S. 1088) and Rep. Lofgren (H. 2146), would restore the refugee admissions program to its historic and bipartisan roots. The bill would set the minimum refugee goal at 95,000, the average of all refugee admissions goals since 1980.

How Do We Determine the Number of Refugees to be Resettled Now?

The Refugee Act of 1980 served to codify refugee resettlement in the US in a way that would more effectively respond to the most pressing humanitarian needs around the world. It required the president, in consultation with Congress, to set the maximum number of refugees to be resettled each fiscal year – known as the Presidential Determination.

Why the GRACE Act?

Since 1980, the average refugee admissions goal has been 95,000. Since the Trump Administration took office, US refugee resettlement has been slashed through executive orders and devastating historically low resettlement ceilings – 45,000 (FY18), 30,000 (FY19), and now 18,000 has been proposed for FY20. Such low numbers leave thousands of vulnerable people in harm’s way and run contrary to the United States’ historically bipartisan commitment to refugee resettlement.

What Will the GRACE Act Do?

The GRACE Act will restore the refugee admissions program to its bipartisan, historical strength and require that there be a minimum commitment of 95,000 refugees per year. It would also require that the president consider global need when setting regional allocations and increase transparency in the resettlement program by requiring public reporting.

What Can You Do?

Call you members of congress today and ask them to cosponsor the GRACE Act. For members of the House of Representatives, you can also ask your Representative to join the bipartisan Refugee Caucus. Speak to members of your community in person and online about why they should support the GRACE Act and refugee resettlement.

Follow RCUSA on Twitter (@RCUSA_DC) and go to rcusa.org for updates