

**ALLIANCE OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS SUPPORT  
HOUSE AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS CELEBRATING REFUGEES**

*This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 19, 2020

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**Washington, D.C.**—Today, the [Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration](#), comprising over 450 presidents and chancellors of higher education institutions, endorses bipartisan resolutions [H.R.902](#) and [S.R.545](#) commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980; and provides its unqualified support for refugee resettlement in the United States. For forty years refugee students and scholars have enriched college and university campuses in every state, and Congress must continue in its commitment to protect the refugee resettlement program and reduce barriers to higher education.

The two identical bipartisan resolutions commemorate March 17, 2020 as the 40th anniversary of our refugee system and reaffirm the need for bipartisan support for its continued survival. They go on to describe the creation of our modern refugee system as “consistent with the best values of the United States,” along with the major contributions of refugees to our country throughout the decades.

This affirmation comes at a time when the refugee resettlement system is under unprecedented attack by the current administration, with the [lowest number of refugee admissions](#) in the history of the program. It has become increasingly difficult for potential refugees to gain refuge in the United States, let alone achieve their goals in higher education. Worldwide, [only three percent](#) of refugees are able to access higher education at all.

**Miriam Feldblum, Executive Director of the Presidents' Alliance stated:** “We support policies that help increase access to higher education for all refugee students and scholars, allowing them to obtain the skills necessary to reach their full potential and contribute to our higher education communities, localities and states, and the U.S. economy. Refugee students and scholars in higher education already provide invaluable contributions through their study, teaching, research, and vocational training, despite facing steep barriers to higher education. Congress must oppose additional policies that would reduce the number of refugee students and scholars coming to the U.S. and curtail their ability to be a part of America's higher education and social fabric.”

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“The United States must continue to support policies that maintain our long-standing tradition as a place of refuge for vulnerable and at-risk communities, including displaced and threatened students and scholars,” **stated Kyle Farmbry, Dean of the Rutgers Graduate School, Newark (GSN) and Chair of the University Alliance for Refugees and At-Risk Migrants (UARRM)**. “At the same time, Congress must ensure refugee students and scholars in the U.S. have access to higher education institutions, vocational training, and career pathways. Helping refugee students and scholars overcome obstacles to higher education and achieve their fullest social, economic, and civic integration not only maintains America’s humanitarian commitments, but strengthens our nation’s economy and helps meet our critical skills gaps.”