

Enrolled House Bill 2508

Sponsored by Representative PILUSO; Representatives ALONSO LEON, FAHEY, GREENLICK, KENY-GUYER, NERON, PRUSAK, SCHOUTEN, WILLIAMS, Senators DEMBROW, GELSER, MANNING JR, MONNES ANDERSON (Presession filed.)

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to refugees in Oregon; and declaring an emergency.

Whereas refugees arriving in the United States are at high risk and have high needs because of the long term trauma and suffering they have endured; and

Whereas studies have shown that with appropriate services and intensive case management, refugees generally become employed within six months of their arrival and make immense contributions to the economy, diversity and social fabric of this state; and

Whereas the federal government has been drastically cutting budgets for refugee services and the funding cuts have had a direct impact on refugees living in Oregon communities; and

Whereas additional cuts to the federal budget for refugee services are likely and will continue to prevent Oregon's refugees from receiving in full the specialized social services they need to become self-sufficient and thrive; now, therefore,

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:

(a) "Eligible agency" means an agency that has contracted with the United States Department of State under 8 U.S.C. 1522(c) to provide initial resettlement and case management services to refugees.

(b) "Refugee" means an individual who is not a United States citizen, who has been in the United States for 60 months or less and who is any of the following:

(A) A refugee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1157.

(B) An asylee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1158.

(C) A Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in 45 C.F.R. 401.2.

(D) A parolee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5).

(E) An Amerasian immigrant lawfully admitted to the United States who is described in 8 U.S.C. 1612(a)(2)(A)(v).

(F) A victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons and the victim's family members who are eligible for benefits and services from federal and state programs under 22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(A).

(G) An Iraqi or an Afghan citizen who is a principal alien provided with the status of special immigrant by the United States Department of Homeland Security under:

(i) Section 1059(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, P.L. 109-163, 119 Stat. 3444;

(ii) Section 1244(b) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007, P.L. 110-181, 122 Stat. 397;
or

(iii) Section 602(b) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009, P.L. 111-8, 123 Stat. 807.

(2) The Department of Human Services shall award grants to eligible agencies to provide the following services to refugees residing in this state, for up to 24 months:

(a) Assisting refugees with department programs by:

(A) Referring refugees to the department within three days of the refugee's arrival in this state;

(B) Completing applications for assistance;

(C) Transporting the refugee to the initial appointments with the department;

(D) Providing to the department all necessary eligibility information known to the eligible agency; and

(E) Coordinating services of the department with other social service agencies.

(b) Assisting refugees with:

(A) Navigating the health care and mental health systems, including providing assistance in applying for medical assistance;

(B) Accessing housing assistance and finding stable housing;

(C) Setting up utilities and paying utility bills;

(D) Issues with landlords;

(E) Navigating legal or criminal issues including services for victims of crime;

(F) Accessing in-home services including parenting assistance, English as a second language instruction, medical and psychosocial support; and

(G) Navigating the culture of the United States.

(c) Providing transportation to appointments.

(d) Training refugees on using public transportation.

(e) Providing immigration assistance and referrals.

(f) Advocating on behalf of refugees regarding domestic violence, federal laws and hate crimes.

(g) Providing refugees with interpretation services and assistance with access to language services.

(h) Providing referrals for refugees to culturally specific support groups and services, including religious organizations.

(i) Pairing refugees with volunteers for English as a second language training and ongoing language support.

(j) Providing support to refugees in budgeting and achieving financial literacy.

(k) Identifying refugees' employment skills and providing referrals to employment skills training and other job support services.

(L) Problem solving with refugees and assisting refugees with life skills development.

(m) Ensuring that refugees have access to psychosocial support and emotional wellness education.

(n) Coordinating medical services for refugees including referring to and coordinating with agencies that determine eligibility for disability benefits.

(o) Providing family preservation services, legal services and social service support for domestic violence and child welfare issues.

(p) Assisting newly arrived refugee children in accessing services to strengthen the children's academic performance and successful integration into the community.

(q) Other services necessary to assist refugees in accessing programs administered by the department.

SECTION 2. (1) In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the Department of Human Services, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$2,000,000:

(a) Which shall be expended to award grants to eligible agencies, as defined in section 1 of this 2019 Act, to supplement the funding received by eligible agencies from the United States Department of State under 8 U.S.C. 1522 to provide services as described in section 1 of this 2019 Act; and

(b) Of which up to \$200,000 shall be granted to an employment service provider described in subsection (2) of this section to provide coordination of employment services.

(2) The Department of Human Services shall select an employment service provider to receive the moneys described in subsection (1)(b) of this section that is an established culturally responsive organization and provides employment and workforce development services to refugees, as defined in section 1 of this 2019 Act.

SECTION 3. This 2019 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2019 Act takes effect July 1, 2019.

Passed by House June 25, 2019

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Passed by Senate June 29, 2019

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Received by Governor:

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Approved:

.....M,....., 2019

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Kate Brown, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M,....., 2019

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Bev Clarno, Secretary of State