



## King County

**Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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December 18, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

U.S. Department of State

2201 C St. NW

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

This letter is in reference to Executive Order 13888, “*On Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Resettlement.*”

I write to affirm that King County, Washington, will continue to take part in the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), and I consent to initial refugee resettlement in King County as per the terms of the Executive Order.

King County is home to the largest immigrant and refugee population in Washington, and Washington is the second largest state tasked with resettling refugees. The vast majority of Washington’s refugees live in King County. Welcoming immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers is not only a fundamental value and character of King County, it is essential to our economic and social development.

As the report by the New American Economy shows, in King County, refugees in the country five years or less had median household incomes of roughly \$21,000, and the equivalent figure for 25 years or longer was more than \$79,000. In 2015, refugees contributed \$21 billion in taxes across the country.

Further, the United States refugee vetting process is the most stringent of any country in the world. Refugees undergo biometric checks, in-person interviews with trained representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, and interagency checks including those conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Counter Terrorism Center. In King County, we understand that refugees are victims of terror and calamities, and not the cause of it. It has been proven that when immigrants and refugees are able to access our immigration system and obtain work permits, they stimulate the economy and build businesses without fear.

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For these reasons and more, we will continue to support refugee resettlement programs and uphold our commitment to making King County a welcoming community where every person can thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dow Constantine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

cc: Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Carol T. O'Connell, Bureau of Population,  
Refugees and Migration, U.S. Department of State  
Sarah Peterson, Washington State Refugee Coordinator, Washington State  
Department of Social and Health Services