

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#1)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

1. The draft report submitted to the Senate and House Judiciary Committees indicated that the Department of State would need approximately \$503.7 million to process and resettle 75,000 refugees. The final report indicated that the Department of State would need the same amount of money to process and resettle 85,000 refugees.

- a. How much will this increase cost?
- b. How much will it cost to admit the 100,000 refugees that the administration has targeted for Fiscal Year 2017?
- c. Does the State Department intend to ask Congress for additional funds? If so, how much, and when?

Answer:

The Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2015: Report to the Congress includes a table outlining the total funding available or estimated availabilities to support the program, including the appropriation from Congress, carryover funds, and refugee loan repayment funds, among others. The President's Budget Request to Congress for FY 2016 was \$442.7 million for the Admissions program and included funding for a ceiling of 75,000 refugees. The Administration is currently evaluating the total funding required to admit an additional number of refugees above the 75,000

included in the initial FY 2016 President's Request, and it may require additional resources. The President's FY 2017 Request is still being formulated and the Administration is currently evaluating the total funding required for the program in FY 2017.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#2)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

2. You testified at the hearing that the Department of State has an approximate 80% repayment rate on the loans provided to refugees for travel to the United States.

- a. What is the average loan amount?
- b. What is the average default amount?
- c. How much money has the Department of State failed to recover due to defaults on loans provided to refugees over the last ten years?

Answer:

Refugees traveling to the U.S. are offered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) interest-free travel loans to pay for the costs of their transportation from overseas to U.S. resettlement sites. The average IOM loan amount per refugee is \$1,200 and the average loan note, which includes loans for all members of a refugee family, is \$2,500. The average number of individuals per note is about 2.1.

Approximately 70 percent of all loan amounts are repaid within 5 years and 78 percent of loan amounts are repaid within 10 years. Neither IOM nor the resettlement agencies charge interest, penalties or fees to delinquent loans, nor have they ever initiated legal action through the courts

against any delinquent loan-holder. IOM is responsible for ensuring the financial accountability of the loan program and compliance with all applicable U.S. laws pertaining to debt collection. IOM loans are subject to credit reporting requirements. Refugees can request extensions or changes to payment schedules and terms, if facing hardship. In addition, refugee loans can be canceled based on specific criteria including death, disability, old age, and bankruptcy. A loan is considered to be in default and then is returned to IOM for collection if the loan has not been extended or modified and no payments have been received within four consecutive months. The average default amount is \$1,981.

For \$645 million in loans provided to refugees over the last ten years, \$137 million (or 21 percent) is currently in default status. IOM continues to actively pursue rehabilitation and repayment of these loans including skip tracing, outbound calling, and changing payment schedules and terms.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#3)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

3. According to data available from the Department of State Refugee Processing Center's databases, out of the 1,670 refugees admitted from Syria during Fiscal Year 2015, 29 refugees, or 1.7%, were Christians. Out of the 10,000 refugees from Syria that the administration says it will resettle in Fiscal Year 2016, do you expect a similar percentage of Christians to be admitted to the United States?

Answer:

The United States is committed to assisting people of all ethnicities, religions and nationalities who are fleeing persecution, violence, and other causes of displacement. With regard to resettlement, our emphasis is on admitting the most vulnerable individuals with a well-founded fear of persecution based on one of the five protected grounds (race, religion, nationality, political opinion, and membership in a particular social group) under U.S. law, in a manner that is consistent with U.S. national security.

Since 2011, the United States has admitted over 2,200 Syrian refugees, four percent of whom are members of religious minorities, half of which were Christians. Pre-war demographics indicated that Christians made up around 10 percent of the population in Syria, or approximately 1.8

million Christians. It is unclear how many Christians have left the country, however it is estimated that Christians comprise far fewer than 10 percent of the Syrian refugee population. Based on this data, we expect a similar percentage of Syrian Christians admitted in FY 2016, although it could increase somewhat given planned resumption of refugee processing in Lebanon. (We believe Syrian Christians are more likely to seek refuge in Lebanon than other countries in the region.)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#4)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

4. How many refugees from Syria do you anticipate will be admitted to the United States over the next five fiscal years through the Refugee Admissions Program?

Answer:

As Secretary Kerry announced in September, the United States would accept at least 85,000 refugees from around the world in Fiscal Year 2016 and at least 100,000 the following year. Of those accepted in 2016, at least 10,000 will be from Syria. He also stated we would be working hard to explore whether we could do more. This step is keeping with America's best tradition as a beacon of hope to those fleeing violence and persecution and a signal of solidarity to our allies and partners around the world. While we do not establish refugee admission targets by nationality five years out due to the emergency nature of refugee crises, in consultation with Congress we will continue to explore ways to increase those figures while maintaining robust security and screening protocols.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#5)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

5. Are members of the public able to attend quarterly consultations with state and local officials regarding refugee resettlement efforts?

Answer:

The Department of State requires resettlement agencies' local affiliates to convene quarterly community consultations with stakeholders in areas of resettlement. In some areas, the State Refugee Coordinator may convene the required quarterly meetings. Through these consultations and other means, the affiliates are able to continually gauge the capacity of the community for refugee resettlement. While the program is operated under federal authority, the resettlement agencies and the Department of State consider carefully the input received from its state and local stakeholders when determining the feasibility and capacity of a refugee resettlement program. Attendance at quarterly meetings is determined locally by meeting organizers.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Director Larry Bartlett
Senator Jeff Sessions (#6)
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 1, 2015**

Question:

6. When is the last time that the Department of State conducted a financial audit of the private contractors with which it works to provide refugee resettlement services?

Answer:

All Department of State cooperative agreements with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide refugee resettlement services require annual independent financial audits under the provisions of the Federal Grant Regulations (2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F –Audit Requirements). Accordingly, each NGO is audited annually.