

WESTCHESTER
JEWISH 
COALITION FOR
IMMIGRATION

April 6, 2021

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Hudson Valley Office
P.O. Box 749
Yonkers, NY 10710

Dear Senator Gillibrand,

We, the Executive Committee of Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration, are writing to ask you to urge the Biden administration to swiftly sign the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2021.

As a Jewish organization that advocates for immigrant rights, we firmly believe that every person seeking refuge in the United States is entitled to due process and dignity. The Biden administration has made bold commitments to revitalize the U.S. refugee resettlement program. Now the administration must begin to fulfill them. President Biden must act on the promise he made to sign a new framework for refugee resettlement. In doing so, people who have fled persecution to seek a new life in a safe place will once again have a chance to find it in the United States.

As we face the worst refugee crisis in history, each day that passes without a change to the Presidential Determination is another day hundreds of particularly vulnerable refugees are forced to wait for safety and protection. The administration has already met with Congress to discuss its proposed changes to the Presidential Determination, and the president must now make it official.

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WJCI was formed to unite and inform the Jewish and wider interfaith community of Westchester with a collective moral voice. Our mission is to advocate for fair, just and compassionate laws, policies, and programs to support refugees, asylees and other immigrant groups. We are currently composed of over 80 individual members and clergy from across the Westchester Jewish community including Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist, Reform, and non-denominational affiliations. As your constituents, we look forward to doing all we can to welcome refugees in our districts and communities. We urge you to do the same.

"Our mission is to advocate for fair, just and compassionate laws, policies, and programs to support refugees, asylees and other immigrant groups".

We would like to work with you further on this issue. If that is a possibility, please let us know.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee of WJCI*

Holly Rosen Fink, Westchester Jewish Center and WJCI Co-Founder

Alan Himmelstein, Temple Israel of White Plains

Howard Horowitz, Temple Israel of New Rochelle

Eric Levine, Hebrew Institute of White Plains and WJCI Co-Founder

Laura J. Lewis, Beth El Synagogue Center

Ruth Rothseid, Park Avenue Synagogue

Jeff R. Swartz, Beth El Synagogue Center

*Affiliations for identification purposes only

NOTE: This letter was adapted from a letter from HIAS that has been posted on their website.