May 1, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In light of the recent U.S. airstrikes in Syria and your acknowledgment and condemnation of the cruel atrocities the Syrian government has committed against its own people, we urge you to immediately take effective action to help innocent Syrians. As you stated, “Assad choked out the lives of helpless men, women and children. It was a slow and brutal death for so many. Even beautiful babies were cruelly murdered in this very barbaric attack. No child of God should ever suffer such horror.”

That is why we are asking you to immediately rescind your Executive Order dated March 6, 2017 which suspends the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days and to fully mobilize U.S. government efforts to assist Syrian refugees from this horrific war who are simply seeking safety for themselves and their families.

In 2016, the United Nations identified an estimated 13.5 million Syrians who require humanitarian assistance inside Syria. Over five million Syrians have fled dangerous conditions to seek safety as refugees in neighboring countries. We believe it is imperative that the U.S. regain its leadership role and help resettle the thousands of Syrians who have been victimized by an oppressive regime.

The U.S. has a long history of resettling refugees. Refugees are the most thoroughly vetted individuals entering the U.S., undergoing the scrutiny of the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the National Counterterrorism Center and the intelligence community. Syrian refugees are also subject to “enhanced” review which involves an additional layer of scrutiny at DHS prior to an in-person interview by a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) adjudicator. At a time when there are more refugees, asylum-seekers, and displaced persons than at any time since World War II, the U.S. cannot stand idly by.

We also ask that you prioritize supporting U.S. foreign aid, which helps respond to humanitarian crises around the world. American assistance is a crucial lifeline and helps maintain global stability worldwide. Cuts to American foreign assistance, particularly to humanitarian programs, will only exacerbate the suffering of millions of refugees and further destabilize the Middle East. Global threats like ISIS grow out of instability, and the humanitarian crises that result, if left
insufficiently attended, only lead to further destabilization. We strongly urge you to maintain our funding commitment to effectively prevent these global threats from finding roots.

It is time for the United States to step up and show the world that we are not indifferent to the grave suffering of the Syrian people. Again, we urge you to safely resettle Syrian refugees into our country, and to maintain funding for those who need our help the most. Doing so would maintain American humanitarian leadership and send a message of hope to oppressed people all over the world. Thank you for your consideration, we look forward to your response and future actions.

Sincerely,

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Zoe Lofgren

Eliot L. Engel

Alcee L. Hastings

Joe Crowley

David N. Cicilline

Pramila Jayapal

John Conyers, Jr.

Bobby Rush

Sheila Jackson Lee

Luis V. Gutiérrez
Val Butler Demings
Debbie Dingell
Rick Larsen
Kathy Castor
James P. McGovern
Paul D. Tonko
Colleen Hanabusa
Jamie Raskin
Peter Welch
Niki Tsongas
Doris Matsui
John K. Delaney
Mark Pocan
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Judy Chu
Ted Deutch
Derek Kilmer

Michelle Lujan Grisham

Anna G. Eshoo

Gene Green

Elizabeth H. Esty

A. Donald McEachin

J. Luis Correa

Lois Frankel

Norma J. Torres

Stephen F. Lynch

Louise Slaughter

Adriano Espaillat

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Jared Polis

Tim Ryan

Thomas R. Suozzi

Sander M. Levin

Ruben Gallego

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Juan Vargas

Albio Sires

Grace Meng

Cheri Bustos

Ruben J. Kihuen

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Jan Schakowsky

Betty McCollum