

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 30

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES JOSEPHSON, Gara, Drummond, Guttentberg

Introduced: 1/24/18

Referred: Community and Regional Affairs, State Affairs

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States Congress to reaffirm the commitment of the United States to**
2 **promote the safety, health, and well-being of refugees and displaced persons; urging the**
3 **United States government to uphold its international leadership role in responding to**
4 **displacement crises with humanitarian assistance and to work with the international**
5 **community and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to find solutions to**
6 **conflicts and protect refugees; and urging the President of the United States to continue**
7 **to mitigate the burden placed on frontline refugee host countries.**

8 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

9 **WHEREAS**, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

10 (1) more than 65,600,000 people are displaced worldwide, including almost
11 22,500,000 refugees, over 40,300,000 internally displaced people who flee war, persecution,
12 or torture in search of peace, hope, and freedom, and 2,800,000 people seeking asylum; these
13 numbers are unprecedented;

14 (2) children account for 51 percent of the refugee population in the world;

1 millions of refugee children are unable to access basic services, including education;

2 (3) on average, 20 people are displaced from their homes every minute;

3 (4) in 2016 alone, 10,300,000 individuals were newly displaced because of
4 conflict or persecution, including 6,900,000 individuals who were displaced within the
5 borders of their own countries and 3,400,000 new refugees and asylum seekers who fled to
6 other countries;

7 (5) more than 5,500,000 refugees have fled Syria since the start of the Syrian
8 conflict and more than 6,300,000 people are internally displaced within Syria;

9 (6) since January 2014, more than 3,000,000 Iraqi people fleeing violence
10 have been internally displaced and over 260,000 have fled as refugees; and

11 (7) South Sudan is now the site of the largest refugee crisis in Africa, with one
12 out of every four people displaced, a total of 1,900,000 people, approximately 1,400,000 of
13 whom are refugees who have fled the country, and over half of whom are children; and

14 **WHEREAS**, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, during a
15 refugee's first 20 years in the United States, the refugee contributes on average \$21,000 more
16 in taxes than the refugee receives in benefits; and

17 **WHEREAS** no evidence links immigration rates to increased crime;

18 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
19 Congress to reaffirm the bipartisan commitment of the United States to promote the safety,
20 health, and well-being of the millions of refugees worldwide, including promoting the
21 education of refugee children and displaced persons; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the United States
23 government to uphold its international leadership role by responding to displacement crises
24 with humanitarian assistance and by providing protection for groups of people who are
25 vulnerable to sexual violence, human trafficking, persecution or violence based on the group's
26 religion or nationality, forced conscription, genocide, or exploitation; and be it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the United States
28 government to work in partnership with the international community to find solutions to
29 existing conflicts and prevent new conflicts from beginning; and be it

30 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the United States
31 government to continue to support the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for

1 Refugees and to advance the work of nongovernmental organizations that protect refugees,
 2 regardless of their country of origin or religious beliefs; and be it

3 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the United States
 4 government to continue to mitigate, through humanitarian assistance and development
 5 support, the burden placed on frontline refugee host countries that absorb most of the world's
 6 refugees.

7 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
 8 of the United States; the Honorable Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States and
 9 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the U.S. House of
 10 Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of
 11 Representatives; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the
 12 Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Bob
 13 Corker, Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; the Honorable Ed Royce,
 14 Chair of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
 15 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
 16 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and the Office of the United Nations High
 17 Commissioner for Refugees.