

States, cities may refuse refugees

Policy could set up clash between governments

Julie Watson and David Sharp
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — When President Donald Trump dramatically slashed the number of refugees allowed into the U.S., he also gave state and local governments the authority to refuse to accept them for the first time in history.

Last week's move could further undermine a program that has seen an 80% drop in the number of refugees allowed in under Trump, who has pushed to limit both legal and illegal immigration.

If governors or lawmakers want to close the door, it could hurt towns with aging populations that have come to rely on young refugees to revitalize their economies.

While conservative states like Texas and Tennessee have used to halt refugee resettlement or demand compensation for the costs, the mayors of more liberal cities like Austin, Dallas, San Antonio and Nashville have publicly welcomed more people fleeing danger in their home countries.

Trump's executive order again thrusts states and cities into immigration policy, whether or not like when they had to decide whether to work closely with federal deportation officers or become "sanctuaries" that limit cooperation.

The change was announced at the same time Trump cut the number of refugees to 30,000 next year, the lowest level since Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980.

Trump's order says the federal government and local officials were not coordinating well and the administration was respecting communities that can't take in refugees.

Refugees have the right to move anywhere in the United States once they're resettled.

But the new authority for state and local governments could lead to disruptions, disputes and delays, further chipping away at the U.S. resettlement program.

The program has long enjoyed bipartisan support and was considered a model for protecting the world's most vulnerable



Betty Kabbashi, a medical interpreter, takes her children, Roda, 5, center, and Richie, 7, to school on Tuesday in South Portland, Maine. Kabbashi, who was a dentist in South Sudan, disagrees with President Donald Trump's plan to further cut refugee quotas. (AP Photo/John Manchillo)

people because of close coordination with communities that welcomed refugees, advocates say.

"This order is in effect a state-by-state, city-by-city refugee ban, and it's un-American and wrong," said Mark Hatfield, president of HIAS, a Maryland-based Jewish nonprofit group that helps refugees worldwide find safety and freedom. "Is this the kind of America we want to live in? Where local towns can put up signs that say 'No Refugees Allowed' and the federal government will back that?"

Roger Mayer Tim Mahoney, a Democrat, said he hopes North Dakota's Republican governor keeps the door open. He said his city has 500 job vacancies and needs refugees to grow the economy, as does North Dakota, which has 30,000 unfilled positions.

The city was receiving a survey as 600 refugees already in the state. Restrictions. Last year, Fargo got 100. "I think a lot of mayors are saying that we're on the front lines, and we're people in our communities," he said.

He said employers call "all the time" hoping for more refugee workers, and the town has had good experiences with them. Many work in health care as caretakers, in the service industry cleaning hotel rooms or in manufacturing at

plants that make windows or computer parts.

"They are hard-working and often work two jobs while they put their children through school," Mahoney said. "Ninety percent are fully employed within 90 days."

Trump's order requires state and local officials to provide public written consent to receive refugees.

North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum, who considered using the federal government to demand more say over the resettlement program, did not respond to questions by The Associated Press on whether he would give his approval.

It's unclear whether counties and other government entities also can weigh in, but that could result in the United States admitting far fewer than Trump's already historically low cap.

"It has the potential to paralyze the ability to move forward on refugee resettlement in many places across the country," said Mark Greenberg, a senior fellow at the Migration Policy Institute and a

former official in the U.S. Health and Human Services Department, which includes refugee resettlement. He left in 2017.

"The International Refugee Assistance Project is considering suing over the policy, which director Leahy Baker said is 'empowering local officials who share the anti-refugee and anti-immigrant agenda.'"

In 2015, more than two dozen states — nearly all with Republican governors — tried to shut out Syrians, citing terrorism fears. But they didn't have the legal authority.

A federal judge last year permanently blocked Indiana from trying to turn away Syrians under an order that Vice President Mike Pence championed as governor, which barred state agencies from making payments to a nonprofit resettling refugees in the state.

Trump's changes mean resettlement agencies have been receiving less federal funding, which is based on the number of refugees admitted. The money supports language and cultural awareness classes, citizenship assistance, and job training and placement — programs that help refugees quickly become self-sufficient.

More than 12 programs have disappeared in the past three years and 41 others have suspended their services in 23 states, according to the Refugee Council USA, an advocacy group representing non-governmental refugee resettlement agencies.

Betty Kabbashi, who fled violence in South Sudan, said refugees are grateful to be in the United States and want to contribute to their communities. She's a widow with two children, ages 5 and 7, and works as a hospital interpreter in Portland, Maine, where the chamber of commerce found that foreign-born residents have contributed \$2.2 billion to the metro area's gross domestic product.

"I count myself as an American because this is where I found opportunity," said Kabbashi, who hopes to get her dentistry license. "This is my home."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice is hereby given that the Board of County Commissioners of Martin County will conduct public hearings on October 22, 2019, beginning at 9:00 A.M., or as soon thereafter as the hour may be heard, to review the following items:

1. AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 19-10, TURNER GROVES, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 4, FUTURE LAND USE/ELEMENT OF THE MARTIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY, PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
 2. AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 19-20, TUCKER COMMONS, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF THE MARTIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY, PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
- In conjunction with:
3. Application for rezoning from R-1A (Single-Family) and R-2B (Single-Family Detached) to C-1 (General Commercial) in the unincorporated zoning district (regarding Comprehensive Plan Amendment 19-20, Tucker Commons (see location map below)). The application also seeks to amend the Zoning Atlas to add the Old Palm City Town Center Zoning Overlay to include Lot 13, Block N, Cleveland Addition.
 4. AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 19-7, GOLF COURSE COURSE LLC AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 4, FUTURE LAND USE/ELEMENT AND CHAPTER 10, SANITARY SEWER SERVICES ELEMENT OF THE MARTIN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY, PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
 5. AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE 3, ZONING DISTRICTS, LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, MARTIN COUNTY, TO PROVIDE FOR GOLF COURSES, PROVIDING FOR APPLICABILITY, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard. The meeting will be held in the Commission Chambers on the first floor of the Martin County Administration Center, 2401 S.E. Mainway Road, Stuart, Florida. Written comments may be sent to: Nicki vanVleet, Director, Martin County Growth Management Department, 2401 S.E. Mainway Road, Stuart, Florida 34996. Copies of the item will be available from the County Management Department. For more information, contact the Growth Management Department at (772) 285-5435.

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding are entitled, at no cost, to the provision of certain assistance. This does not include transportation to and from the meeting. Please contact the Office of the ADA Coordinator at (772) 285-5435, or the Office of the County Administrator at (772) 285-5435, or in writing to 2401 S.E. Mainway Road, Stuart, FL 34996, no later than three days before the hearing date. Persons using a TTY device, please call 711 Florida Relay Services.

If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at the meetings or hearings of any board, committee, agency, council, or advisory group, that person will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record should include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.



NOTICE TO PATIENTS

Dr. Jose A Suarez, Jr. announces his retirement from his practice at 6103 SE Federal Highway, Stuart, FL 34997.

Effective: October 1, 2019
Office Phone: 772-220-1666

Primary Care Associates will be the custodian of records for Dr. Suarez's patients at the above address. Dr. Jamie Gomez will be assuming the continuation of care of his patients as of October 1, 2019 at the same office location.

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