

Introduced by: Councilmember Kostiuk

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION 2019-20**

**SUPPORTING REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN TAKOMA PARK**

WHEREAS, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has determined that 1.4 million refugees are in need of immediate resettlement, but less than 200,000 resettlement places are available worldwide; and

WHEREAS, refugees who need to be resettled include torture survivors, people with severe medical conditions, LGBTQIA individuals, children alone, and women and children at risk, all of whom who cannot return home and cannot stay in their host country due to their extreme vulnerability; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Takoma Park, the City Council, and the City staff are proud to embrace the historic tradition of the United States in welcoming refugees, in keeping with our national values and respect for human rights, and believe the City has a moral obligation to welcome refugees; and

WHEREAS, as part of this tradition and obligation, the City of Takoma Park allows all residents over 16 years old to vote in City elections, whether or not they are citizens of the United States; and

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2015, the Council adopted Resolution 2015-66, Welcoming Syrian Refugees, that “affirmed its duty and willingness to welcome our Syrian neighbors who are approved as refugees, because to shut the door on those in need is inconsistent with basic values of our community” and committed to “work with other levels of government, non-governmental agencies, and residents of the City to identify ways in which the community can provide support for refugee families relocating to the Takoma Park area and integrating into our community” and the Council desires to affirm this resolution; and

WHEREAS, on April 12, 2017, the Council adopted Resolution 2017-27, Encouraging Takoma Park Landlords To House Refugees And Asylees, calling on “Takoma Park landlords to open their doors and provide housing to refugees, and those who have been granted or are seeking asylum, regardless of their national origin, as we work together to create a livable community for all” and the Council desires to affirm this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Amnesty International USA’s Takoma Park/Silver Spring community group and Ethiopian Community Development Council, an organization responsible for resettling refugees in this community, have declared their support for resettling refugees in Takoma Park and asked the City Council to pass this resolution; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland, declares its support for the resettlement of refugees in Takoma Park, no matter their religion, race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, or country of origin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland, calls on Montgomery County and other counties and cities to pass similar resolutions and asks the City Clerk to send the resolution to the President of the Montgomery County Council and the Executive Directors of the Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council will explore what steps can be taken to encourage and facilitate refugee resettlement in Takoma Park.

Adopted by the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland this 1st day of May, 2019.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk