

House Bill 2508

Sponsored by Representative PILUSO; Representatives ALONSO LEON, GREENLICK, Senators DEMBROW, GELSER, MANNING JR, MONNES ANDERSON (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Requires Department of Human Services to award grants to refugee resettlement agencies to provide specified services to refugees. Appropriates moneys from General Fund to department to award grants.

Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1 Relating to refugees in Oregon; and declaring an emergency.

2 Whereas refugees arriving in the United States are high risk and have high needs because of
3 the long term trauma and suffering they have endured; and

4 Whereas studies have shown that with appropriate services and intensive case management,
5 refugees generally become employed within six months of their arrival and make immense contri-
6 butions to the economy, diversity and social fabric of this state; and

7 Whereas the federal government has been drastically cutting budgets for refugee services and
8 the funding cuts have had a direct impact on refugees living in Oregon communities; and

9 Whereas additional cuts to the federal budget for refugee services are likely and will continue
10 to prevent Oregon's refugees from receiving in full the specialized social services they need to be-
11 come self-sufficient and thrive; now, therefore,

12 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:

13 (a) **"Eligible agency" means an agency that has contracted with the United States De-**
14 **partment of State under 8 U.S.C. 1522(c) to provide initial resettlement and case management**
15 **services to refugees.**

16 (b) **"Refugee" means an individual who is not a United States citizen, who has been in**
17 **the United States for 60 months or less and who is any of the following:**

18 (A) **A refugee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1157.**

19 (B) **An asylee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1158.**

20 (C) **A Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in 45 C.F.R. 401.2.**

21 (D) **A parolee admitted under 8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5).**

22 (E) **An Amerasian immigrant lawfully admitted to the United States who is described in**
23 **8 U.S.C. 1612(a)(2)(A)(v).**

24 (F) **A victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons and the victim's family members**
25 **who are eligible for benefits and services from federal and state programs under 22**
26 **U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(A).**

27 (G) **An Iraqi or an Afghan citizen who is a special immigrant, as defined in 8 U.S.C.**
28 **1101(a)(27).**

29 **NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 **(2) The Department of Human Services shall award grants to eligible agencies to provide**
2 **the following services to refugees residing in this state, for up to 24 months following their**
3 **date of arrival in the United States:**

4 **(a) Assisting refugees with department programs by:**

5 **(A) Referring refugees to the department within three days of the refugee's arrival in**
6 **this state;**

7 **(B) Completing applications for assistance;**

8 **(C) Transporting the refugee to the initial appointments with the department;**

9 **(D) Providing to the department all necessary eligibility information known to the eligible**
10 **agency; and**

11 **(E) Coordinating services of the department with other social service agencies.**

12 **(b) Assisting refugees with:**

13 **(A) Navigating the health care and mental health systems, including providing assistance**
14 **in applying for medical assistance and disability benefits and services;**

15 **(B) Accessing housing assistance and finding stable housing;**

16 **(C) Setting up utilities and paying utility bills;**

17 **(D) Issues with landlords;**

18 **(E) Navigating legal or criminal issues including services for victims of crime;**

19 **(F) Accessing in-home services including parenting assistance, English as a second lan-**
20 **guage instruction, medical and psychosocial support; and**

21 **(G) Navigating the culture of the United States.**

22 **(c) Providing transportation to appointments.**

23 **(d) Training refugees on using public transportation.**

24 **(e) Providing immigration assistance and referrals.**

25 **(f) Advocating on behalf of refugees regarding domestic violence, federal laws and hate**
26 **crimes.**

27 **(g) Providing refugees with interpretation services and assistance with access to lan-**
28 **guage services.**

29 **(h) Providing referrals for refugees to culturally specific support groups and services,**
30 **including religious organizations.**

31 **(i) Pairing refugees with volunteers for English as a second language training and ongo-**
32 **ing language support.**

33 **(j) Providing support to refugees in budgeting and achieving financial literacy.**

34 **(k) Identifying refugees' employment skills and providing referrals to employment skills**
35 **training and other job support services.**

36 **(L) Problem solving with refugees and assisting refugees with life skills development.**

37 **(m) Providing psychosocial support to refugees and access to emotional wellness educa-**
38 **tion.**

39 **(n) Coordinating medical services for refugees including coordinating with agencies that**
40 **determine eligibility for disability benefits.**

41 **(o) Providing family preservation services, legal services and social service support for**
42 **domestic violence and child welfare issues.**

43 **(p) Assisting newly arrived refugee children in accessing services to strengthen the**
44 **children's academic performance and successful integration into the community.**

45 **SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-**

1 ated to the Department of Human Services, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, out of
2 the General Fund, the amount of \$4,250,000, which shall be expended to award grants to eli-
3 gible agencies, as defined in section 1 of this 2019 Act, to supplement the funding received
4 by eligible agencies from the United States Department of State under 8 U.S.C. 1522 to pro-
5 vide services as described in section 1 of this 2019 Act.

6 SECTION 3. This 2019 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
7 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2019 Act takes effect
8 July 1, 2019.

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