

Introduced by: Councilmember Qureshi

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

**RESOLUTION 2015-66
WELCOMING SYRIAN REFUGEES**

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park has a long history of welcoming immigrants and building a caring, inclusive and strong community which celebrates its diversity; and

WHEREAS, our neighbors include individuals from all parts of the world who speak many different languages and represent many cultures, making Takoma Park truly a city of immigrants; and

WHEREAS, the conflict in Syria has presented one of the worst refugee crises since World War II; and

WHEREAS, more than seven million Syrians have been displaced by war, more than half of whom are under eighteen years old; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has committed to accepting 10,000 Syrian refugees into the United States within the next year; and

WHEREAS, those individuals wishing to emigrate to the United States must apply through the United Nations, and if accepted, are subject to a rigorous and multi-layered security screening program, including an in-person interview, administered by the Department of Homeland Security; and

WHEREAS, the intense background and medical checks required of refugees to the United States can take as long as 24 months to complete; and

WHEREAS, we share the view of many national security experts, that failing to help “refugees resettle as quickly as possible is, in itself, a factor that can increase risk for Americans the world over;” and

WHEREAS, opening our doors to those who are fleeing violence does not endanger our safety; but rather shows our compassion and hope; and

WHEREAS, since 2011, 39 Syrian refugees have been settled in the State of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby reaffirms the City of Takoma Park’s commitment to remain a place of sanctuary and a safe haven for refugees from around the world, regardless of their national origin.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland hereby affirms 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, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Takoma Park will 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.

Adopted by the Council of the City of Takoma Park this 30th day of November, 2015.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk