

**June 2, 2020**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL FILES AMICUS BRIEF OPPOSING FEDERAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT ORDER**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul, along with California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, led a coalition of 19 attorneys general in [filing an amicus brief](#) in the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals to oppose a federal executive order that would undermine refugee resettlement efforts.

The Oct. 1, 2019, executive order seeks to upend the existing refugee resettlement process by requiring resettlement organizations to obtain affirmative written consent from state and local authorities before being able to place refugees in their jurisdictions. In the amicus brief, Raoul and the coalition assert that the executive order violates the Refugee Act of 1980, undermines family reunification efforts and disrupts the states' ability to deliver essential resources to refugees.

"Since the enactment of the Refugee Act of 1980, states have implemented effective systems that help refugees get reunite with family members already living in the United States, which also helps them more successfully transition to life in this country," Raoul said. "The federal government's order to arbitrarily upend those systems will hurt refugees, communities and the states that have come to rely on the important contributions refugees play in our society."

The executive order threatens to undercut the longstanding refugee resettlement system, including efforts to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. For instance, under the executive order, a refugee could be prevented from resettling in a community where they already have a child or sibling, contravening congressional intent and directly interfering with efforts to maximize cultural supports that help refugees and their communities succeed.

Moreover, the executive order's consent requirement runs contrary to one of the key purposes of the Refugee Act: to give states a greater voice in making recommendations about refugee placement. Instead, the consent requirement gives localities veto power over statewide resettlement policies. By requiring states and localities to provide affirmative consent before receiving refugees, the order also places an undue administrative burden on resettlement agencies to obtain consent, hindering the delivery of services to the thousands of refugees who are welcomed into communities across the country each year. Since 2001, Illinois and other coalition states collectively have welcomed and resettled more than 50 percent of the refugees entering the United States. In 2015, refugees' businesses generated \$4.6 billion in income nationally.

Joining Raoul in filing the brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.