

RESOLUTION _____ - 16

A RESOLUTION DECLARING OPPOSITION TO THE RELOCATION OF REFUGEES FROM THE UNITED STATES REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM TO THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

WHEREAS, the United States federal government has adopted a program to relocate refugees (“Refugee Resettlement Program”) from Syria and other locations in the Middle East and around the world to the United States within the next few years. As part of the Refugee Resettlement Program, it is anticipated that each state will receive refugees through designated relocation agencies approved by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, City Council has significant security concerns about the Refugee Resettlement Program, including the federal government’s ability to fully vet incoming refugees to ensure the safety of the general public. These concerns are heightened because of recent terror attacks in Paris and the ongoing terrorist operations around the world; and

WHEREAS, City Council is also concerned about the financial burdens refugees can place upon local schools, law enforcement, and community services. This is an unfunded mandate imposed upon the community during uncertain economic times in which the City budget and other governmental entities and agencies are already experiencing financial stress; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no formal process in place to notify local municipalities when volunteer agencies resettle refugees into a city; and

WHEREAS, Colorado Springs City Council respectfully requests that the Colorado State Refugee Coordinator notify the City immediately when the State becomes aware that refugees may be resettled here and to further coordinate with the City in order to mitigate potential impacts on City budgets and services; and

WHEREAS, under the U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, the U.S. Congress has the exclusive power to regulate commerce with foreign nations and naturalization, and City Council supports and encourages Congress to adopt legislation such as the proposed American Security Against Foreign Enemies (“SAFE”) Act, which will require additional background investigation on refugees from Iraq and Syria, including certification by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”) that such refugees are not a security threat; and

WHEREAS, while understanding the desire for persons to seek freedom and to share in all that is good and positive in the American way of life, the risk to our local citizens in times of global terrorism cannot be ignored. Accordingly, it is necessary for City Council to protect the health, safety, security, and welfare of

the citizens of the City by declaring its opposition to the relocation of refugees from the United States Resettlement Program into the City until, and unless, it is determined by the federal government that such refugees are not a security threat; and

WHEREAS, the El Paso County Commissioners have adopted Resolution 15-463, expressing concerns about the necessity of background investigations for refugees to mitigate security threats.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Colorado Springs:

City Council hereby declares its opposition to the relocation of refugees to the City of Colorado Springs from the United States Refugee Resettlement Program until, and unless they are certified by the federal government not to pose a security threat.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado, this ____ day of _____, 2016.

President

ATTEST:

Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk