



**For Immediate Release:**

Monday, July 21 2014

**Contact:**

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**WHO:** Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance (CIRA)

**WHAT:** Rally in support of housing refugee children in Connecticut

**WHERE:** Gateway Community College (20 Church Street, New Haven, CT, 06510)

**WHEN:** Tuesday, July 22 @ 4:0pm

In addressing the recent surge of Central American children, the federal government requested Connecticut's assistance in housing up to 2,000 refugees. Governor Dannel Malloy's administration rejected the request, citing capacity and safety concerns.

CIRA will hold a rally in support of humane immigration policy and asking Governor Malloy to reconsider his decision. Statewide advocates are willing to work with the administration to identify a viable location to house refugee children.

See press release below for further details:

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**CONNECTICUT** – The state’s largest immigrant-rights coalition, the Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance (CIRA), released the following statement in response to Governor Malloy’s refusal to temporarily house refugee children arriving in the U.S. to escape from violence: The request from the federal authorities that we house refugee children at one of our facilities offered the Governor a choice: to lead by portraying Connecticut as a compassionate state that is a beacon of light and welcoming to immigrants and refugees, or to abdicate from our values and succumb to the will of the nativists and xenophobes.

Sadly, the Governor chose the wrong path. In doing so, he has made Connecticut the only state in New England that has refused housing refugee children. We are disappointed by his actions and demand that he reverse course and seek alternative sites to house these children. This would come at no cost to Connecticut taxpayers – all that would be required is for the Governor and his administration to be compassionate and lend a helping hand.

Children coming to our borders seeking aid, and our state’s response to the situation constitutes a real test of our values and our identity. So far, the Governor and his administration have failed – rejecting vulnerable children when they most need help is unacceptable and not aligned with the values that Connecticut residents embrace and aspire to.

An overwhelming number of Connecticut churches and individuals have reached out to us expressing a desire to house and help these immigrants. In fact, some Connecticut groups already are assisting Guatemalan children, adolescents and women who have arrived in our state fleeing violence and have cases pending in immigration court. The Governor's decision is out of step with the Connecticut community.

The Governor must change course – not only on this issue but also on the broader challenges facing the immigrant community in the state including the continued practice of detaining contributing members of our communities, despite the policies that have been recently enacted. There is a crisis in the immigrant community affecting many residents in Connecticut that need his urgent action and we urge that he act now on both fronts.”

The Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance will hold a rally and press conference to speak out on this issue next Tuesday, July 22. Details to follow.

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