



## **Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.**

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*Empowering refugees and immigrants since 1983*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 16, 2018**

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### **ECDC Statement on Presidential Determination**

**Arlington, VA** - As we await the release of the Presidential Determination on refugee admissions, the Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc. (ECDC) urges the administration to uphold America's heritage of welcome and its legacy of protecting refugees. America became home for newcomers from around the world long before enactment of the Immigration Act of 1980. Yet the United States Refugee Admissions Program has given families a chance to start their lives anew. Individuals and families who are resettled in communities large and small across this great country become contributing members of American society. While the number of admissions for refugees was set at 45,000 refugees for FY 2018, we have seen just over 18,327 refugees resettled as of August 6, 2018. ECDC joins the resettlement community in calling for the ceiling to be set at 75,000 for FY 2019.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 31 people are newly displaced every minute of every day. The total number of refugees has risen to 25.4 million, 52% of whom are children. Refugees do not leave their homes to seek a better life. They leave everything behind to stay alive, fleeing extreme violence and persecution and seeking refuge through durable solutions.

Reducing the number of refugees who are resettled in the United States has dire consequences for the refugees. They are unable to return to their countries of origin due to safety concerns, and countries of first asylum often lack the resources to provide permanent integration as a solution. This is why it is so important that resettlement remains a viable option for those who qualify.

We ask that a refugee admissions number be set that reflects the real need of refugees worldwide and reminds those across the country who have become Americans that they are valued. Protecting refugees is an American legacy worth preserving. ECDC, its partners, and the communities that support resettlement stand ready to welcome refugees throughout the coming year.

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*ECDC is one of nine resettlement agencies working in partnership with the Department of State and the Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide initial placement and support services to refugees being resettled in the United States. ECDC promotes cultural, educational and socio-economic development programs to assist refugees and immigrants in becoming productive members of their new homeland.*