

# NEIGHBORS FOR REFUGEES

December 6, 2024

Dear Neighbors,

[Neighbors for Refugees](#) is determined to welcome and support refugee families – both those soon-to-arrive and those who are already members of our communities – no matter what happens under the new Trump administration. Neighbors' financial and volunteer support helps refugee families meet their many (and likely increasing) challenges: **housing, food, learning English, employment, school enrollment, tutoring, navigating the health system,** and the like.

Because the “refugee world” will become far more challenging beginning January 20<sup>th</sup>, we are **accelerating our efforts to welcome new refugee families to Westchester** as quickly as we can. Your donations and volunteer talent are the vital means by which we will meet the challenges to come.

## ***How You Can Help***

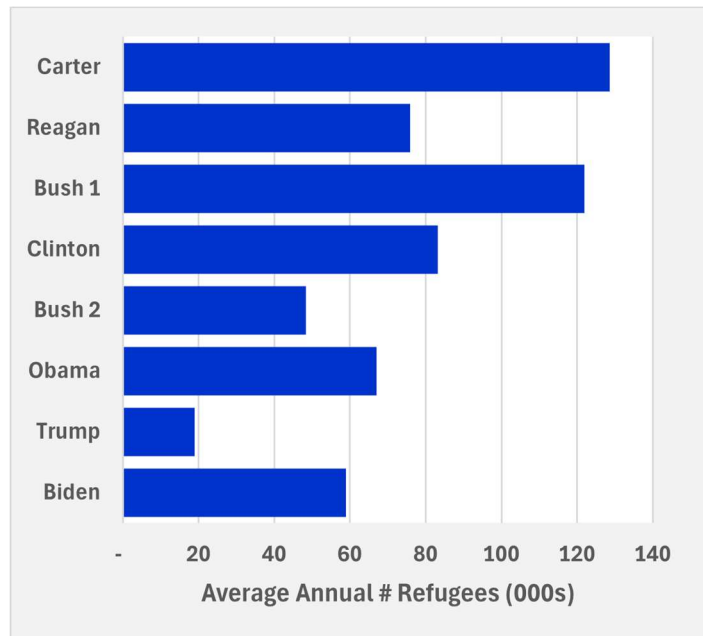
[Neighbors](#) plans to welcome and resettle as many refugees and asylees as possible in the coming months and years, and to help those who are already here to stay. You can do your part to help us help.

- **Donate/volunteer locally** - [support Neighbors](#) and other local organizations that work with refugees and asylum seekers to welcome new families and help those already in our communities to maintain their residency status, find work and affordable housing, educate their children, etc.
- **Donate nationally** – support organizations like HIAS, the International Rescue Committee, the ACLU and Southern Poverty Law Center, who will carry the fight against Trump's deportation efforts so that refugees and asylum seekers, especially those from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, can remain in the U.S. and not be forced to return to their countries.
- **Advocate** - write and/or call your representatives in Congress and in your State to urge them to pass a new immigration bill that would provide funding for more judges to process asylum claims. Ask them to pass a bill that would set a minimum number of refugees to be allowed to enter the U.S.

## ***What We Can Expect Under Trump 2.0***

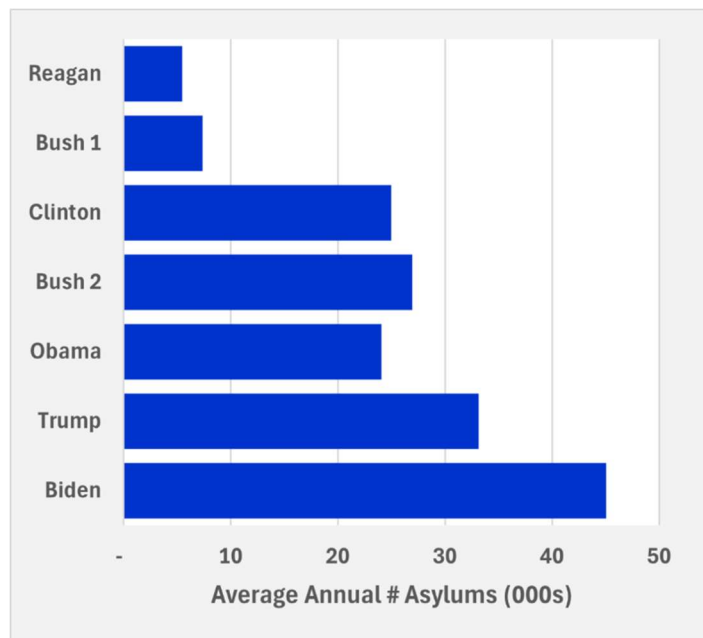
It's now a month out from the presidential election and it's clear from Trump's rhetoric and his nominations for the Departments of Defense and State, DHS, DOJ, and the FBI that the prospects for refugees and other seeking legal refuge in the U.S. are very challenging. That being said, [Neighbors](#) will do all we can to help those seeking a better life in America.

The **Refugee Act of 1980** established rules for both refugees and asylum seekers to enter the U.S. This law gives the **President the authority to limit the number of refugees** that can enter the country each year. The number of refugees that entered the U.S. has varied widely by administration. The graph shows the average annual number of refugees that entered the U.S. under each of the administrations since the Act went into effect. **The high numbers under Carter, Reagan and Bush 1 reflect evacuations of Southeast Asia after the**



**Vietnam War and the Cuban migration in the 1980s.** The numbers of refugees entering the U.S. has declined since then. That said, **the Trump administration allowed a record low number of refugees into the country.** Given presidential rhetoric during the 2024 campaign, we can expect the number of refugees allowed entry to again return to record lows. **We hope not to zero.**

While the President determines refugee quotas, the **granting of asylum is mainly determined by a factual adjudication** of applicants' asylum claims **by immigration judges.** Over the last few years, **the number of asylum grants has risen** (see graph), **but it has not kept pace with the dramatic increase in the number of people seeking asylum.** From initial asylum application to final adjudication before an immigration judge can take upwards of seven or more years, in part because there are far too few judges.



The good news is that during the first Trump administration, the number of asylum grants rose compared to the prior three administrations.

Unfortunately, **we do not expect the record numbers under the Biden administration to continue under Trump 2.0.** Again, the campaign rhetoric and Trump's efforts to kill the bipartisan immigration bill that would have increased the number of judges and sped up the adjudication of cases would suggest that the number of asylum grants will drop over the next four years.



In addition to the potential cutback in new arrivals, there will likely be a significant change in how those already here are treated. **During the last four years, hundreds of thousands of people have entered the U.S. on Humanitarian Parole** under such programs as **Operation Allies Welcome (Afghanistan), Uniting for Ukraine and CHNV** (the Advanced Travel Authorization Program for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans) among others.

**Humanitarian Parole allows a person to remain in the U.S. for only a *limited* period of time** (typically one or two years). The Biden Administration has established processes to grant permanent residency to these parolees. **It is likely that the Trump Administration will either end or significantly slow down these processes, requiring many parolees to leave the U.S. and seek refuge elsewhere.**

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While it is hard to predict the future, we remain hopeful that refugees and asylum seekers will still be allowed to enter the U.S. and those already here will be able to stay. That said, we cannot depend on hope. **[Neighbors](#) stands ready to welcome new families and provide financial assistance and support to families already here.**

Thank you for anything you can do to help.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank D. Pierson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and "P".

Frank D. Pierson  
V.P. Development