



**World Learning**  
EDUCATION | DEVELOPMENT | EXCHANGE

**Subject: Please support base funding in the FY2025 Budget of \$998,700 for transitional housing of refugees in Vermont**

On behalf of refugees (“New Vermonters”) and the non-profit organizations who support their resettlement across Vermont, we seek your support of \$998,700 in the FY2025 Base Budget for the General Fund to the State Refugee Office for grants to provide transitional housing of refugees. Continued state funding for transitional housing of incoming refugees is a smart investment for Vermont's future - stimulating economic growth, countering labor shortages, and addressing the challenges of an aging population – all of which align with Governor Scott's vision to revitalize communities and counter troubling demographic trends.

**Refugee resettlement highlights:**

Since 2022, the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC), Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC), and World Learning/SIT have supported over 290 refugees in Windham and Bennington counties, resulting in:

- Over 90 percent of refugees permanently settling in the state and 98 percent securing permanent housing within four to five months.
- 83 percent of job-seeking refugees employed in 49 local businesses, earning \$19.07 an hour, and contributing over \$3.7 million (and counting) in annual taxable wages.

Since 1980, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) in Vermont has resettled more than 10,000 refugees and served 220 Afghan Humanitarian Parolees and 90 Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees. In Federal FY2023 alone:

- 230 refugees and 58 Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees received support.
- Over 82 percent of refugees were employed in more than 30 businesses, contributing \$1.5 million (and counting) in taxable wages.

**FY2025 Budget Request and Rationale:**

Please support \$998,700 in the FY2025 Base Budget for the General Fund to the State Refugee Office for grants to provide transitional housing of refugees, which includes:

1. Approximately \$648,700 to support the transitional housing program in southern Vermont run by World Learning/SIT and ECDC. Such funding would support:
  - Approximately 200 new refugee arrivals to the region during Federal FY2025.
  - Up to 87 refugees at one time for 16-24 weeks (on average) in residence halls on the World Learning/SIT campus or in other transitional housing, as needed.
2. Approximately \$350,000 to cover direct housing costs across northern Vermont managed by USCRI. Such funding would support:
  - Approximately 320 refugees for up to 7 weeks in current and new short-term housing options, including hotels, motels, or short-term rental units (which can host 30-50 households at an average per night cost per household of \$250).

On behalf of Vermont’s refugees and the non-profit organizations and community volunteers who support them, thank you for considering this vital funding request.