



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan, Assemblymember Jon Rivera Announce State Budget Doubles Funding For Refugee Resettlement Agencies

SEAN M. RYAN April 9, 2022

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**SENATOR SEAN RYAN,
ASSEMBLYMEMBER JON RIVERA
ANNOUNCE STATE BUDGET DOUBLES
FUNDING FOR REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
AGENCIES**

Significant Investment in State Funding for Refugee Resettlement Will Help Agencies Address Immediate Needs and Prepare for the Future

ALBANY – Today, April 9, 2022, New York State Senator Sean Ryan and Assemblymember Jon Rivera announced that the state budget for FY 2022-2023 delivers a record \$6 million in funding for refugee resettlement agencies through the New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program (NYSESRP).

As the first state to provide funding to support refugee integration with the creation of NYSESRP in 2017, New York has been a leader in its commitment to refugees. Since 2017, NYSESRP has already provided \$10 million to support the work done by New York's refugee resettlement agencies – helping provide essential services such as housing, job training, and childcare – and speed up refugees' economic integration and progression to self-sustainability.

During budget negotiations, Senator Ryan and Assemblymember Rivera fought to boost funding for NYSESRP. The program received a then-unprecedented allocation of \$3 million for refugee resettlement in last year's budget. This year's \$6 million in funding is the largest annual appropriation in the program's history.

In Western New York, agencies such as Journey's End Refugee Services, Jewish Family Services, Catholic Charities, and the International Institute of Buffalo have served refugees fleeing danger in their home countries for decades. Their work was especially critical in the last year, as they resettled more than 500 Afghan refugees in the Western New York region alone. In addition, with New York having the largest Ukrainian-American population in the United States, the state is expected to see an influx of Ukrainian refugees in the wake of the Russian war on Ukraine. At the same time, resettlement agencies are continuing to rebuild from devastating federal cuts to refugee admissions from 2017 to 2020. The Biden Administration has worked to increase the refugee admissions cap to over 120,000, meaning more refugees will be coming to New York in the years ahead. This year's significant investment in state funding for refugee resettlement will help agencies address immediate needs and prepare for the future.

More than 90% of refugees coming into New York settle in Upstate communities. Since 2002, more than 16,000 refugees have come to the City of Buffalo, with thousands more settling in places such as Utica, Syracuse, and Rochester. Refugees have helped to stem population losses in Upstate New York communities, and have contributed to economic growth by opening small businesses and employing local workers. The support provided by NYSESRP has been essential to the refugee resettlement progress Buffalo has made.

Senator Sean Ryan said, "Thanks to the great work of refugee resettlement agencies, Buffalo and other cities through Upstate New York have welcomed thousands of families seeking refuge over the last two decades. Helping acclimate these new Americans into their new lives is an important task that not only helps them thrive, but also benefits our communities. New York has always been a leader in refugee resettlement, and this unprecedented funding for our state's resettlement agencies will help us remain one."

Assemblymember Jon Rivera said, "Western New York's economic resiliency is due in no small part to its vibrant immigrant population and their demonstrated entrepreneurial resolve. This record funding for refugee resettlement agencies through the New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program is not only a testament to the work of these agencies and the invaluable services they provide, but it will also

place them in a position of strength as they prepare to cater to our state's next generation of immigrant business owners and homeowners."

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