

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 184

Recognizing refugee women and girls on World Refugee Day.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 24, 2013

Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Ms. LANDRIEU, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Recognizing refugee women and girls on World Refugee Day.

Whereas June 20 was established by the United Nations as World Refugee Day, a global day to honor the courage, strength, and determination of women, men, and children who are forced to flee their homes under threat of conflict, violence, and persecution;

Whereas, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (in this preamble referred to as the “UNHCR”), there are more than 43,000,000 displaced people worldwide, including more than 15,000,000 refugees;

Whereas, according to the UNHCR, women and girls make up at least 50 percent of any refugee population;

Whereas refugee women and girls work every day, often under the most difficult circumstances, to care for their families, improve their prospects and build a better future;

Whereas refugee women and girls are often at greater risk of sexual violence and exploitation, forced or early marriage, human trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence;

Whereas refugee women and girls face barriers in accessing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities in countries of asylum;

Whereas, according to the UNHCR, more than 1,600,000 refugees,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of which are women and children, have fled the ongoing violence in Syria;

Whereas, according to the UNHCR, an estimated 2,700,000 people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been displaced, and an additional nearly 500,000 Congolese refugees have crossed the border into neighboring countries;

Whereas refugee women and girls are frequently victims of gender-based violence as their displaced status puts them at greater risk, coupled with intense social and cultural stigmas that make actual statistics extremely difficult to compile because underreporting is endemic;

Whereas refugee women and girls have a right to safe and equitable access to humanitarian assistance, including food and cooking fuel, shelter, education, health care, and economic opportunity;

Whereas the full and meaningful participation of refugee women and girls in community decision-making is critical

to the stability, security, and prosperity of entire communities;

Whereas the full participation of refugee women and girls in the design and implementation of assistance programs is vital to ensuring that those programs are equitable, efficient and successful;

Whereas the United States is a leader on protection of and humanitarian assistance for refugees, including refugee women and girls;

Whereas the United States has recognized the threat that gender-based violence can pose to refugee women and girls by working to strengthen efforts to protect them through the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security;

Whereas the United States is a leading advocate for the meaningful participation of refugee women in humanitarian programs, peace processes, governance, and recovery programs;

Whereas the United States provides critical resources and support to the UNHCR and other international and non-governmental organizations working with refugees around the world; and

Whereas the United States has welcomed more than 3,000,000 refugees during the last 30 years, who are resettled in communities across the country: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2                (1) supports the goals and ideals of World Ref-

3        ugee Day;

1           (2) reaffirms its commitment to the protection,  
2 well-being, and self-reliance of refugee women and  
3 girls and their families in United States humani-  
4 tarian policy, programs, and diplomacy and recog-  
5 nizes the work of the United States Department of  
6 State and the United States Agency for Inter-  
7 national Development to this end;

8           (3) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that  
9 humanitarian assistance programs supported by the  
10 United States provide safe and equitable access for  
11 women and girls and are designed and implemented  
12 with their full participation;

13           (4) reiterates the importance of targeted pro-  
14 grams for refugee women and girls that prevent and  
15 respond to gender-based violence, support self-reli-  
16 ance, and promote and develop their participation  
17 and leadership skills;

18           (5) recognizes the work of the Bureau of Popu-  
19 lation, Refugees, and Migration of the Department  
20 of State, the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the  
21 Department of Health and Human Services, the  
22 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of the  
23 Department of Homeland Security, nongovernmental  
24 organizations, advocacy groups, and communities

1 across the United States in welcoming and resettling  
2 refugees in the United States;

3 (6) celebrates the invaluable contributions that  
4 refugee women and girls make to their families and  
5 communities; and

6 (7) encourages the people of the United States  
7 to observe World Refugee Day with appropriate pro-  
8 grams and activities.

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