

Link to final letter:

https://rcusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/RCUSA-Organizational-Sign-On-Letter_-_Operation-PARRIS-February-6-2026.pdf

February 6, 2026

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned 83 national, state, and local organizations, write to address the administration's Operation "Post-Admission Refugee Reverification and Integrity Strengthening" (PARRIS), in the context of escalating, chaotic, and deadly enforcement actions by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in Minnesota and across the country. On January 9, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) formally [announced](#) Operation PARRIS, subjecting already-vetted, recently-resettled refugees, who had fled violence and persecution and found safety in the United States, to "intensive verification." This followed the publicization of a November 2025 [internal USCIS memo](#) that ordered a "review and re-interview" of all refugees who entered via the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) between January 20, 2021 and February 20, 2025 – approximately 233,000 individuals.

Since January 9, armed Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents have been going door-to-door arresting and detaining members of the [Minnesota refugee community](#) – including children and the elderly – and transferring them [out of the state](#) to Texas without due process or access to legal assistance. Refugees who assert their legal right to refuse ICE entry into their homes without a judicial warrant are then receiving letters calling them to appear at a local ICE office, where they are immediately detained – without explanation, any notice of a reason to deport them, or due process. Others have had their cars followed or been picked up on their way to work or school, making many refugee community members terrified to even leave the house. Plaintiffs have sought relief from the harms of this operation through a [new lawsuit](#) filed January 24, 2026, and a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order on January 28, 2026.

Once detained in Texas, refugees are frequently put through intensive questioning without adequate opportunity to prepare or consult with a lawyer or accredited representative. Many have been forced to answer the same questions they were already asked when they initially demonstrated to the U.S. government they were refugees or on their green card applications; now they face systematic barriers in accessing relevant records and documents, while their attorneys or representatives (if they have access to counsel) are often left in the dark about their transfer or release. Refugees released by ICE were left on the streets of Texas, usually without money, identification, or any way to get home. Other refugees have been forced to stay in detention in Texas for a week or more, with no information about why they are being detained or when they will be released.

We urge Congress to:

1. Hold the administration accountable to **terminate Operation PARRIS**, end these harmful enforcement actions, and halt any actions that would terminate refugee status, remove protections, stop processing of green card applications or employment authorization, or retroactively review entire cohorts of resettled individuals.

2. **Prohibit any federal funds** from being used for any operation that allows for indiscriminate refugee arrests, family detention, or detention of minors.
3. Demand **full transparency** for any refugees arrested, detained, interviewed, or removed through oversight letters, public hearings, private briefings, etc.
4. **Support a full congressional investigation into ICE and CBP use of force methods**, including deadly force, racial profiling, and enforcement operations in locations based on political retribution. At minimum, Congress should refuse to increase FY 2026 CBP or ICE funding, reduce reliance on punitive enforcement methods, and strengthen accountability for abuses by immigration enforcement officers.
5. **Speak out publicly** and do everything in their power to safeguard their refugee communities.

Operation PARRIS and USCIS’s directive to “review and re-interview” refugees who have already been adjudicated and resettled in the U.S. is cruel, illegal, and a massive waste of limited resources. All refugees in the U.S. have gone through an extremely extensive vetting and screening process and are some of the most vetted travelers in the world. Former U.S. government officials who served across multiple administrations submitted [this amicus brief](#) in the *Pacito v. Trump* case challenging the administration’s current refugee ban; the brief details the extensive security checks that USCIS already conducts of the applicants’ biographic and biometric data against both classified and unclassified databases in coordination with several government agencies in the U.S. intelligence community. This lengthy and comprehensive vetting process both confirms the applicant’s identity and surfaces any potential security concerns.

Operation PARRIS is a fundamental violation of basic due process and our promise of a safe place to call home. The November 2025 memo not only ordered the halt of USCIS processing of form I-485 for refugees applying for lawful permanent residence,¹ but also made clear that the review and re-interview will target refugees who still have refugee status and those who have received green cards.² Forcing someone who has spent years in limbo overseas to re-litigate the violence and persecution that forced them to flee their homes re-unearths trauma for little discernible reason. Instead, USCIS is using limited available resources relitigating, second-guessing, or re-doing the agency’s own work to interview and vet refugees through the refugee re-interview process. See public stories of impacted refugees and communities below:

- **Selamawit Mehari** is a single mother of three from Eritrea who entered the U.S. as a refugee in 2023. On January 13, as her 13 year-old son cried in the background, federal agents showed up at her apartment in St. Paul, shackled her, and arrested her. A day later, chained at the wrists, waist, and ankles, Ms. Mehari was flown to Texas for “intensive” interrogation. In Texas she was issued prison garb and locked in a cold room

¹ The Refugee Act is clear that refugees *shall* be considered for a green card after one year in the United States.

² The “initial focus” of Operation PARRIS is on 5,600 resettled refugees in Minnesota who still have refugee status and have not yet received their green cards.

with other women. After being questioned for hours, she was released on January 17 without any money or identification. A gold chain she was wearing had been confiscated. ([Source](#))

- **Ta Eh Do Lah** was admitted to the U.S. as a refugee from Burma in November 2024 alongside her husband and three children. She has a congenital heart condition. She has no criminal history and filed for a green card on the date she was eligible (one year after arriving in the U.S.). In the summer of 2025 she gave birth to her fourth child, a baby who is now five months old. On January 10, ICE agents entered her apartment, led her outside, and arrested her. At the time of her arrest Ms. Lah was breastfeeding her baby. She was rapidly transferred to Texas, and missed an appointment with her cardiologist because she remained detained on January 17. On January 23, a court ordered her release, noting: “there is something particularly craven about transferring a nursing refugee mother out-of-state.” ([Source](#))
- **U.H.A.**³ was admitted to the U.S. as a refugee in 2024. He is a young adult who lives with his parents and siblings in Minnesota. He has never been charged with or convicted of a crime or ever placed in removal proceedings. He was stopped by immigration officers without justification while driving to work on January 18. He was immediately handcuffed and detained. The officers never presented a warrant. As of January 24, U.H.A. remained in detention. ([Source](#))

By every metric, refugees have enriched and benefited American communities and made our country stronger – economically, culturally, and spiritually. Refugees bring enriching diversity; they are small business owners, tax contributors, and job creators. The data is unequivocal, at the [local](#), [federal](#), and [even international](#) level. An HHS report found that over a fifteen year period, refugees and asylees brought in over 124 billion in fiscal revenues more than they received in services (the survey replicated a Trump administration [report](#) with a similar result).

There has never been a more important time to speak out in support of comprehensive, meaningful measures to rein in DHS’s unaccountable – and increasingly violent – campaign of enforcement, deadly force, and detention. While documented targeting of refugees has been limited to Minnesota thus far, there is every reason to believe that the administration will expand its operation, and it is critical to speak out before that inevitably happens. Our collective organizations denounce this administration’s abuses and culture of impunity that have led to an unprecedented string of unconstitutional activity.

Thank you for your urgent attention to these issues – and please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

National
#AfghanEvac

³ [U.H.A. v. Bondi](#) Plaintiff.

Afghan-Americans.org
Afghans For A Better Tomorrow
African Communities Together (ACT)
African Human Rights Coalition
ANAR
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
ASISTA
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Victims of Torture
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
Church World Service
Climate Refugees
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition on Human Needs
Cocina Libre
Community Supported Film
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
Franciscan Action Network
Global Refuge
Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees
Hands United
HIAS
Human Rights First
International Refugee Assistance Project
Jesuit Refugee Service USA
JRS/USA
Justice in Motion
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mobile Pathways
MPower Change Action Fund
Muslim Advocates
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Partnership for New Americans
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Paloonkey
Refugee Advocacy Lab
Refugee Congress
Refugee Council USA
South Asian American Justice Collaborative
Stop AAPI Hate
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Chamberlain Network

The Workers Circle
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ
USAHello
VECINA
Welcome With Dignity Campaign
Welcoming America
Witness at the Border
World Hazara Council USA
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

State/Local

African Community Center
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California
Ayuda
Building Community in New Hampshire
Catholic Charities of Springfield, MA
Denver Institute of Urban Studies
Empowering Communities Globally
Hearts & Homes for Refugees
HIAS Pennsylvania
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Immigrant Defenders Law Center (ImmDef)
International Institute of New England
IRIS: Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services
Jewish Family Service of Metrowest MA
JFCS East Bay
Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA)
Miami Valley Immigration Coalition
Oasis Legal Services
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist Leadership
Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success
REACT DC
Refugee & Immigrant Assistance Center
Refugee Action Coalition of Colorado
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
Welcoming Alliance for Refugee Ministry WARM
Worcester RISE for Health