

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CELEBRATING UTAH'S**
2 **HISTORY OF WELCOMING REFUGEES**

3 2024 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Dan N. Johnson**

6 Senate Sponsor: Todd D. Weiler

7 Cosponsors: Brett Garner

8 Gay Lynn Bennion

10 **LONG TITLE**

11 **General Description:**

12 This resolution celebrates Utah's rich history as a welcoming state for individuals
13 fleeing persecution.

14 **Highlighted Provisions:**

- 15 This resolution:
- 16 ▶ celebrates Utah's history of welcoming refugees.

17 **Special Clauses:**

18 None

20 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

21 WHEREAS, as of 2023, the United Nations estimates there were over 36 million
22 refugees in the world, more than at any other time since World War II, and nearly half of these
23 refugees are children;

24 WHEREAS, refugees are people displaced from their home country who are unable to
25 return to that country due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, nationality,
26 religion, political opinion, or membership in a particular group;

27 WHEREAS, the United States participates in a resettlement program that is critical to
28 global humanitarian efforts and reflects the United States' values, strengthens global security,

29 and alleviates some of the burden placed on frontline host countries;

30 WHEREAS, refugees who enter the United States are among the most vetted
31 individuals to enter this country and are subject to extensive screening checks including
32 in-person interviews, biometric and biographic data checks, multiple interagency checks, and
33 medical screenings;

34 WHEREAS, once refugees resettle in the United States, refugees contribute to their
35 new communities by starting businesses, paying taxes, and sharing their cultural traditions;

36 WHEREAS, these new residents are workers, students, entrepreneurs, parents,
37 neighbors, and community leaders who contribute more than they consume in state-funded
38 services, including schooling and healthcare;

39 WHEREAS, Utah boasts a rich history of multicultural blending, dating back tens of
40 thousands of years when the first people lived within the boundaries of the state, continuing
41 into the 1700s when explorers from Spain and France ventured into the region, and later, when
42 pioneers settled in Utah, it became a haven for those seeking religious freedom and an escape
43 from persecution;

44 WHEREAS, over the years, the state has continued to be a beacon of welcome for
45 families and individuals fleeing violence, with an acknowledgment of at least 106 different
46 languages spoken by families throughout the state;

47 WHEREAS, refugees contribute enormously to Utah's economy as members of the
48 workforce, as homeowners, as business owners and entrepreneurs, as taxpayers, as consumers,
49 and as essential workers filling gaps in Utah's workforce shortage and strengthening the local
50 economy; and

51 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the state of Utah has affirmed its support for refugee
52 families in bipartisan, unanimous legislation in 2021, 2022, and 2023:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
54 Governor concurring therein, celebrates Utah's history as a welcoming state for refugee
55 families.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor declare their

57 support for the resettlement of refugees in Utah and call upon other local governments and
58 communities to join in supporting a strong national effort to resettle the world's most
59 vulnerable refugees.