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Subject: Draft Response to Dan Brown (Aiken Standard) re: Refugee Resettlement

Below is my proposed draft response to Dan that is consistent with previous responses made to media inquiries and the backgrounder. Please let me know if you have any edits, revisions or additions. – Karen

Dan,
Thank you for contacting the Department with your inquiry regarding refugee resettlement in South Carolina. The Refugee Resettlement Program is a federal program administered by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, an Office of the Administration for Children and Families within the federal department of HHS. As this is a federal program, the administration of the Refugee Resettlement Program is completely federally funded. South Carolina has participated in the Refugee Resettlement Program since 1975. The South Carolina Department of Social Services has been designated by the Governor of South Carolina as the agency responsible for the administration of the Refugee Resettlement Program in South Carolina. However, the Department is not involved in the admittance or placement of refugees. Rather, before any individual is resettled in the United States as a refugee, he or she is vetted by the federal government and only individuals approved by the federal government are admitted into the program for placement. Through the two resettlement organizations located in South Carolina, Lutheran Services and World Relief, refugees are resettled in South Carolina. The placement of refugees is determined by the resettlement organizations.

The Department of Social Services is aware of the Aiken County resolution and is monitoring developments at both the state and national level regarding refugee resettlement. However, at this time, the Department will continue to provide services and/or benefits to qualifying refugees who are resettled in Aiken County by either of the resettlement organizations located within the state.

If you have any other questions, please let me know.

All the best,
Karen

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