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Pisarik, HollyHollyPisarik@gov.sc.gov
Date: 7/14/2016 2:18:16 PM
Subject: RE: Syrian refugees

Draft response below in red.

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From: Jackson, Gavin [mailto:gjackson@postandcourier.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 14, 2016 11:25 AM
To: Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov>
Subject: Syrian refugees

Karen,

Hey, this is Gavin Jackson with The Post and Courier, I hope this email finds you well.

I'm working on a story for tomorrow about Syrian refugees being resettled in South Carolina. I noticed U.S. State Department data that shows the resettlement of 22 Syrian refugees has occurred in South Carolina since June 15. I wanted to confirm these numbers with DSS, get a better understanding of if these are just individuals or if some are families, if DSS is doing anything additional regarding these individuals versus other refugees that resettle in the state, if there have been any issues with resettling these individuals, how many more Syrian refugees are expected to relocate to the state this year, and which part of the state they have primarily resettled to.

Gavin,
Thank you for reaching out. As I shared with you, there are two resettlement organizations operating in South Carolina: Lutheran Services Carolina which is based in the Midlands and World Relief which is based in the upstate.

Each fiscal year, the resettlement organizations are approved to resettle individuals from a defined list of national origins. Lutheran Services is approved to resettle individuals of Syrian national origin this federal fiscal year. World Relief is not. It is our understanding from Lutheran Services that Syrians will not be among the nationalities approved for resettlement in South Carolina next fiscal year.

With respect to your specific questions, 22 individuals of Syrian national origin were resettled in South Carolina during the month of June 2016. DSS cannot publicly disclose case specific information on refugees resettled in the state. However, we can confirm that three families, each with minor children, comprise the 22 individuals from Syria who were resettled last month. DSS has learned from Lutheran Services Carolinas that 26 additional individuals of Syrian national origin are anticipated to be resettled in the state during the remainder of the federal fiscal year, but arrival dates and details have not been finalized for most of those individuals. Unless refugees have preexisting ties to another community in the state, refugees, including Syrian refugees, resettled in South Carolina by Lutheran Services are resettled in Midlands to assure proximity to services and programs aimed at helping them achieve economic stability and self-sufficiency.

Please let me know as soon as you can, thanks!

Gavin

Gavin Jackson
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