



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Highland Gets Its First Syrian Refugee; Three More Placed in Victorville**  
*Refugees continue to be placed in San Bernardino County without public notification*

(Torrance, CA, July 8, 2017) – Unvetted Syrian refugees continue to be settled in San Bernardino County communities without any public notification by local government officials. In 2017, the City of Highland received its first refugee from Syria while three more Syrians were placed in Victorville bringing that city's total to 26.

At least 27 Syrian refugees have been placed in San Bernardino County.

**“The public has a right to know when refugees are being placed in their communities and local government officials have an obligation to notify them,”** said Joseph Turner, executive director for American Children First.

Federal law states that the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (which falls under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), "shall consult" with state and local governments and voluntary non-profit agencies "concerning the sponsorship process and the intended distribution of refugees among the states and localities before their placement...." (See 8 U.S.C. § 1522(a)(2)(A)).

The law is very clear. Before refugees can be placed in our communities the federal government is required to consult with state and local governments.

If the government is not following the law then it is incumbent upon local governments to hold them accountable.

Unfortunately, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors and various city councils throughout the county have failed to inform the public about these refugee settlements.

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Here is a list of San Bernardino County communities that have received refugees since January 1, 2016:

Apple Valley:	9 (Iraq)
Colton:	3 (Iran)
Fontana:	3 (Honduras/El Salvador)
Highland:	1 (Syria)
Montclair:	1 (Pakistan)
Ontario:	1 (El Salvador)
Redlands:	1 (Burma)
San Bernardino:	2 (El Salvador)
Upland:	2 (Iran)
Victorville:	26 (Syria)

American Children First obtained this publicly available information by viewing the data online at the Refugee Processing Center (<http://www.wrapsnet.org/>). The RPC is a site run by the United States Department of State.

**“If our organization can access this information then why aren’t our elected officials using this tool to keep residents informed about refugees being placed in their communities,” asked Turner.**

*Joseph Turner is the Executive Director of American Children First and author of the “American Children First” initiative. He previously founded the anti-illegal immigration group Save Our State and also authored the City of San Bernardino Illegal Immigration Relief Act (IIRA) in 2005. The IIRA served as the model for dozens of local jurisdictions, most notably Escondido (CA), Farmers Branch (TX), and Hazleton (PA). Farmers Branch and Hazleton had their ordinances struck down by their respective Courts of Appeals and the Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal for each case. Turner can be reached at: [info@americanchildrenfirst.org](mailto:info@americanchildrenfirst.org).*