



June 15, 2022

Senator Jay Costa
Democratic Leader
Room: 535 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203043
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3043

Senator Vincent Hughes
Minority Chairman, Appropriations Committee
Room: 545 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203007
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3007

Re: Incorporating SB 1176 (Assistance for Ukrainian Refugees) Into the Final Budget

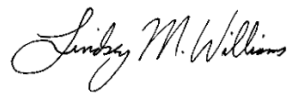
Dear Leader Costa and Chairman Hughes,

As we start finalizing the budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year this month, we crossed a somber milestone: June 3rd marked 100 days since Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale military invasion on the sovereign nation of Ukraine. Since then, more than 14 million people have fled their homes—a number that's greater than the population of this Commonwealth. Nearly 7 million who left their homes have become refugees across other parts of Europe and the United States. While fighting in some parts of Ukraine has tempered, meaning some of those people displaced by war have been able to return, tens of thousands unable to safely return home are arriving in the United States.

Agencies and non-profits are doing their part to help families resettle across Pennsylvania and this budget season is a prime opportunity to help those organizations providing aide to the refugee crisis. That's why we're urging that SB 1176 be incorporated into the final budget. This bill would use \$2 million in state funds to provide assistance to Ukrainian refugees that make it to Pennsylvania. This money will allow us to provide faster and more flexible ways to invest in services. For example, it can support any Ukrainian, regardless of legal status. It can provide assistance as long as necessary, whereas federal assistance for people resettling from other countries can be capped anywhere between 30-90 days. Furthermore, this money can help arrange for as broad an array of services as we as state officials see fit to meet local needs: examples include providing for more immediate needs like short term housing or offering capacity to local partners to manage volumes of donations – such as increased numbers of volunteers or items like clothing or personal care products.

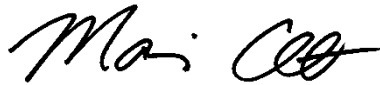
In May, Leader Costa and Senator Williams had the amazing opportunity to sit down with several of southwestern Pennsylvania's regional Refugee Service Providers to hear about the work they've been doing to help current refugee families in the Pittsburgh region and how they're preparing to welcome potential Ukrainian refugees. That meeting really underscored the role the General Assembly has to play in helping provide stability during a tumultuous time for refugee service providers and the people they serve. Please make this funding request a priority and if you have any follow up questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



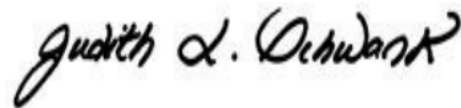
Senator Lindsey M. Williams

38th Senatorial District



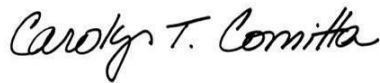
Senator Maria Collett

12th Senatorial District



Senator Judith L. Schwank

11th Senatorial District



Senator Carolyn Comitta

19th Senatorial District



Senator Tina Tartaglione

2nd Senatorial District



Senator Amanda Cappelletti

17th Senatorial District



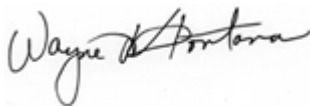
Senator John Kane

9th Senatorial District



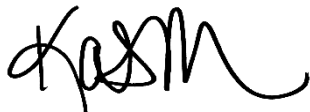
Senator Lisa Boscola

18th Senatorial District



Senator Wayne D. Fontana

42nd Senatorial District



Senator Katie J. Muth

44th Senatorial District