

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 12, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Secretary Blinken,

We request additional information on the State Department's "Refugee Travel Loans" issued by the Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to the United Nation's International Organization for Migration (IOM). It is important taxpayer funds are being used responsibly and the State Department is making every effort to collect on the loans within a reasonable amount of time.

We are also concerned with a possible conflict of interest among resettlement agencies operating as debt collectors. While some of these organizations claim the United States has a moral obligation to resettle thousands of refugees every year, the organizations making this claim have a vested financial interest.


There is a severe lack of transparency surrounding Refugee Travel Loans and we request the following information to ensure proper oversight of taxpayer funds. It has been reported from 1952 to 2002 the IOM issued \$1,020,803,910 in "transportation" loans and recovered only \$584,219,453. Please respond to the following questions with as much detail as possible. We also request you notify the United Nation's International Organization for Migration (IOM) and any partner resettlement agencies to retain all records reflecting the amount of Refugee Travel Loans furnished and repaid to the U.S. Government.


- Any and all records reflecting the number of Refugee Travel Loans furnished by the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) per year; the number of travel loans that are defaulted upon per year; and the amount of money written off per defaulted loan.
- Any and all records reflecting the number of Refugee Travel Loans furnished using USG funds per year; the number of such travel loans that are defaulted upon per year; and the amount of money written off per defaulted loan.
- Any and all records reflecting the amount of Refugee Travel Loans repaid to the federal government by resettlement agencies responsible for collecting the loans.

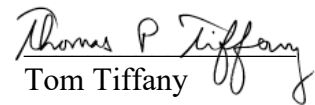
- Please provide a copy of the promissory note refugees sign if they decide to receive a Refugee Travel Loan.
- Please outline the State Department's policies and procedures for collecting Refugee Travel Loans.
 - If the State Department does not have official policies and procedures in place, please specify what policies and procedures are in place for the United Nation's International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the following loan collection agencies: Church World Service, Immigration & Refugee Program (CWS), Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society, Episcopal Migration Ministries (DFMS), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), International Rescue Committee (IRC), US Refugee Travel Loan Program, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (IRSA), Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB), World Relief Refugee Services (WRRS).


We look forward to your response and please do not hesitate to contact our offices if you have any other questions.

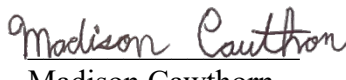
Sincerely,



Lance Gooden
Member of Congress

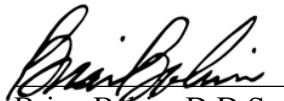

Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress

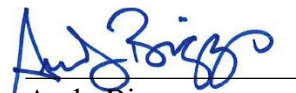

Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress

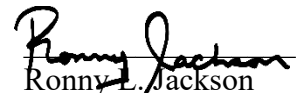

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

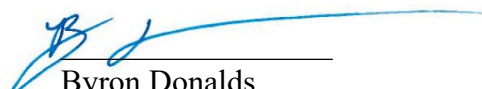

Madison Cawthorn
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan (SC-03)
Member of Congress

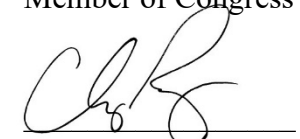

Brian Babin, D.D.S.
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