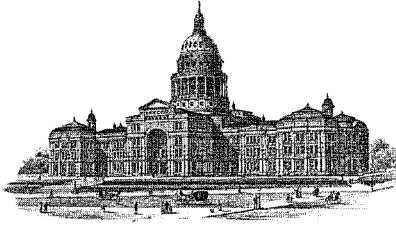


TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



December 16, 2015

The Honorable Loretta E. Lynch
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

GENE WU
DISTRICT 137

Dear Attorney General Lynch,

As you may be aware, Texas Governor Abbott and Chris Traylor, Executive Commissioner of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission recently ordered refugee resettlement organizations to stop accepting and assisting Syrian refugees.

These orders/directives are unprecedented — Texas has never before interfered with the resettlement of any refugee group. Past court decisions and federal laws and regulations give states no ability to overrule the federal government on the issues of foreign affairs, which includes immigration, naturalization, and acceptance of refugees. I believe that these directives unlawfully interfere with federal programs, and are possibly a violation of federal law.

Houston is home to 70,000 refugees from 79 different countries, and has resettled more refugees than any other city in the United States. Many of these refugee families reside in the House district that I represent in southwest Houston; along with numerous organizations offering programs, services, resources, and support. I believe that the state's directives will likely subject people in my community to needless harassment, discrimination, and even the fear of violence.

In light of this, I am requesting that the U.S. Department of Justice conduct a formal investigation to see if any of the actions taken by Texas state agencies have violated the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980; or violated the Constitution of the United States, or any other applicable federal law by targeting and ordering discriminatory action against a group of people based on their ethnicity, religion, or country of origin.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gene Wu', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

State Representative Gene Wu

cc:
Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
Congressman Al Green

