



Feds spend nearly \$20,000 to settle every refugee

By [PAUL BEDARD \(@SECRETSBEDARD\)](#) • 6/8/16 11:20 AM

Federal taxpayers are on the hook for nearly \$20,000 just to settle each refugee and asylum seeker, who are then immediately eligible for cash welfare, food stamps, housing and medical aid, according to a [new report](#) on the "refugee industry."

The report provided federal budget figures showing that the government spends \$19,884 on each refugee the U.S. takes in.

And that number is set to jump if President Obama gets his way and brings in an additional 10,000 Syrian refugees in this year.

The [report from the Negative Population Growth Inc.](#) said that the U.S. is currently accepting about 95,000 refugees and asylees. That is in addition to the over 500,000 legal and illegal immigrants coming to the U.S.

It focused on the industry created to accept the \$1.8 billion in federal support to help refugees settle and sign up for further cash awards from Uncle Sam. The refugee agencies get a small portion, or about \$1,875 per refugee they help. The rest goes to the United Nations, which helps to determine eligible refugees, and state agencies.

The State Department spends about \$1.28 billion, and Health and Human Services another \$609 million.

From the report:

Two federal agencies sustain the refugee industry:

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), in the State Department, supports a major share of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' budget. In FY2014 this support came to \$1.28 billion, making the U.S. by far the largest donor to the UNHCR. Some of this money is supposedly used to expand the capacity of countries outside the U.S. to absorb refugees – potentially reducing the share of refugees coming to the U.S. Despite this, more refugees come to the U.S. than to the rest of the world combined: 67% of UNHCR-referred refugees settled in the U.S. in 2014.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), enrolls refugees in a broad range of welfare programs – for which refugees automatically qualify after 30 days. ORR spent about \$609 million in FY2015. Nearly half of this goes to states and voluntary resettlement agencies to help defray cash, medical assistance, and employment-related assistance for newly arrived refugees. The balance funds formula grants to states and NGOs for English language and employment-related training and the Unaccompanied Alien Children Program.

Once settled, the refugees are eligible for further federal support and most take it, said the report.

– 47 percent of refugee households received cash assistance.

- 74 percent of refugees were on food stamps.
- 56 percent are on Medicaid.
- 22 percent receiving housing assistance.

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