



For Immediate Release:

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Albuquerque Interfaith and Partner Organizations Pack City Council Chambers in Favor of \$250,000 Appropriation to Humanitarian Refugee/Asylee Crisis

45 speakers including Archbishop Wester and leaders of Jewish, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Lutheran and other parishes provide supportive public comments. Two individuals speak in opposition.

Albuquerque, NM - Albuquerque's City Council chambers reached its capacity of 241 persons tonight as Albuquerque Interfaith, the New Mexico Dream Team, Catholic Charities, Congregation Albert, Lutheran Family Services, Indivisible Nob Hill, and others spoke in support of a resolution to appropriate \$250,000 toward providing humanitarian support for migrants traveling through Albuquerque to sponsors across the country.

To date, the broad operation in Albuquerque has been led by volunteers, community organizations and donations from the community. More than 2,200 asylees have been welcomed in Albuquerque in recent months. Albuquerque Interfaith itself has taken in nearly 700 refugees/asylees and is welcoming its 15th bus this Friday, May 10th. Asylees have been provided medical examinations, food, access to showers, clothing and toiletries, humane places to sleep, and connections by phone to their sponsors. But for operations like Albuquerque's, asylum seekers would be released into the streets of El Paso, which is already overwhelmed and at capacity.

Members of Albuquerque's humanitarian response to the refugee/asylee crisis have met with our state's federal delegation, although very little can be done without Comprehensive Immigration Reform and a cooperative administration. The Trump administration is creating "willful chaos" by instructing ICE not to communicate with volunteer operations about when refugees are being transported by bus, how many will be arriving, and other helpful details.

Language within R-19-143 was left flexible to provide direct support to the non-profit humanitarian response. Community organizations have been at the forefront of the crisis and are most informed about where financial aid would be best spent. One of the greatest needs identified for the appropriated funding has been hours spent connecting with the myriad of volunteers who are offering their time.

For more information, please contact Albuquerque Interfaith organizers Joaquin Sanchez at (505)268-3991 or Javier Benavidez at (505)315-3596.

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