Refugee Related Legislation/Policies to Watch and Track!

- In the Spring, Support **Refugee Appropriations Funding** for Office of Refugee Resettlement for the next year. FY2013 received funds to maintain services and assist higher Unaccompanied Minors.
- President’s FY 2014 budget recently released, with some increases. Will work to increase in Senate and maintain stable funding for refugees in House.
  - **Strengthening Refugee Resettlement Act, H.R. 651;** Rep. Ellison (D-MN-5)
    Admits refugees as Legal Permanent Residents, Expands Resettlement & Processing and case management, provides for a domestic resettlement emergency fund.
  - **Refugee Protection Act, S. 645 & H.R. 1375;** Sen. Leahy (D-VT) and Rep. Lofgren (D-CA-14)
    Eliminates 1 year filing deadline, protects refugee families, gives authority to designate groups for resettlement (as in “Lautenberg” Agreement)
    Elevates ORR within the HHS structure, allows formula state funding to include projected arrivals, helps with data collection & assistance to secondary migrants.

Refugees in S-744

- In its introduced form, removes the 1 year filing deadline for asylum, helps keep refugee families together, provides legal help to stateless people, would allow Administration to designate groups of humanitarian concern who are persecuted, increases U visas for victims of crimes who cooperate with police, provides waivers for immigrants over 60 for citizenship exam, continues to improve Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant visa application process.

  POSITIVE SUPPORT+: In May 7 amendments:
  --provides work authorization for aliens eligible for status as VAWA self-petitioners or V/U visas while applications are pending,
  --provides for basic humanitarian protections for children in immigration enforcement actions affecting their parents;
  --clarifies battered women under VAWA are eligible for public housing assistance,
  --adds “Little Dreamers Amendment” to allow children under age 18 at time they apply for legal residence and bought to US under age 16 to access the 5 year path to citizenship,
  --removes religion as basis for denial in visa processing
  --enhances protections for female detainees and children

  POTENTIALLY DAMAGING TO VULNERABLE GROUPS: In May 7 amendments:
  --prevents asylees from maintaining status if return
  --requires add’l security screening
  --strikes designation of certain refugees
  --strikes protection for stateless people in the US
  --strikes Office of Legal Access Programs
  --delays asylum and student visa changes until review of intelligence/immigration failures in Boston Marathon terrorist attack is submitted to Congress