



February 27, 2017

The Rabbinical Association of Greater Kansas City affirms its solidarity with all refugees that have been resettled in the Greater Kansas City area and extends a welcoming hand to all refugees seeking resettlement in America through our country's comprehensive resettlement program.

We read in the Torah that God loves the stranger (Deut. 10:18), and we likewise are commanded to love the stranger as well (Deut. 10:19, Lev. 19:34). We uphold this sacred obligation even and especially when risk or unease threatens to dissuade us. So it is written in the Babylonian Talmud (Bava Metzia 59b):

It has been taught: Rabbi Eleazar the Great said: Why does Torah warn 36 times—and some say 46 times—about [wronging] the stranger? Because wickedness is [part of] human nature [and may tempt us to turn away].

And so it has been codified in the Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat 228:2):

One must take special care against treating the stranger unfairly, whether physically or financially, because one is warned about this in several places.

Far too often in our own history have Jews been turned away in our times of greatest need. Therefore, in line with our Jewish responsibilities and convictions, we join hands with others in our local and national communities in support of efforts to receive and support refugees.

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