



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Hon. Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: July 17, 2014

CONTACT: Alexander Marion
Press Secretary (315) 448-8044

**MINER SENDS LETTER TO PRESIDENT OBAMA,
OPENS THE DOORS TO SYRACUSE FOR
MIGRANT CHILDREN**

*Miner Seeks Partnership with Federal Government to Address
Humanitarian Needs*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – Mayor Stephanie A. Miner today sent a letter to President Barack Obama formally extending her offer to use the City of Syracuse as a site for relocating Latin American children who have crossed the Southern border.

“Our nation is rightly proud to point to the famous promise at the entrance to New York Harbor: ‘send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,’” said **Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner** in her letter to the President. “Here in Syracuse, we stand ready to live up to that promise.”

The City of Syracuse is well-known as a City welcoming to new immigrants and it currently is home a large population of refugees from across the globe.

The City of Syracuse has been visited by representatives from federal agencies seeking to review a site for possible placement of migrant children. Federal officials have made it clear to Mayor Miner that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will pay for and provide all services for children through its network of grantees. Before the children would be placed in Syracuse, they would undergo a well-child exam, tuberculosis testing, and a mental health screening. Children stay an average of 35 days while awaiting a hearing before an immigration magistrate and do not attend local schools. More information on this can be found on a page on the City’s website, www.syr.gov/unaccompaniedchildren.

The full text of Mayor Miner’s letter can be found below:

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*Hon. Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500*

Dear President Obama:

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your help to create a partnership between Syracuse and the federal government to help mitigate the humanitarian crisis of the unaccompanied minors arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Like many Americans, people in Syracuse are engrossed by the plight of the children arriving at our border. As a city with a rich immigrant tradition we feel strongly these children should be welcomed and protected. Toward that end, Syracuse would welcome the opportunity to provide shelter while the larger global issues causing them to leave home for such an arduous journey are resolved.

While the Department of Health and Human Services has already completed a partial assessment of a potential site in Syracuse, we stand ready to expedite this process and work through any issues so we can accomplish the goal of providing a safe and welcoming site. The federal officials have been open and transparent as we work through these issues yet we feel we can move faster to mitigate this crisis. Indeed, the desire to help exists across the entire Syracuse community. The leadership of the religious, academic, and non-profit community have all expressed to me a commitment to be part of a holistic solution to mitigate the humanitarian crisis we are all seeing unfold. With your administration's commitment we can quickly and efficiently work through the practical problems with a goal of providing shelter and compassion to these victims of circumstance.

In recent years, the Syracuse community has been part of the successful network the U.S. government has relied on for the placement and settlement of refugees. We are proud of the service network that has developed here in Syracuse to serve displaced persons from all corners of the globe and we stand ready to continue serve in this effort. Our city's immigrant history

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very much defines us and we would be proud to continue that tradition as our nation faces this latest immigration crisis.

We hope you will accept our offer. The exodus of these young people to our borders is particularly tragic. Only terror could force a child to leave home and walk hundreds of miles to a strange place. Our nation is rightly proud to point to the famous promise at the entrance to New York Harbor: "send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me." Here in Syracuse we stand ready to live up to that promise and attend to the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free." We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor*

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