

Dear Pima County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Karina Jurado, and I am a resident of Pima County. I am contacting you today with regard to the impacts of the Reconciliation Package (HR 1) on our newest refugee neighbors. At a time when we should be focused on how to best integrate the newest members of our community, we are instead focused on how to ensure their survival given dramatic changes to critical lifeline services.

Refugees in Arizona are resilient- rebuilding their lives and strengthening our communities as they start small businesses, address food scarcity by starting community gardens, and help to meet critical workforce needs in healthcare and other sectors. The limited and temporary services that they receive upon arrival are a lifeline to stabilization and a safe and humane integration process.

I write today to ask that Pima County support the positive impact of refugees on our local communities and invest in programs that will ensure economic stability and prosperity for our entire community. I urge you to support:

- Emergency funding for community food banks to address immediate needs
- Emergency funding for refugee support programs that deliver trusted guidance, basic needs assistance and accredited legal services: Refugee serving organizations are a trusted source of information, basic needs coordination, and also are DOJ accredited to deliver immigration legal services but require support for rapid scaling and capacity building to meet the moment.
- Pima County to work with AZDES on English language, workforce and volunteer programs and AZDOT on state IDs/driver's license renewal to remove unnecessary barriers and streamline processes as outlined in the Addendum Agenda

I am a supporter of Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, who helps lawful permanent residents apply for U.S. citizenship through affordable naturalization services. We also offer free English and Citizenship/Civics classes in partnership with Pima Community College for those who qualify. Our goal is to guide and support individuals on their path to becoming proud United States citizens.

The people are core to the success of Arizona's economy, and the state thrives when we invest in the residents of our state. Please take action to ensure that refugees are

supported as valuable long-term members and contributors of our Pima County community.

Sincerely,

Karina Jurado

Matt Felix

From: P Van Ness [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 10:48 AM
To: COB_mail
Subject: PLEASE PROTECT REFUGEES' ACCESS TO FOOD

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This message and sender come from outside Pima County. If you did not expect this message, proceed with caution. Verify the sender's identity before performing any action, such as clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

Dear Chair and Members of the Pima County Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in strong support of Pima County's efforts to protect refugee families and other vulnerable residents from the harmful effects of H.R. 1 and related reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

After being founded by my Church (Saint Francis in the Foothills) 22 years ago, **Iskashitaa Refugee Network** (IRN) has worked to strengthen Tucson's food system through hands-on education, community partnerships, and sustainable local food providing initiatives that reduce food loss, food waste, and hunger. Learning from over 57 ethnic groups, Iskashitaa's approach to food security and community integration is both unique and effective. Refugees and resident asylum seekers are not only receiving food — they are actively **harvesting, gleaning, and redistributing** it to others in need through IRN.

Each year, refugees with Iskashitaa glean between **60,000 and 150,000 pounds of backyard fruits and vegetables**, and more than **half is donated** to local food banks, shelters, and tribal partners — reaching far beyond the refugee community. This work embodies the spirit of self-reliance, contribution, and community-building that Pima County stands for.

We recognize that SNAP is meant to be supplemental. However, without this crucial support in their first years of resettlement, refugees struggle to meet their families' basic needs while learning English, developing marketable skills, and finding employment. The loss or reduction of SNAP benefits at this stage could severely hinder their ability to become self-sufficient and integrated members of our community. Barriers to becoming legal permanent residents (green card holders), increased eligibility requirements for SNAP benefits all increase the possibility of evictions of Pima county residents.

We urge you to take all possible actions to advocate with DES and state leadership to mitigate the impact of H.R. 1 and protect access to essential food assistance for all Pima County residents — including our newest neighbors.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to a compassionate, food-secure Southern Arizona.

Sincerely,

Paula Van Ness

Resident of District 2 & Iskashitaa Refugee Network Donor

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Paula Van Ness

Matt Felix

From: Tracy Daub <tracy@stmarksaz.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:31 AM
To: COB_mail
Subject: support for protecting refugee access to food assistance

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Thank you for your leadership and commitment to a compassionate, food-secure Southern Arizona.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Tracy Daub
Interim Pastor, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
Tucson, AZ

Matt Felix

From: Judith Billings [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:35 AM
To: COB_mail
Subject: H.R. 1

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Support for Protecting Refugee Access to Food Assistance

Dear Chair and Members of the Board,

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For 22 years, **Iskashitaa Refugee Network (IRN)** has worked to strengthen Tucson's food system through hands-on education, community partnerships, and sustainable local food providing initiatives that reduce food loss, food waste, and hunger. Learning from over 57 ethnic groups, Iskashitaa's approach to food security and community integration is both unique and effective. Refugees and resident asylum seekers are not only receiving food — they are actively **harvesting, gleaning, and redistributing** it to others in need through IRN.

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Thank you for your leadership and commitment to a compassionate, food-secure Southern Arizona.

Sincerely,

Judith Lopez Billings, Ph.D.

Matt Felix

From: CA Early [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:58 AM
To: COB_mail
Subject: Support for Protecting Refugee Access to Food Assistance

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To: Pima County Board of Supervisors

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Thank you for your leadership and commitment to a compassionate, food-secure Southern Arizona.

Sincerely,

Christina Early

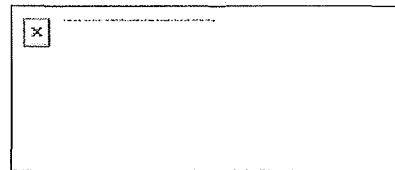
Board Chair Iskashitaa Refugee Network

Precinct 91committee person LD18

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] , TucsonRefugees@gmail.com



www.iskashitaa.org

www.facebook.com/iskashitaarefugeenetwork

Matt Felix

From: ilean Rivas [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 12:07 PM
To: COB_mail
Subject: Support for Emergency Funding for Refugee Assistance and Food Security

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CAUTION: This message and sender come from outside Pima County. If you did not expect this message, proceed with caution. Verify the sender's identity before performing any action, such as clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

Dear Pima County Board of Supervisors,

My name is **Ilean Rivas**, and I am a resident of Pima County. I am writing to express my strong support for the County's consideration of emergency funding to assist refugees who are losing access to critical benefits due to changes in the Reconciliation Package (HR 1).

As the **daughter of immigrants**, this issue is deeply personal to me. My family came to this country seeking safety and opportunity, yet we never qualified for any public benefits. Growing up in poverty taught me firsthand the struggles many families face in trying to meet basic needs while striving to build a better future. Those experiences shaped my understanding of how vital community support and equitable access to resources can be.

Now, as a **single mother of three children**, one of whom has special needs, I know how quickly circumstances can become overwhelming when assistance is limited. The loss of SNAP benefits for newly arrived refugees will not only affect those families but also ripple through our local communities—impacting schools, employers, and service providers who care deeply about the well-being of every resident.

Refugees in Tucson and across Arizona are incredibly resilient. They start small businesses, fill critical workforce gaps, and enrich our neighborhoods with culture and compassion. To continue supporting their success and stability, I urge the Board to approve:

- **Emergency funding for community food banks** to address immediate food insecurity.
- **Emergency funding for refugee support programs** that provide legal guidance, case management, and essential basic needs assistance.
- **Collaboration with AZDES and AZDOT** to reduce barriers related to language access, employment readiness, and state identification renewals, as outlined in the Addendum Agenda.

I am a proud supporter of **Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona (CCS)**, which helps refugees and lawful permanent residents achieve independence through affordable immigration legal services and free English and Citizenship classes. These programs truly change lives and strengthen the entire community.

Refugees make Pima County stronger. By investing in their well-being, you are investing in the economic stability, diversity, and future of our entire region. I sincerely thank you for considering this urgent and compassionate support.

**Sincerely,
Ilean Rivas**

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Ilean Rivas.

Tucson, Arizona

Matt Felix

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