



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
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**Testimony of Mary Truong, Executive Director**  
**Office for Refugees and Immigrants**  
**Joint Committee on Ways and Means**  
**February 15, 2022**

Good morning, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Vice Chair Donato, Vice Chair Friedman, and the members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means for the opportunity to address you today and to answer your questions about the Office for Refugees and Immigrants' Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

I also would like to express my gratitude to Governor Baker, Lieutenant Governor Polito, and Secretary Sudders for their proposal of over \$1M in state funding in FY23 to continue support for our Citizenship for New Americans Program (CNAP), which will provide services to more than 2,000 refugees and immigrants. This appropriation will also support our Financial Literacy for Newcomers (FLN) program to provide much needed financial training to 300 newcomers. With your help, we can continue to make an impact in people's lives.

The data from last year FY21 shows how your support had helped many of our refugee and immigrant clients. CNAP services provided to 3,687 Massachusetts residents through ORI's network of 18 providers across the state including the Cape and Islands. In addition, we have conducted a total of 92 online FLN workshops, serving over 450 refugees and immigrants in Lynn, Dorchester, Hyde Park, West Springfield, Worcester, Attleboro, Lawrence, and New Bedford with the support of ten FLN providers and 16 subject matter experts.

ORI has been working diligently to implement the \$20 M earmark received as part of the FY22 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Spending Bill, \$12 M of these additional funds are earmarked to the resettlement agencies that serve Afghan evacuees. The funds will be distributed shortly amongst resettlement agencies that hold a Refugee Case Management contract with ORI. The remaining \$8 M is earmarked to the Immigrant Family Services Institute, Inc. (IFSI) which will assist eligible Haitians who arrive to the U.S. after July 29, 2021. ORI is also finalizing a contract with IFSI and funds will be available to them to use shortly as well.

In closing, I would like to say that it is an honor to work on behalf of the state to integrate newcomers into the Commonwealth. I will answer any questions you may have.

Mary Truong, Executive Director