

HOUSE BILL 21

By Griffey

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;  
Title 5; Title 6 and Title 7, relative to refugee  
resettlement.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 38, is amended by adding  
the following new sections:

**4-38-105.**

Sections 4-38-101 – 4-38-104 only apply to refugees received before the  
effective date of this act or in accordance with § 4-38-107.

**4-38-106.**

Except as provided in § 4-38-107, the governor and each local  
government within this state do not have the authority to voluntarily accept, and  
shall refuse to consent to receive, any refugees for purposes of resettlement  
within this state. The courts of this state have no jurisdiction over policy  
decisions made by the general assembly regarding refugee resettlement in this  
state.

**4-38-107.**

(a) A local government may propose to consent to receiving refugees for  
purposes of resettlement:

- (1) By the adoption of a resolution or ordinance by a two-thirds  
(2/3) vote of the local government; and
- (2) If the resolution or ordinance specifies the number of refugees  
to be received and each location for resettlement.

(b) If a local government approves a resolution or ordinance under subsection (a):

(1) The local government shall provide notice of approval to each member of its legislative delegation; and

(2) A member of the general assembly may propose legislation authorizing the local government to consent to the resettlement of refugees within the boundaries of its jurisdiction in accordance with the adopted resolution or ordinance. Legislation proposed under this subdivision (b)(2) must authorize the local government to request a moratorium on refugee resettlement activities in accordance with § 4-38-104. Legislation proposed under this subdivision (b)(2) must specify the amount of state funds authorized for the purpose of assisting refugees covered by the legislation. The Tennessee department of labor and workforce development shall provide the members of the general assembly with a good faith estimate of the number of jobs Tennesseans may lose to the refugees as a result of the passage of legislation proposed under this subdivision (b)(2) prior to the legislation being considered by the general assembly.

(c) For purposes of consenting to the resettlement of refugees under this section, a local government shall not consent unless legislation proposed under subdivision (b)(2) is approved in each house of the general assembly by a two-thirds (2/3) vote and signed into law by the governor.

(d) Any local government approval of a resolution or ordinance regarding refugee resettlement, or legislation proposed under subdivision (b)(2), is valid for a one-year period, the start of which must be specified in the resolution,

ordinance, or legislation as the effective date of the resolution, ordinance, or  
legislation.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.