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Office of Refugee Resettlement

UPDATE

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families

December 1991

Reauthorization

Senators Kennedy and Simpson introduced on November 7, 1991, S. 1941, the "Refugee Resettlement Reform Act of 1991". The bill contains several key provisions, including:

1) Creates an Administration on Refugee and Migration Affairs. The Administrator will report directly to the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

2) Requires the Administrator, "to the maximum extent practicable", to make grant awards and notices of reimbursement to the States within 90 days after enactment of appropriations.

3) Establishes a system of case management in certain States.

It is expected that the Senate Judiciary Committee will consider this bill in the early Spring.

Appropriations

President Bush signed into law on November 26, 1991 the FY 1992 appropriation (P.L. 102-170) for the Department of Health and Human Services. ORR was appropriated \$410.6 million. Congress allocated the funds as follows:

\$234.2 million for Cash/Medical/Administration

82.9 million for social services

39.0 million for matching grant programs

5.6 million for preventive health

48.8 million for targeted assistance

Congress directed that of the \$234 million for CMA, \$116 million may not be obligated before September 30, 1992. This translates into a delay in reimbursement to the States for CMA expenditures.

As with the FY 1991 appropriation, Congress included report language allocating 15% of social services

funds for discretionary grants and 10% of targeted assistance funds for grants to communities impacted by refugees, such as Laotian Hmong, Cambodians and Soviet Pentecostals.

Dr. Nguyen Van Hanh Appointed as New ORR Deputy Director

On September 27, 1991, HHS Secretary Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., announced the appointment of Dr. Nguyen Van

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Hanh as Deputy Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), Administration for Children and Families.

"Dr. Van Hanh brings to the Department a wealth of experience in the area of refugee resettlement. I am most pleased that he has accepted this position," Secretary Sullivan said. "His extensive experience and dedication will be an enormous asset to our work on behalf of those who enter this country as refugees."

Prior to his appointment, Dr. Van Hanh served as the Governor's community representative to the Asian community during the administration of California Governor George Deukmejian. Dr. Van Hanh was responsible for representing the Governor on a wide range of socio-economic, educational and cultural issues involving the diverse Asian Pacific communities of California.

Dr. Van Hanh is no stranger to the refugee resettlement program. From 1976 to 1981, he served concurrently as Director of the California Office of Refugee Affairs and Coordinator of the Governor's Refugee Task Force. In these positions, Dr. Van Hanh assumed responsibility for management and coordination of all refugee resettlement activities at the State level. He is credited with the initial establishment and operation of the State refugee program during the early years of the inflow of the Southeast Asian refugees. His direct contacts with county officials, voluntary agencies, community leadership, and Federal representatives earned him respect and praise for his commitment and dedication.

Other State-level appointments included positions as Economist and Energy Resources Specialist in the Department of Water Resources and Finance and Market Development Manager in the California Environmental Affairs Agency. Prior to 1975, Dr. Nguyen Van Hanh was a Specialist at the Nuclear Research Institute, taught at the National Military Academy, and served as Director General of Planning for economic development for the former Government of South Vietnam.

Dr. Van Hanh's educational accomplishments parallel that of his professional career. In 1990, he was a part-time lecturer in Asian-American Studies at the University of California, Davis. From 1985 to 1990, he served as a part-time faculty member, teaching engineering economics in the Department of Civil Engineering and lecturing on Southeast Asian adaptation in the U.S. at the Ethnic Studies Center at the California State University,

Sacramento. He holds a Ph.D in Economics, a M.A. in Economics from the University of California at Davis, as well as a M.S. in Agronomy, and a B.S. in Agricultural Science (magna cum laude) from the University of Florida. His extensive professional and managerial background is an asset to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, while he serves on the Citizens Advisory Committee. Dr. Van Hanh has been appointed to serve on the Committee since 1990 by former USDA Secretary Clayton Yeutter.

Dr. Van Hanh has authored several papers and published articles on economic development in developing nations, especially in Indochina, and on refugee resettlement in the U.S. He has also served on the Board of Directors of a number of non-profit community-based organizations providing assistance to refugees from all over the world who have come to Northern California in the past decade.

Commenting on Dr. Van Hanh's appointment, Jo Anne B. Barnhart, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, said, "Dr. Van Hanh is very well respected in the refugee community. He knows what services can help refugees to become self-sufficient citizens of this country."

"Dr. Van Hanh's experience at the State level will make an important contribution to our program operations. He is intimately familiar with California's refugee resettlement program, which accounts for almost 50 percent of all refugees who have resettled in this country," said Chris Gersten, Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Working closely with the Director and his executive staff since joining ORR, Dr. Nguyen Van Hanh has maintained liaison with the Office of Ambassador LaFontant Mankarious, the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, coordinated the ORR California Task Force, and handled program issues related to health services, former re-education camp detainees, and Mutual Assistance Associations. He is also responsible for certain administrative and technical matters on refugee economic self-sufficiency as requested by the Director.

1991 ORR Targeted Assistance Discretionary Grants

Pursuant to the program announcement, these were awarded in four categories - Crime Victimization, Employment, Health, and Education. A total of 26 States sub-