

## Petition Backgrounder: Refugee Travel Loans

For many years, refugee advocates have called for amendments to the Immigration Loans Program, which provides new immigrants and refugees with loans to cover the costs of their relocation to Canada. **Refugees make up 98% of Immigration Loans Program users**, and the burden of repaying these loans has often hindered their ability to settle in Canada.

In February, Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada amended the program to discontinue the practice of charging interest on loans and extend the loan repayment period. While these changes were commendable, the continued requirement for refugees to fund their travel to Canada will still leave many with significant financial burdens.

### KEY FACTS

- **76% of Government-Assisted Refugees** and **32% of Privately Sponsored Refugees** used income support or social assistance to repay the loan.
- **54% said repaying the loan made it difficult to pay for necessities** like food and housing.
- **51% said repaying the loan was stressful** for them and their families.
- **24% of recipients quit language training** to repay the loan. **22% quit school and other training.**

*Join the call to ask the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to continue with this progress and fully exempt resettled refugees from travel loan repayment!*

### Instructions:

1. **Print the petition!** The official petition can be printed double sided or on individual pages.
2. **Collect signatures!** Encourage those in your community to sign and circulate the petition in their networks.
3. **Mail petition to CPJ!** Send your completed petition to Citizens for Public Justice (501-309 Cooper Street Ottawa, ON K2P 0G5) **by May 18, 2018.**

### Rules for Petition:

- Original **signatures must be handwritten** directly on the petition, along with addresses.
- Each **petitioner must sign their own name** only.
- There is **no minimum age** requirement for anyone signing a petition.
- Petitions **may only be signed by residents or citizens** of Canada.

*For more information on travel loans see the CCR's [Infographic](#) or visit [cpj.ca/half-welcome](http://cpj.ca/half-welcome). For questions contact Deborah Mebude at [deb@cpj.ca](mailto:deb@cpj.ca).*