

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TO: Mack McLarty
Mark Gearan
Joan Baggett
Pat Griffin
Marcia Hale
Alexis Herman

FROM: Carol H. Rasco *CHR*

SUBJ: Refugee program in Miami

DATE: February 18, 1994

In November or December we discussed the closing of the Miami Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) closing. Now that HHS's ORR is actually carrying out the action I asked that they prepare the attached fact sheet for you to have.

In addition to the information on the sheet the following is the employment picture within the office:

The current director is 74 years old and is interested in retirement (!). Six other employees are eligible for retirement. The five remaining employees are bilingual and can be placed locally in Social Security offices and HHS is actively working on jobs for them.

Please contact me or Donsia Strong of my staff if you have further questions. Also, the contact in HHS is Lavinia Limon who is the Director of the HHS ORR.

Thank you.

**FACT SHEET
OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
MIAMI OFFICE**

The federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is closing its Miami office. The Miami office is a small operation that in recent years has provided information to refugees and entrants who drop in.

Initial reception and placement of Cuban and Haitian entrants is provided by the Community Relations Service of the federal Department of Justice in conjunction with local voluntary agencies.

It is no longer necessary to collect information about arriving Cubans and Haitians at an ORR field facility, since data that once was collected by the Miami office of ORR is now available to ORR centrally from federal agencies charged with the responsibility for reception and placement of Cuban and Haitian entrants.

The Florida State Refugee Resettlement program, which is funded by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, recently has reorganized its local service delivery to improve access by refugees and entrants. ORR is confident that the improved service delivery system in Miami will provide refugees and entrants not only with any information they may wish to know about obtaining services but in most instances will be able to directly assist them.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
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FEB 11 1994

Ms. Donsia Strong
Senior Policy Analyst
Domestic Policy
Old Executive Office Building, Rm. 224
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Donsia:

As we discussed earlier, we believe that the ORR Miami facility should be closed.

The Miami facility housed the headquarters of the Refugee program in the early 1970s, when there was large-scale influx of Cubans into south Florida. Despite subsequent shifts in refugee arrival patterns, and a diminished and changed role, the Miami facility has continued to operate. Today, the facility employs 12 people, down from an historical high of nearly 200. Its role has been reduced to providing information and referral to walk-in clients and maintaining information about those individuals.

The Miami facility performs functions that are no longer necessary for the federal government to perform. The information collected by the ORR Miami facility is available, probably more completely from other sources. The Florida State Refugee program, funded by ORR, recently has reorganized to improve service delivery. We are confident that the limited services functions performed the ORR Miami facility are now being provided by the Florida Refugee program.

The current director of the Miami facility is a Cuban veteran of the Bay of Pigs with strong Republican ties. There have been several earlier attempts to close the Miami facility, which were vetoed by the Reagan and Bush White House.

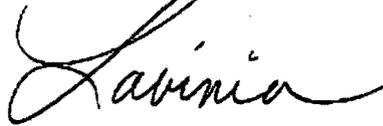
ORR expects no resistance to closing the Miami facility at this time. The current director of the Miami facility is 74 years old and is interested in retirement and supports closing the facility.

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Six other employees of the facility are eligible for retirement. The 5 employees not eligible for retirement are bilingual and can be placed locally in Social Security offices.

Enclosed is a fact sheet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lavinia".

Lavinia Limon
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement