GOP governors who embrace refugees deserve conservative support

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You might initially think the 17 Republican governors choosing to accept a small number of refugees under the Trump administration's new refugee resettlement guidelines are simply compassionate conservatives. But no, according to one *Townhall* columnist, they're "RINO squishes all too happy to put foreigners over the citizens who elected them to office."

Fox News host Tucker Carlson echoed this sentiment, warning, "The last thing many struggling communities need is more low skilled migrants who may be great people but need a lot."

Carlson's guest, American Majority's Ned Ryun, took it one step farther, saying, "This is how red states become blue and how America ceases to be America."

Yawn. It's fair for Americans to have some concerns about refugee resettlement — no, it doesn't make them automatically racists — but this level of hysteria is baseless. It amounts to little more than needless alarmism.

First, we're not talking about a wave of millions of refugees pouring into the country en masse … not even close. The Trump administration has, sadly, limited the number of refugees the United States can accept to just under 20,000. So, between the 17 Republican governors, not to mention all of their Democratic counterparts, they're simply agreeing to each take on what, less than 1,000 refugees at most?

This isn't a very intimidating "invasion." And allowing a few thousand refugees, who aren't even granted the right to vote, to enter red states will hardly mean "America ceases to be America."

It's still fair for everyday Americans and conservative pundits to have earnest concerns about safety when we're accepting refugees from war-torn countries, some of which are riddled with terrorism. But a sober analysis of the facts reveals that there's no substantial security threat posed to the U.S. by refugee resettlement.

The Cato Institute's Alex Nowrasteh has found that "the chance of an American being murdered in a terrorist attack by a refugee is about 1 in 3.86 *billion* per year." As the *Washington Examiner* editorial board has noted, "All refugees admitted through our immigration system are subject to extensive vetting and for good reason. Refugees create almost no problems in the United States, even though the U.S. has for many years led the world in refugee admissions."

As far as the economic argument against accepting refugees goes, it is to some extent true that refugees at first rely on government handouts more than other types of immigrants — we budget a lot of money for them actually. But does this mean they are a threat to struggling communities, as Carlson says?

No, not really. In the long run, refugees still have a net positive economic impact. A 2017 report from inside the Trump administration even found that "refugees brought in $63 billion more in government revenues over the past decade than they cost."

The facts simply don't support the idea that a few thousand refugees pose an economic threat to low-income communities. Nowrasteh told me in an interview, "Refugees make an economically positive contribution to the United States and the local communities where they settle – which is especially true in cities and towns in the midst of a population decline."

So no, Republican governors such as Massachusetts's Charlie Baker and Arizona's Doug Ducey aren't "[putting] foreigners over the citizens who elected them" by accepting refugees. They're simply doing the right thing to help people fleeing tyrants and terrorists abroad.