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STATE OF FLORIDA

# Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL

TALLAHASSEE 32301

BOB GRAHAM  
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 27, 1985

CONTACT: Steve Hull, Press Secretary  
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## GRAHAM ANNOUNCES FLORIDA TO JOIN LAWSUIT SEEKING REFUGEE FUNDS

TALLAHASSEE--Governor Bob Graham today said that the federal office of Management and Budget had improperly impounded \$3.03 million of the money Congress provided this year for Florida counties with large numbers of refugees needing social services and joined in a suit in federal court to get the money released.

Graham, on behalf of the state of Florida, joined in the lawsuit which was filed in San Jose federal district court by six California congressmen whose districts are also affected by the action of the Office of Management and Budget.

A total of \$11.5 million of the \$89 million provided for counties nationwide with refugees has been unlawfully impounded, according to Graham.

"Funding for refugee assistance, for services such as programs to provide jobs for these individuals, should be a federal responsibility," said Graham. "Despite the burdens placed upon Florida by the influx of Mariel refugees, the federal government has never met its full obligation to the people of Florida. And now, despite the fact that Congress

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provided these funds, the Office of Management and Budget has withheld the money. This is yet another example of how the federal government has failed to assume its responsibility for those refugees to whom it has granted refuge."

According to Graham, the OMB's action will mean reductions this year in refugee funding as follows: Broward County, \$159,047; Dade County, \$2,762,210; Hillsborough County, \$49,982; and Palm Beach County, \$66,072.

If successful, the Governor said, the suit will regain the funds for those four Florida counties -- along with other affected local governments outside of Florida -- as Congress intended.



STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR BOB GRAHAM

September 27, 1985

Mr. Joseph Wright, Acting Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Old Executive Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Wright:

Florida strongly protests the action of the Office of Management and Budget ignoring the June decision of the Comptroller General directing the release of disputed funds for refugee targeted assistance programs. Following the GAO's opinion that the Administration's interpretation of the 1985 Continuing Resolution was counter to the intent of Congress, Secretary Heckler verified that HHS would comply with the Comptroller's decision. State plans were submitted and obligations incurred to continue operation of employment and training related programs designed to effect the economic self-sufficiency of refugees.

Forty-four counties in twenty states heavily impacted by refugee populations depend on the targeted assistance funds which are now being unlawfully impounded. OMB's arbitrary action overriding the Comptroller General's decision is an unreasonable abrogation of federal responsibility.

Florida opposes the OMB policy and is preparing to join other affected parties seeking injunctive relief to prevent reversion of the \$11.5 million in question. Florida demands immediate release of the targeted assistance funds in compliance with the June 28, 1985 decision of the Comptroller General.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Graham".

Governor