

Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McCarthy and Chairman Rogers:

We are writing to express our concerns about the continuing threat of terrorism and to urge that the Congress exercise greater oversight and authority over the refugee resettlement programs.

The Director of National Intelligence, the Director Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Secretary of Homeland Security have each testified recently that they cannot properly screen refugees coming from Syria and the surrounding regions for national security threats.

There is no duty of the federal government more important than ensuring the protection of the American people. We believe that we would fall short of that duty if the Congress fails to exercise greater authority over the Administration's refugee resettlement program. We see this as an important national security concern.

It is prudent and in the best interest of the American people that language be included in the upcoming FY 2016 appropriations legislation to restore Congressional oversight and authority over the refugee program. Specifically we would ask that language be included in the final bill that would:

1. Prevent federal funds from being used to admit to the United States refugees from Syria, the Middle East and North Africa until the following conditions are met:
 - a. Federal Immigration, law enforcement and national security agencies put in place processes to ensure that refugee and related programs are not able to be co-opted by would be terrorists;
 - b. That such process and programs are provided to the Congress in both classified and public formats;
 - c. That a longer-term monitoring process be put into place for those admitted to the U.S. as refugees; and
 - d. That no federal funds may be used for refugee travel to the U.S. or any U.S. resettlement until Congress has passed by joint resolution a bill that specifically approves funding for such purposes.
2. Permit U.S. funds to continue to be used to provide for the safety of refugees overseas, including housing, food and medical aid.

ISIS has repeatedly declared that they would infiltrate the refugee community that is leaving the Middle East and flooding into Europe. The November 13 attacks in Paris appear to have been a fulfillment of that threat. We cannot allow the refugee program to serve as a Trojan Horse threat to American national security.

We look forward to working with you to make this a priority in end of the year legislation over the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

Brian Babin
Member of Congress