



**TONY DALE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
DISTRICT 136

November 16, 2015

The Honorable John Cornyn  
United States Senate  
417 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn:

Along with the rest of the civilized world I am saddened and gravely concerned by the recent Daesh attacks in Paris, Beirut and their apparent downing of a Russian airliner in the Egyptian desert. There is no doubt that these radical Islamists desire to perpetrate similar attacks on American soil. I believe that current federal policies have created an environment where such an attack here is increasingly likely.

As you know, the Texas/Mexico border has not received sufficient fortification by successive administrations. To my knowledge the Rio Grande Valley Sector continues to be the most porous sector of the US/Mexico border. In Texas alone over 4,000 people are apprehended weekly after making illegal crossings. They come from nations around the world to include countries with a nexus to terrorism such as Syria, Libya, Iraq, Iran and others. You know the extent of this problem, so I will not belabor the point.

As it relates to the President's current policy of accepting refugees from Syria I speak on behalf of many Texas when I plead for your direct and swift intervention. The Paris attack is instructive as initial reports indicate that at least two of the terrorists were Syrian refugees legally admitted to the European Union. According to a September 13, 2015 Texas Tribune article titled, "Texas Could See Increase in Syrian Refugees", Texas has received over 123 Syrian refugees since October 2014. The Obama Administration has announced plans to accept 10,000 Syrians over the next year and traditionally more refugees are settled in Texas than any other state. The decision to accept these refugees and where to relocate them is a federal decision. It makes no sense to implement this policy. Please do whatever you can to stop this program.

I've spoken with an official at Homeland Security about the vetting process for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan. I am not confident that the screening process is robust enough or thorough enough to prevent potential terrorists from entering the country via this process. I am not alone in this assessment. According to the Associated Press, FBI Director James Comey recently told the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that gaps still remain in the process by which the United States screens refugees entering from Syria. He made it clear that there are risks entailed in carrying out the President's policy.

I confirmed with Congressman John Carter's office that once a Syrian refugee is cleared they will be issued the following immigration documents by the United States Department of State and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services These documents include, but are not limited to, the I-590, I -602, I-730 and the I-765. As a result of being issued these and other federal immigration documents these Syrian refugees will be eligible to apply for Texas drivers licenses. I have confirmed this with the Texas Department of Public Safety.

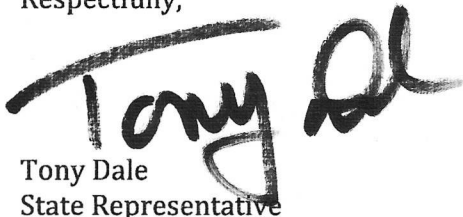
Under existing Texas statute any individual issued the immigration documents listed above is eligible to obtain the driver's license. The Texas drivers licenses will make them eligible to gain employment enter federal facilities and board commercial aircraft. I have not yet found a way to prevent this and the legislature does not meet again until 2017. Any new law to change current Texas statute would not take effect until late 2017. I filed a bill in the 84<sup>th</sup> session that would have fixed aspects of this, but it failed to get a hearing.

While the Paris attackers used suicide vests and grenades it is clear that firearms also killed a large number of innocent victims. Can you imagine a scenario were a refugees is admitted to the United States, is provided federal cash payments and other assistance, obtains a drivers license and purchases a weapon and executes an attack? Can you foresee a scenario where such a person obtains employment at a vendor servicing Austin Bergstrom International Airport or DFW Airport and then participates in an attack like what appears to have happened with the Russian airliner?

To date federal law enforcement organizations have arrested 70 individuals in the United States for activities related to Daesh. Furthermore the FBI has stated that there are over 900 open investigations in all 50 states.

I am asking for you to stop more Syrians from being admitted to the United States and specifically to Texas. The risk outweighs the reward in admitting these individuals. Either we act in a way that protects Americans from Daesh or their desire to attack us will be made a reality. As they say in their own words, "American Blood Is Best And We Will Taste It Soon".

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Dale". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The first name "Tony" is written in a larger, bolder script, and "Dale" is written in a smaller, more fluid script to its right. A long horizontal stroke underlines the "Tony" part of the signature.

Tony Dale  
State Representative  
Member, Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee