# Calls to Suspend Syrian Refugee and Other Recent Anti-Muslim Statements by Government Officials

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#### Governors:

- AL: Gov. Robert Bentley(<u>11/15/2015</u>)
  - "After full consideration of this weekend's attacks of terror on innocent citizens in Paris, I will oppose any attempt to relocate Syrian refugees to Alabama through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. As your Governor, I will not stand complicit to a policy that places the citizens of Alabama in harm's way."
- AZ: Gov. Doug Ducey(11/16/2015)
  - "Given the horrifying events in Paris last week, I am calling for an immediate halt in the placement of any new refugees in Arizona."
- AR: Gov. Asa Hutchinson(11/16/2015)
  - "This is not the right strategy for the United States to become a permanent place for relocation."
- FL: Gov. Rick Scott(11/16/2015)
  - "Following the terrorist attacks by ISIS in Paris that killed over 120 people and wounded more than 350, and the new that at least one of the terror attack suspects gained access to France by posing as a Syrian refugee, our state agency will not support the requests we have received."
- GA: Gov. Nathan Deal (11/16/2015)
  - "In light of the terror attacks in Paris, I've issued an executive order [pdf] Idirecting state agency heads to prevent the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Georgia [...] Further, I call upon the Obama administration to work with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security to confirm the backgrounds of the 59 Syrian refugees recently resettled to ensure they do not pose a security threat to our citizens. Until the federal government and Congress conducts a thorough review of current screening procedures and background checks, we will take every measure available to us at the state level to ensure the safety of Georgians."
- IA: Gov. Terry Branstad (11/16/2015)
  - "Until a thorough and thoughtful review is conducted by the intelligence community and the safety of lowans can be assured, the federal government should not resettle any Syrian refugees in lowa."
- ID: Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter (11/16/2015)
  - "It makes no sense under the best of circumstances for the United States to allow people into our country who have the avowed desire to harm our communities, our institutions and our people [...] The savage and senseless ISIS-driven attacks in Paris illustrate the essential inhumanity of terrorism and make it clearer than ever that we must make protecting our homeland from this threat our primary focus."
- IL: Gov. Bruce Rauner (11/16/2015)
  - "We must find a way to balance our tradition as a state welcoming of refugees while ensuring the safety and security of our citizens. Therefore, the state of Illinois will temporarily suspend accepting new Syrian refugees and consider all of our legal options pending a full review of our country's acceptance and security processes by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security."
- IN: Gov. Mike Pence(11/16/2015)
  - "In the wake of the horrific attacks in Paris, effective immediately, I am directing all state agencies to suspend the resettlement of additional Syrian refugees in the state of Indiana pending assurances from the federal government that proper security measures have been achieved. Indiana has a long tradition of

opening our arms and homes to refugees from around the world but, as governor, my first responsibility is to ensure the safety and security of all Hoosiers. Unless and until the state of Indiana receives assurances that proper security measures are in place, this policy will remain in full force and effect."

#### • KS: Gov. Sam Brownback (11/16/2015)

"Most people seeking refugee status are peaceful individuals looking for a better life. But we cannot allow an influx of Syrian refugees, without any meaningful security checks, while ISIS is promising to infiltrate the refugee process. "Our resources can be better used to help persecuted Syrians. We must consider whether refugees fleeing the persecution of their home country may be better served by resettlement in a friendly nation closer to their homes."

## • KY: Governor-Elect Matt Bevin (11/16/2015)

"My primary responsibility as Governor of Kentucky will be to protect the citizens of the Commonwealth. This is why I am joining with other governors across the country in opposing the resettlement of Syrian nationals until we can better determine the full extent of any risks to our citizens."

## • LA: Gov. Bobby Jindal(<u>11/14/2015</u>)

- "Mr. President, in light of these attacks on Paris and reports that one of the attackers was a refugee from Syria, it would be prudent to pause the process of refugees coming to the United States. Authorities need to investigate what happened in Europe before this problem comes to the United States."
- Signed executive order prohibiting resettlement (11/16/2015)

## • ME: Gov. Paul LePage (11/16/2015)

"To bring Syrian refugees into our country without knowing who they are is to invite an attack on American soil just like the one we saw in Paris last week and in New York City on 9/11. That is why I adamantly oppose any attempt by the federal government to place Syrian refugees in Maine, and will take every lawful measure in my power to prevent it from happening."

#### MD: Gov. Larry Hogan (<u>11/17/2015</u>)

 "Following the terrorist attacks on Paris just four days ago, and after careful consideration, I am now requesting that federal authorities cease any additional settlements of refugees from Syria in Maryland until the U.S. government can provide appropriate assurances that refugees from Syria pose no threat to public safety."

#### MA: Gov. Charlie Baker(11/16/2015)

"I think at this point in time we would have to be very cautious about accepting folks without knowing a lot more about what the federal government's plan looks like... I would certainly say no until I know a lot more than I know now."

#### MS: Gov. Phil Bryant (11/16/2015)

"I will do everything humanly possible to stop any plans from the Obama administration to put Syrian refugees in Mississippi. The policy of bringing these individuals into the country is not only misguided, it is extremely dangerous. I'll be notifying President Obama of my decision today to resist this potential action."

#### • NE: Gov. Pete Ricketts (11/16/2015)

"While it is my understanding that no Syrian refugees have been resettled in Nebraska to date, I am requesting that your organization and all refugee resettlement agencies in our state decline to participate in potential resettlement efforts."

#### NH: Gov. Maggie Hassan (11/16/2015)

"The Governor has always made clear that we must ensure robust refugee screening to protect American citizens, and the Governor believes that the federal government should halt acceptance of refugees from Syria until intelligence and defense officials can assure that the process for vetting all

refugees, including those from Syria, is as strong as possible to ensure the safety of the American people."

#### • NJ: Gov. Chris Christie (11/16/2015)

"I do not trust this administration to effectively vet the people who are proposed to be coming in. In order to protect the safety and security of the American people, so I would not permit them in [...] The fact is, that we need for appropriate vetting and I don't think orphans under five should be admitted into the United States at this point. You know, they have no family here. How are we going to care for these folks? The fact is, you could come up with a number of different scenarios Hugh," explained Christie. "But in the end, I don't trust this administration to effectively vet the people that they are asking us to take in. We need to put the safety and security of the American people first."

## • NM: Gov. Susana Martinez (11/16/2015)

"The governor strongly opposes the Obama administration's plan to accept more Syrian refugees until there is a very clear plan in place to properly vet and place the refugees, and the voices of governors and the public can be heard."

#### NC: Gov. Pat McCrory(11/16/2015)

"However, because President Obama has increased the number of refugees from Syria coming into the United States from 2,000 to 10,000 and because of the terrorist attacks in Paris and the very real possibility that one of the terrorists entered France as a recent refugee, I am requesting that the federal government cease sending refugees from Syria to North Carolina."

#### • ND: Gov. Jack Dalrymple (11/17/2015)

 "Ensuring the safety and security of North Dakotans, as well as all Americans, is a top priority for us all, and so I urge the administration to halt the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the U.S. until the system has been reviewed and we can be assured that our citizens will be safe."

## • NV: Gov. Brian Sandoval (11/16/2015)

 "I would also request that until your administration has completed the review of these programs, no additional Syrian refugees be admitted for resettlement in Nevada."

#### • OH: Gov. John Kasich (11/16/2015)

 "There is no way that we can put any of our people at risk by bringing people in at this point. You asked the question, 'should anyone be able to come in here before the end of the year.' The answer to that question should be 'no.' We cannot jeopardize our people."

## • OK: Gov. Mary Fallin (<u>11/16/2</u>015)

"The Obama administration needs to assure the public that the background checks they are doing are rigorous, and that American lives will not be endangered in the process [..] Until then, I call on the Obama administration to suspend any Syrian refugees into the United States. During these uncertain times, the Obama administration needs to make sure those entering the United States are not terrorists."

## • SC: Gov. Nikki Haley(11/16/2015)

"This lack of historical and verifiable intelligence with many Syrian refugees makes it difficult, if not impossible, to thoroughly vet individuals seeking to enter the United States as a refugee."

#### • TN: Gov. Bill Haslam (11/16/2015)

"While screening, acceptance and placement is legally under the authority of the federal government, they have said in the past they would be open to cooperating with receiving states. Today I'm asking the federal government to suspend placements in Tennessee until states can become more of a partner in the vetting process."

## • TX: Gov. Greg Abbott(<u>11/16/2015</u>)

"Given the tragic attack in Paris and the threats we have already seen in Texas, coupled with the FBI director's acknowledgment that we do not have the information necessary to effectively vet Syrian nationals, Texas cannot participate in any program that will result in Syrian refugees - any one of whom could be connected to terrorism - being resettled in Texas."

#### • WI: Gov. Scott Walker(11/16/2015)

"With this in mind, I am calling upon the President to immediately suspend the program pending a full review of its security and acceptance procedures. The State of Wisconsin will not accept new Syrian refugees."

#### WY: Gov. Matt Mead(11/17/2015)

 "In light of the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris, I have joined other governors in demanding the refugee process be halted until it is guaranteed to provide the security demanded by Wyoming and United States citizens."

#### **Members of Congress:**

## • House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) (11/17/2015)

Our nation has always been welcoming, but we cannot let terrorists take advantage of our compassion. This is a moment where it's better to be safe than to be sorry. So we think the prudent — the responsible thing is to take a pause in this particular aspect of this refugee program in order to verify that terrorists are not trying to infiltrate the refugee population."

## • Rep. Brian Babin (R-TX) (11/16/2015)

- "The terrorist attack in Paris by militant Islamists is a loud clanging alarm bell to Congress and the American people warning us why we must block Obama's reckless and foolish plan to allow tens of thousands of Syrian refugees into the U.S."
- "Mary and Jesus didn't have suicide bomb vests strapped on them, and these folks do. You can see it in technicolor in Paris."

#### • Rep. Lou Barletta (R-PA) (11/16/2015)

 "With all these facts considered, I appeal to your concern for the safety of your fellow Pennsylvanians and ask that you reverse tour policy of accepting the so-called 'Syrian refugees."

## • Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX) (11/16/2015)

"As we continue to reflect on the terrorist attacks in Paris, one thing has become abundantly clear. The United States cannot continue to participate in Syrian refugee resettlement. ISIS has already claimed credit for one attack in Texas, and we must do everything in our power to make sure it will never happen again."

## Rep. Mike Bishop (R-MI) (11/16/2015)

"America will always be a nation of immigrants, but without adequate background information to crosscheck, it would be more than irresponsible to push ahead and simply 'hope for the best.' The terrorist attacks in Paris remind us that, despite the president saying ISIS is 'contained,' they are in fact alive and well, and we cannot afford a misstep when it comes to our national security."

## • Rep. Bradley Byrne (R-AL) (11/16/2015)

 "We have no greater responsibility as a federal government than to ensure the safety and security of the American people. It is clearly in the best interest of the American people to halt the Syrian refugee resettlement program."

## • Rep. Chris Collins (R-NY) (11/16/2015)

"At this point, we cannot guarantee with 100 percent certainty that the refugees we are accepting from Syria don't pose a threat to our community. Until we have a process in place that achieves that goal, I am calling on Governor Cuomo to stop plans to accept Syrian refugees."

• Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA)(11/16/2015)

"ISIS terrorists and sympathizers have made clear that they plan to infiltrate Western countries through the refugee system. When will President Obama take ISIS threats seriously, as well as the warnings of national security officials within his own administration, and cease his plan to bring thousands of Syrian refugees into the United States?"

## • Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI)(11/16/2015)

 "President Obama should immediately halt his Syrian refugee program until the United States Intelligence Community can guarantee the program does not pose any threats to our national security."

## • Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH) (11/16/2015)

 "I agree with Gov. Kasich. As unanswered questions remain about the screening process used for Syrian refugees admitted into the U.S., it is time for the State Department, at a bare minimum, to halt bringing more refugees into the United States and Ohio."

#### Rep. Walter B. Jones (R-NC)(11/16/2015)

 "After the atrocious attacks in Paris on Friday night brought on by at least one Syrian refugee, it is dishonest for any politician to pretend that importing 'refugees' from radical Islamic countries does not increase the threat of horrific attacks against Americans."

## • Rep. Peter King (R-NY) (11/15/15)

 "We have to put political correctness aside. We have to have surveillance in the Muslim communities. That's where the threat is coming from. I don't think today the French police or french intelligence is monitoring the Catholic or Jewish community. The threat is coming from the Muslim community."

## • Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-GA) (11/16/2015)

"The threats against our nation are real and serious, and we must make every effort to protect the people and interests of our nation. Therefore, I am calling on the administration to immediately cease plans to admit any refugees from the conflict zones associated with the expansion and occupation of ISIS or the civil war in Syria."

## • Rep. Candice Miller (R-MI) (11/15/2015)

"I support Governor Snyder's decision to suspend efforts to relocate Syrian refugees to Michigan, and have cautioned against the Administration's decision to increase the number being admitted into the U.S. [...] Anyone who says we can adequately and safely vet these refugees is wrong because there is no database in Syria and no way to identify who's who."

### • Rep. Jeff Miller (R-FL)(11/16/2015)

 "We must be vigilant in defending our shores. I will continue to oppose any attempt to relocate Syrian refugees to this country."

#### Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX)(11/17/2015)

"Current federal law does not clearly give governors the absolute right to refuse. This matter will end up being fought in long court battles if Congress does not act to clarify the law. ISIS has threatened to attack our homeland. We should believe them. The Director of the FBI even stated that he does not believe we have enough resources to screen the refugees. We should allow state governors to take action to protect their citizens."

## • Rep. Bill Posey (R-FL) (<u>11/16/2015</u>)

 Furthermore, I oppose the President's plan to bring tens of thousands of Syrian refugees into the United States, and I have cosponsored legislation to stop the Administration from taking this action."

## Rep. Martha Roby (R-AL)(11/16/2015)

"As many as 10,000 Syrian refugees are reportedly about to start showing up in the United States in 2016 per President Obama's directive. Are we really this naive? At least one of the Paris attackers came into that country via similar means, and ISIS has said they would actively try to game the refugee resettlement process to infiltrate western countries."

## • Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) (11/16/2015)

"At a time when we are on high alert, all plans for relocating Syrian refugees should come to a screeching halt. We should not allow Syrian refugees into our country until this administration can guarantee that they pose no danger to the American people."

## • Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX)(11/16/15)

"There is no meaningful risk of Christians committing acts of terror. If there were a group of radical Christians pledging to murder anyone who had a different religious view than they, we would have a different national security situation [...] But it is precisely the Obama administration's unwillingness to recognize that or ask those questions that makes them so unable to fight this enemy. Because they pretend as if there is no religious aspect to this."

## • Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY)(11/16/2015)

"The best way to defend the country from attackers that don't really have an army, but come here as individuals, is to prevent their access into this country [...] It is about time, and I think Paris should wake us up to the fact that we can't just let anyone come to this country."

## • Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL)(11/16/2015)

"The barbaric attacks in Paris - an assault on civilization itself - add immense new urgency. As the former head of the USCIS union warned in a public statement more than a year ago: 'as we know from the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, from the Boston Bombing, from the recent plot to bomb a school and courthouse in Connecticut, and many other lesser-known terror incidents, we are letting terrorists into the United States right through our front door."

## • Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) (11/16/2015)

"I would also suggest to President Obama that he reconsider his plans to admit Syrian refugees until the dust settles and we get to the bottom of the Paris attacks. We need to analyze what happened. We need to figure out how we can better screen these refugees and ensure that terrorists among them are not evading proper screenings. We need a time-out before we press forward."

#### • Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT)(11/16/2015)

"In the case of the Syrian refugees, most of them are male. Most of them are of military age, and yes, it is a significant security issue in that a background check is only as good as the authorities have information on them. But when you have a background check and you don't know their background, you don't know what they've done, it is enormously dangerous in the interest of our national security to accept potential terrorists. ISIS said, and now they have proven, they will use this chaos to infiltrate ISIS members in the refugee population."

- Sens. Mark Kirk (R-IL), Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Daniel Coats (R-IN), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), and Joe Manchin (D-WV) (11/16/2015)
  - "It is already clear that ISIS is responsible for the barbaric attacks. Reported indicates that at least one of the attackers apparently utilized the flow of refugees to infiltrate Europe. These facts require a serious and objective reexamination of the Administration's policy toward Syrian refugees to avoid unnecessary risks."
- Sen. David Vitter (R-LA)(11/15/15)
  - "Please join me and others in demanding that President Obama stop accepting these Syrian refugees immediately, and stop settling any into New Orleans, given this unacceptable lax security and lack of full vetting on their backgrounds,"
- Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC) (11/13/15)
  - Tweeted: "How's that Syrian refugee resettlement look now? How about that mass migration into Europe? Terrorism is alive & well in the world. #No"
- Former Rep. Hoekstra (R-MI) (11/6/15)
  - "We can make a very compelling case that Judeo-Christian values as exercised in the United States, that we are superior"
  - "There is a reason we say Judeo-Christian values rather than Judeo-Christian-Islamic values"
- Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) (12/3/15)
  - "So the president has presided over hundreds of thousands, millions really, being in the country illegally, at least 179,000 that, as I understand it, they have detained previously but have let loose on the country who have committed crimes, including murder, rape, robbery. And with all of those people that are coming into the country, some of whom are violent criminals, coming into our interior, some of them are actually picked up by Homeland Security and shipped all over our country, no matter whether they're sick or not, I've seen them shipped out while they're sick, but they're shipped all over the country, not knowing for sure whether they're violent criminals or not. So then we have people in the country that should never have been allowed in the country."
  - "Refugees that have been allowed in the country, some of whom are violent terrorists, and they've been let in the country, and then when they do some act of violence, we're told, and I know they haven't said these words but basically by the position the administration is taking, they're saying, 'Yep, we've let all of these terrorists, these criminals come into the middle of our country, so all of you law-abiding citizens are going to have to give up your Second Amendment rights because I've let all these terrorists in; we can't let terrorists go in and buy guns so we need to be really restrictive.' So law-abiding citizens are going to have to give up a big portion of their Second Amendment rights because we've allowed all of these terrorists to be in our country without doing anything to remove them. Yes they've removed some, but there's a massive number they haven't."

#### • Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)

- "They are not fueled by materialistic motivation it's actually a theological, this radical Islamic ideology."
- Also see: "<u>The Curious Islamophobic Politics of Dem Congressmember Tulsi</u> Gabbard"
- Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) (10/9/2015)
  - "There is a small group, and we don't know how big that is—it can be anywhere between 5 and 20 percent, from the people that I speak to—that Islam is their

religion and who have a desire for a caliphate and to institute that in any way possible, and in particular go after what they consider Western norms—our way of life."

## • Rep. Trey Gowdy (R-SC) (11/19/2015)

 "The president says we're scared of widows and orphans. With all due respect to him, what I'm really afraid of is a foreign policy that creates more widows and orphans."

## Rep. Steve King (R-IA) (11/19/2015)

- o "Have you ever seen a suicidal terrorist that was not a Muslim?"
- "We're talking about a huge haystack of humanity and that hay is benign, relatively speaking, but in that haystack are the needles called terrorists, and the proposal that's coming from the administration is we're so professional that we can examine all of that hay and we can identify any of the needles in it terrorists and we can sort the needles out of they haystack, and somehow prevent them from coming into America."
- (12/09/2015): "We should be profiling people who are getting on airplanes, and we should be profiling people that are coming into America, and those coming into America should meet a profile where they are most likely to be able to contribute to our society and our economy, and assimilate into the American civilization. And I have said publicly that Muslims do not do that in significant numbers."

## • Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) (11/15/2015)

[In response to statements denying "war against Islam"] ""That would be like saying we weren't at war with Nazis, because we were afraid to offend some Germans who may have been members of the Nazi Party but weren't violent themselves."

#### o (12/3/2015)

- "When you understand it, you realize these are not people you can negotiate with. These are not people that are going to go out of business. These are not individuals that are disgruntled or unemployed. These are not people that are upset because American troops were deployed in Iraq."
- "These are individuals with an apocalyptic vision of the future, and they will not stop until they feel they have succeeded in triggering this apocalypse. It, by the way, is similar to the views held by the Ayatollah in Iran. And so when people that have an apocalyptic vision of the future are growing in their capabilities in the case of ISIS, or trying to acquire a nuclear weapon in the case of Iran, you understand why it is that in many cases, diplomacy and engagement does not work, and in the case of ISIS has no chance of working."

## • Former Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN) (12/10/2015)

- "Donald Trump is right. Obama's insane open-door immigration policies are getting innocent Americans killed."
- "No one has a right to enter the United States. Until we can set up a working, fail-safe vetting system, Trump's idea is the only one that ensures the innocence, safety and security of all Americans, Muslims included."

#### State lawmakers

• NC: House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate leader Phil Berger (11/17/2015)

 "We commend our Governor for his leadership in requesting that Syrian refugees not be placed in North Carolina. It is important that our States unite to challenge the Obama Administration on its weak foreign policy."

## • RI: State Rep. Doreen Costa(11/16/2015)

 "Please re-think welcoming refugees here to Rhode Island. We need to protect our citizens"

## • TN: Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey (R-Blountville) and House Speaker Beth Harwell (R-Nashville)(11/16/2015)

 "Out of an abundance of caution, the flow of refugees must be stopped. As Tennessee's congressional delegation, we ask you to advocate strongly for an immediate moratorium on refugees entering the United States, specifically Tennessee."

## • TN: State Rep. Shelia Butt (R-64)(11/16/2015)

"Michigan Governor, Rick Snyder, who has made the comment himself that he believes he is "the most pro-immigration governor in the country" has already suspended settlement of Syrian refugees in Michigan. We implore you on behalf of the people whom we represent to take the responsibility as Governor to protect the safety of the people in the great state of Tennessee and do the same."

## • ID: State Rep. Heather Scott (R-1)(11/16/2015)

"Along with many local, state, and federal representatives I believe this
administration, in conjunction with the United Nations, is deliberately flooding
America with Islamic refugees while paying lip service to states' resources
and national security."

## • TX: State Rep. Tony Dole (R-136) (11/16/2015)

"I am asking 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.

## • NV: Assemblywoman Michele Fiore (R-4) (11/21/2015)

- "What--are you kidding me? I'm about to fly to Paris and shoot 'em in the head myself!"
- "I am not OK with Syrian refugees. I'm not OK with terrorists. I'm OK with putting them down, blacking them out, just put a piece of brass in their ocular cavity and end their miserable life. I'm good with that," she continued.

#### • WA: Jay Rodne (R-5) (11/20/2015)

- "I'm concerned about the safety and security of the people of the state of Washington first and foremost and that trumps, in my view, concerns about being compassionate. Especially when given our current threat environment, we have no reliable way to vet these migrants coming in from Syria."
- "If there had been a concealed carry in that theater in Paris; if there had been individuals there that had been concealed carry like we enjoy in this country; had there been individuals there that were properly concealing, maybe we wouldn't have 100 dead hostages. People of France have been disarmed."
- "We have no vetting process in place, we have no reliable way to determine who is an innocent refugee and who is a terrorist, who wants to use those freedoms against us."