

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 3, 2016

The Honorable John F. Kerry
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Jeh Johnson Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretaries Kerry and Johnson:

On January 25, 2016, French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve publicly warned of the growing terrorism threat posed by ISIS's "fake document industry." As *ABC News* revealed in December 2015, the Department of Homeland Security's investigative arm, known as Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), concluded that ISIS terrorists acquired passport-printing capabilities and "boxes of blank passports," and also warned: "Since more than 17 months [have] passed since Raqqa and Deir ez-Zour fell to ISIS, it is possible that individuals from Syria with passports 'issued' in these ISIS controlled cities or who had passport blanks, may have traveled to the U.S."

The danger of ISIS terrorists using fake or stolen passports to infiltrate Syrian refugee flows and attack the United States became very real amid revelations that two of the nine ISIS terrorists involved in the November 13th attacks in Paris used fraudulent passports to pose as refugees entering the European Union. The threat to the United States posed by ISIS-created Syrian passports is now imminent. That danger will continue to grow so long as our enemies are able to perfect these passports and exploit loopholes in refugee programs. ISIS is an enemy that constantly adapts around our security posture, and there is no room for error when it comes to protecting our citizens from their brutal terror campaign.

I therefore urge you to suspend the Syrian refugee program until America's intelligence and law enforcement agencies acquire the capabilities to identify all fake Syrian passports and certify that any potential refugee with a Syrian passport poses no threat to national security. The security and integrity of America's refugee program is critical to maintaining the safety of our citizens here at home. The United States should pause plans to accept tens-to-hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees until the Administration implements a credible plan to detect and identify all fake Syrian passports and to prevent ISIS terrorist infiltration. Anything less represents an unacceptable risk to the safety of our country.

Sincerely,

 

MARK S. KIRK
U.S. Senator

BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
U.S. Senator

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JOHN BARRASSO
U.S. Senator



MIKE ENZI
U.S. Senator



THOM TILLIS
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ROGER WICKER
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JAMES M. INHOFE
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