

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2284

To suspend the admission and resettlement of aliens seeking refugee status because of the conflict in Syria until adequate protocols are established to protect the national security of the United States and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 17, 2015

Mr. VITTER (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. BARRASSO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To suspend the admission and resettlement of aliens seeking refugee status because of the conflict in Syria until adequate protocols are established to protect the national security of the United States and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Syrian Refugee
5 Verification and Safety Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
2 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
3 gress” means the following:

4 (A) The Committee on the Judiciary, the
5 Committee on Foreign Relations, the Com-
6 mittee on Homeland Security and Govern-
7 mental Affairs, and the Select Committee on
8 Intelligence of the Senate.

9 (B) The Committee on the Judiciary, the
10 Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee
11 on Homeland Security, and the Permanent Se-
12 lect Committee on Intelligence of the House of
13 Representatives.

14 (2) APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS.—The term “ap-
15 propriate officials” means each of the following:

16 (A) The Secretary of Homeland Security.

17 (B) The Secretary of State.

18 (C) The Director of National Intelligence.

19 (D) The Director of the Federal Bureau of
20 Investigation.

21 (3) COVERED ALIEN.—The term “covered
22 alien” means an alien who is a refugee (as that term
23 is defined in section 101(a)(42) of the Immigration
24 and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42)) because
25 of the conflict in Syria.

1 **SEC. 3. SUSPENSION OF ADMISSION OF REFUGEES FROM**
2 **THE CONFLICT IN SYRIA.**

3 (a) SUSPENSION OF ADMISSIONS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
5 provision of law—

6 (A) no covered alien may be admitted to
7 the United States as a refugee under section
8 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
9 U.S.C. 1157) or any other provision of law;

10 (B) no funds may be expended to process
11 applications for covered aliens to be admitted as
12 refugees; and

13 (C) no funds may be expended by the Sec-
14 retary of State or the Secretary of Health and
15 Human Services to resettle covered aliens in the
16 United States.

17 (2) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—Subject to subsection
18 (f), paragraph (1) shall be in effect until the date
19 that is 30 days after the date that the President
20 submits to the appropriate committees of Congress
21 a certification that the provisions of subsections (b)
22 through (e) of this section have been carried out.

23 (3) MINIMUM REVIEW PERIOD.—The President
24 may not submit the certification referred to in para-
25 graph (2) until after the date that is 270 days after
26 the date of the enactment of this Act to ensure there

1 is adequate time to conduct the necessary evaluation
2 of trends, analysis, and intelligence, and to otherwise
3 obtain the necessary information to review the intel-
4 ligence and security structures required to make the
5 certifications and submissions required by this sec-
6 tion.

7 (b) IMPROVED PROTOCOLS AND COORDINATION.—
8 Each appropriate official shall submit to the appropriate
9 committees of Congress a certification that includes the
10 following:

11 (1) A description of the protocols in place and
12 efforts to enhance protocols to properly adjudicate
13 whether a covered alien is admissible to the United
14 States and to resettle covered aliens in the United
15 States, including a description of—

16 (A) all security-related requirements and
17 any enhanced security requirements;

18 (B) how such protocols are adequate to
19 protect the national security of the United
20 States; and

21 (C) how such protocols will ensure coordi-
22 nation with Federal, State, and local law en-
23 forcement officials in areas where covered aliens
24 will reside.

1 (2) A cost assessment of the costs related to the
2 admission of covered aliens as refugees and resettlement of covered
3 aliens in the United States, including potential costs to individual
4 States.

5 (3) A description of the enhanced interagency coordination occurring to
6 effectively implement such protocols.

8 (4) A statement acknowledging that every covered alien entering
9 the United States as a refugee is required to go through a full
10 enhanced vetting process, as described in this section and carried out
11 by the United States Government.

13 (c) EVALUATION AND REVIEW BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE
14 INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The Inspector General of the Intelligence
15 Community shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a
16 comprehensive evaluation and review of the protocols and coordination
17 referred to in subsection (b).

19 (d) UPDATE OF CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION DOCUMENT FROM
20 BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION.—

22 (1) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the
23 appropriate committees of Congress an updated Congressional
24 Presentation Document of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and
25

1 Migration for Fiscal Year 2016 that reflects security
2 or other risks posed by covered aliens.

3 (2) CONTENTS.—The update required by para-
4 graph (1) shall include the following:

5 (A) An assessment of whether the Bureau
6 of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the De-
7 partment of Homeland Security, and law en-
8 forcement and intelligence agencies are success-
9 fully protecting the refugee admissions program
10 from infiltration by aliens who pose national se-
11 curity threats to the United States related to
12 the violent extremist organization that calls
13 itself the Islamic State (also known as “ISIS”).

14 (B) The identity of the aliens admitted to
15 the United States as refugees since 2001 who
16 subsequently engaged in criminal or terrorist
17 conduct.

18 (e) BRIEFING TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of
19 State shall provide a briefing to the appropriate congres-
20 sional committees on the increase in covered aliens seeking
21 to be admitted as refugees, including whether any covered
22 alien seeking to be admitted as a refugee had, or there
23 was reason to believe may have, engaged in terrorist con-
24 duct regardless of whether such conduct was linked to the

1 conflict in Syria or to the violent extremist organization
2 that calls itself the Islamic State (also known as “ISIS”).

3 (f) JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other
5 provision of this section, a certification described in
6 subsection (a) shall not have any effect if, within 15
7 calendar days after the date on which Congress re-
8 ceives the certification, there is enacted into law a
9 joint resolution disapproving the certification.

10 (2) CONTENTS OF JOINT RESOLUTION.—For
11 the purpose of this subsection, the term “joint reso-
12 lution” means only a joint resolution—

13 (A) that is introduced not later than 3 cal-
14 endar days after the date on which a certifi-
15 cation described in subsection (a) is received by
16 Congress;

17 (B) which does not have a preamble;

18 (C) the title of which is as follows: “Joint
19 resolution disapproving the certification of the
20 President described in section 3(a) of the Syr-
21 ian Refugee Verification and Safety Act”; and

22 (D) the matter after the resolving clause of
23 which is as follows: “That Congress disapproves
24 the certification of the President described in

1 section 3(a) of the Syrian Refugee Verification
2 and Safety Act.”.

3 (3) FAST TRACK CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF
4 REPRESENTATIVES.—

5 (A) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a
6 certification described in subsection (a), the
7 Speaker of the House of Representatives, if the
8 House of Representatives would otherwise be
9 adjourned, shall notify the Members of the
10 House that, pursuant to this subsection, the
11 House shall convene not later than the second
12 calendar day after receipt of such certification.

13 (B) REPORTING AND DISCHARGE.—Any
14 committee of the House of Representatives to
15 which a joint resolution described in paragraph
16 (2) is referred shall report it to the House not
17 later than 5 calendar days after the date of re-
18 ceipt of the certification described in subsection
19 (a). If a committee fails to report the joint reso-
20 lution within that period, the committee shall be
21 discharged from further consideration of the
22 joint resolution and the joint resolution shall be
23 referred to the appropriate calendar.

24 (C) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—
25 After each committee authorized to consider a

1 joint resolution reports it to the House or has
2 been discharged from its consideration, it shall
3 be in order, not later than the sixth day after
4 Congress receives the certification described in
5 subsection (a), to move to proceed to consider
6 the joint resolution in the House. All points of
7 order against the motion are waived. Such a
8 motion shall not be in order after the House
9 has disposed of a motion to proceed on the joint
10 resolution. The previous question shall be con-
11 sidered as ordered on the motion to its adoption
12 without intervening motion. The motion shall
13 not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the
14 vote by which the motion is disposed of shall
15 not be in order.

16 (D) CONSIDERATION.—The joint resolu-
17 tion shall be considered as read. All points of
18 order against the joint resolution and against
19 its consideration are waived. The previous ques-
20 tion shall be considered as ordered on the joint
21 resolution to its passage without intervening
22 motion except two hours of debate equally di-
23 vided and controlled by the proponent and an
24 opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote on

1 passage of the joint resolution shall not be in
2 order.

3 (4) FAST TRACK CONSIDERATION IN SENATE.—

4 (A) RECONVENING.—Upon receipt of a
5 certification described in subsection (a), if the
6 Senate has adjourned or recessed for more than
7 2 days, the majority leader of the Senate, after
8 consultation with the minority leader of the
9 Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate
10 that, pursuant to this subsection, the Senate
11 shall convene not later than the second calendar
12 day after receipt of the certification.

13 (B) PLACEMENT ON CALENDAR.—Upon in-
14 troduction in the Senate, the joint resolution
15 shall be placed immediately on the calendar.

16 (C) FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—

17 (i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding
18 Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the
19 Senate, it is in order at any time during
20 the period beginning on the 4th day after
21 the date on which Congress receives a cer-
22 tification described in subsection (a) and
23 ending on the 6th day after the date on
24 which Congress receives a certification de-
25 scribed in subsection (a) (even though a

1 previous motion to the same effect has
2 been disagreed to) to move to proceed to
3 the consideration of the joint resolution,
4 and all points of order against the joint
5 resolution (and against consideration of
6 the joint resolution) are waived. The mo-
7 tion to proceed is not debatable. The mo-
8 tion is not subject to a motion to postpone.
9 A motion to reconsider the vote by which
10 the motion is agreed to or disagreed to
11 shall not be in order. If a motion to pro-
12 ceed to the consideration of the resolution
13 is agreed to, the joint resolution shall re-
14 main the unfinished business until dis-
15 posed of.

16 (D) DEBATE.—Debate on the joint resolu-
17 tion, and on all debatable motions and appeals
18 in connection therewith, shall be limited to not
19 more than 10 hours, which shall be divided
20 equally between the majority and minority lead-
21 ers or their designees. A motion further to limit
22 debate is in order and not debatable. An
23 amendment to, or a motion to postpone, or a
24 motion to proceed to the consideration of other

1 business, or a motion to recommit the joint res-
2 olution is not in order.

3 (E) VOTE ON PASSAGE.—The vote on pas-
4 sage shall occur immediately following the con-
5 clusion of the debate on a joint resolution, and
6 a single quorum call at the conclusion of the de-
7 bate if requested in accordance with the rules of
8 the Senate.

9 (F) RULINGS OF THE CHAIR ON PROCE-
10 DURE.—Appeals from the decisions of the Chair
11 relating to the application of the rules of the
12 Senate, as the case may be, to the procedure re-
13 lating to a joint resolution shall be decided
14 without debate.

15 (5) RULES RELATING TO SENATE AND HOUSE
16 OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

17 (A) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY
18 OTHER HOUSE.—If, before the passage by one
19 House of a joint resolution of that House, that
20 House receives from the other House a joint
21 resolution, then the following procedures shall
22 apply:

23 (i) The joint resolution of the other
24 House shall not be referred to a com-
25 mittee.

1 (ii) With respect to a joint resolution
2 of the House receiving the resolution—

3 (I) the procedure in that House
4 shall be the same as if no joint resolu-
5 tion had been received from the other
6 House; but

7 (II) the vote on passage shall be
8 on the joint resolution of the other
9 House.

10 (B) TREATMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION
11 OF OTHER HOUSE.—If one House fails to intro-
12 duce or consider a joint resolution under this
13 subsection, the joint resolution of the other
14 House shall be entitled to expedited floor proce-
15 dures under this subsection.

16 (C) TREATMENT OF COMPANION MEAS-
17 URES.—If, following passage of the joint resolu-
18 tion in the Senate, the Senate then receives the
19 companion measure from the House of Rep-
20 resentatives, the companion measure shall not
21 be debatable.

22 (D) VETO DEBATE AND DURATION.—If the
23 President vetoes the joint resolution, debate on
24 a veto message in the Senate under this sub-
25 section shall be 1 hour equally divided between

1 the majority and minority leaders or their des-
2 ignees.

3 (6) RULES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
4 AND SENATE.—This paragraph and paragraphs (3),
5 (4), and (5) are enacted by Congress—

6 (A) as an exercise of the rulemaking power
7 of the Senate and House of Representatives, re-
8 spectively, and as such it is deemed a part of
9 the rules of each House, respectively, but appli-
10 cable only with respect to the procedure to be
11 followed in that House in the case of a joint
12 resolution, and it supersedes other rules only to
13 the extent that it is inconsistent with such
14 rules; and

15 (B) with full recognition of the constitu-
16 tional right of either House to change the rules
17 (so far as relating to the procedure of that
18 House) at any time, in the same manner, and
19 to the same extent as in the case of any other
20 rule of that House.

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