Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 8, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell,

As the 114th Congress reconvenes, we in the House of Representatives look forward to working with our Senate colleagues to defend the Constitution, promote economic prosperity and ensure national security. We especially appreciate your assurance to return to regular order. This will restore our oath to represent "we the people."

We sincerely applaud your commitment to Speaker Ryan to bring forward H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015 (American SAFE Act). This legislation would require that no Syrian or Iraqi refugee be admitted into the United States without undergoing enhanced security checks by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Homeland Security, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. If the applicant does not receive unanimous approval from each of these three agencies collectively, their entrance into the United States will be denied.

Since the Paris attacks, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has proven capable of utilizing the chaos of the region to infiltrate the refugee population. While we have the deepest sympathies for those impacted by the conflict in Syria and the surrounding region, we strongly believe that refugees from Syria and Iraq headed to the United States must receive enhanced screening.

In October, FBI Director James Comey testified before a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing, stating they "do see a risk" in the current vetting process for Syrian refugees entering the country. During House Homeland Security Committee hearings, Assistant Director Michael Steinbach also admitted the FBI could not properly inspect these individuals, saying, "you have to have information to vet…databases don't [have] the information on those individuals, and that's the concern."

Our government's first Constitutional duty is to provide for a strong national defense. That is an obligation that all members of Congress share. The American SAFE Act passed the House with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 289-137 and we respectfully request you promptly take this important national security bill up in the Senate. As we move towards regular order, we can think of no better effort than to move a bill forward that emphasizes the safety and security of the American people.

Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Rep. Ryan Zinke (MT-00)

Chairman Michael McCaul (TX-10)

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Rep. Richard Hudson (NC-08)

Rep. David Joyce (OH-14)

Rep. Garret Graves (LA-06)

Rep. Ann Wagner (MO-02)

Rep. Dan Benishek, M.D. (MI-01)

Rep. Earl. L. "Buddy" Carter (GA-01)

Rep. David Rouzer (NC-07)

Rep. Michael C. Burgess, M.D. (TX-26)

Rep. Kevin Cramer (ND-00)

Rep. Trent Franks (AZ-08)

Rep. Blake Farenthold (TX-27)

Rep. Bob Gibbs (OH-07)

Rep. John Ratcliffe (TX-04)

Rep. Mike Bost (IL-12)

Rep. Bruce Westerman (AR-04)

Rep. Andy Barr (KY-06)

Rep. Robert E. Latta (OH-05)

Rep. Rick Allen (GA-12)

Rep. Trent Kelly (MS-01)

Chairman Jeb Hensarling (TX-05)

Rep. Luke Messer (IN-06)

Rep. Randy Weber (TX-14)

Rep. Brad Wenstrup (OH-02)

Rep. Jody Hice (GA-10)

Rep. Steve Chabot (OH-01)

Rep. Tom Emmer (MN-06)

Rep. Charles Boustany (LA-03)

Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (MO-03)

Chairman Jeff Miller (FL-01)

Rep. Randy Neugebauer (TX-19)

Rep. Gary Palmer (AL-06)

Rep. Jeff Duncan (SC-03)

Rep. Ralph Abraham, M.D. (LA-05)