

Florida Governor Rick Scott Requests Congress Halt Funding Syrian Refugee Resettlement in the Sunshine State



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Florida Governor Rick Scott requested a halt to federal funding of the scheduled resettlement of 425 Syrian Refugees in the Sunshine State. This follows similar actions by Republican gubernatorial colleagues in Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts Michigan, and Texas. He sent a letter this afternoon to US House Speaker Paul Ryan, Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell and all members of the Florida US Senate and Congressional delegation outlining his concerns. He adds his concerns regarding the ability of the Administration to vet Syrian refugees to prevent the possible infiltration of ISIS jihadis as occurred last weekend in Paris. The Syrian passport of a suicide bomber or shahids (martyr) was found at the Paris soccer stadium a check of which revealed his entry into the EU via Greece in early October, 2015

In his letter to House Speaker Ryan and Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Governor Scott expressed his concerns:

Several organizations have requested that our state Department of Children and Families support the relocation of 425 possible Syrian refugees to Florida, as they receive federal funding to house these refugees in our state. Following the terrorist attacks by ISIS in Paris

that killed over 120 people and wounded more than 350, and the news 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.

More importantly, however, it is our understanding that the state does not have the authority to prevent the federal government from funding the relocation of these Syrian refugees to Florida even without state support. Therefore, we are asking the United States Congress to take immediate and aggressive action to prevent President Obama and his administration from using any federal tax dollars to fund the relocation of up to 425 Syrian refugees (the total possible number of refugees pending for state relocation support at this time) to Florida, or anywhere in the United States, without an extensive evaluation of the risk these individuals may pose to our national security.

As the federal elected body that exercises oversight and authorizes federal spending, please take any action available through the powers of the United States Congress to prevent federal allocations toward the relocation of Syrian refugees without extensive examination into how this would affect our homeland security.

My office stands ready to provide any available information regarding this request for your immediate action.