

Illinois Gov. Rauner latest to suggest a stop to Syrian Refugee Resettlement



Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner

Source: E. Jason Wambsgans / Chicago Tribune)

Gov. Bruce Rauner of Illinois joins Republican gubernatorial colleagues in Alabama, Arkansas Louisiana , Massachusetts, Michigan, Texas in requesting a temporary halt to Syrian refugee resettlement . He is the fourth Republican governor to question the Administration's ability to vet Syrian refugees coming to the US under the Refugee Act of 1980. These concerns erupted in the wake of this weekend's disclosures about an ISIS suicide bomber who entered Europe in early October in the Syrian refugee stream only to die as a *shahid* (martyr) at the Paris soccer stadium.

Note this *Chicago Tribune* [report](#):

Gov. [Bruce Rauner](#) announced Monday that Illinois will temporarily stop taking in new Syrian refugees, joining seven other Republican governors in the wake of the Paris attacks.

Rauner's decision comes after officials said at least one of the Paris attackers entered Europe amid the recent influx of migrants from the war-torn country.

"Our nation and our state have a shared history of providing safe haven for those displaced by conflict, but the news surrounding the Paris terror attacks reminds us of the all-too-real security threats facing America," Rauner said in a statement. "We must find a way to balance our

tradition as a state welcoming of refugees while ensuring the safety and security of our citizens.”

Rauner said his office will “consider all of our legal options” as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security undergoes a review of acceptance and security processes.

Mayor [Rahm Emanuel](#) stopped short of directly criticizing Rauner for the move. Instead the mayor pointed out that the federal government performs background checks on refugees before they get here and said the U.S. has a history as a welcoming place for people fleeing trouble elsewhere in the world.

“The United States government is reviewing anybody and all of their papers,” Emanuel said when asked to respond to Rauner’s decision while appearing at the French Consulate downtown to offer his support to the country in the wake of the attacks. “That’s a year away from the present moment. My one word is, security and our values go hand in hand. The United States government is in the vetting process, but our values are one in which we remind ourselves that we are an open, welcoming society. So the United States government, in conjunction, is actually vetting any of the migrants that are going to Europe.”

[...]

The Associated Press reported that Lavinia Limon, president and CEO of the U.S Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, said that under the Refugee Act of 1980, governors cannot legally block refugees from settling in their communities.

As of September, 94 refugees from Syria have been resettled in Illinois, including 62 in Chicago, according to the Refugee Processing Center, operated by the U.S. State Department. That’s about three times as many as in all of

2014, though those numbers don't include Syrians seeking asylum, which is a separate process.

Some governors halt, question plan to accept Syrian refugees

The other states to impose a temporary ban despite President Barack Obama's opposition are Texas, Michigan, Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Louisiana and Massachusetts.

Here is Rauner's full statement:

"Our nation and our state have a shared history of providing safe haven for those displaced by conflict, but the news surrounding the Paris terror attacks reminds us of the all-too-real security threats facing America. 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."