



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

November 30, 2015

Mrs. Tonda Laubenstein
422 Newbury Circle
Westminster, South Carolina 29693-6608

Dear Mrs. Laubenstein,

Thank you for your recent message to my office regarding refugee resettlement. I appreciate the opportunity to hear from you on this matter.

In the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks, I had conversations with FBI Director Jim Comey and DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson. In the past, intelligence officials have had sufficient information to adequately check the backgrounds of refugee applicants. In reference to the Syrian refugees, neither Director Comey nor Secretary Johnson could vouch for the sufficiency of the available information. Therefore, I asked Secretary John Kerry and the United States Department of State to suspend efforts to resettle Syrian refugees in South Carolina.

As Governor, it is my first and primary duty to ensure the safety of the citizens of South Carolina. While I agree that the United States should try to assist individuals in dire situations, the lack of historical and verifiable intelligence with many Syrian refugees makes it difficult, if not impossible, to thoroughly vet individuals seeking to enter the United States as refugees. Currently, no Syrian refugees fleeing the current conflict have been resettled in South Carolina, and until these security issues are addressed, I hope the United States Department of State will honor my request.

Thank you again for your message and interest in this issue. God bless.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nikki Haley".

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/ahp

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tonda Laubenstein".