



## FIRST FOCUS

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

November 19, 2015

Dear Representative [Name]:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a national bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, I write to you today to strongly urge that you **oppose the American SAFE Act (H.R. 4038)**. This bill would immediately prevent all refugees from Syria and Iraq from entering the United States and makes the process for their entry considerably more difficult.

The American SAFE Act creates a much more stringent, discriminatory process for refugees from Syria and Iraq to gain entry into the United States. These populations would be singled out and could not be admitted until the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of DHS and the Director of the National Intelligence have received a background investigation that is deemed sufficient to determine whether the refugee is a threat. This process is fraught with complications as thousands of refugee children and their families will remain in limbo indefinitely and agencies would have to use significant resources to coordinate investigations and create new criteria for who can be admitted. The United States already has much tougher protections than European nations, evident in the fact that all refugees are screened for 18-24 months before stepping foot in the U.S. and face the highest level security screening of any traveler or immigrant.

Those fleeing from violence in Syria are amongst the most vulnerable in the world. Over 50% of those who have entered the United States are children and a quarter are over the age of 60. By adding an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy to the screening process, the United States would be jeopardizing the lives of thousands of innocent children who have committed no crime other than to be born in a country rife with instability and susceptible to unspeakable acts of terrorism. These children have already experienced a great deal of trauma and creating barriers for safety will only make their situations more desperate.

America has a proud history of providing refuge for those in need, and this bill runs contrary to our most fundamental values of compassion and fairness. Thus, we strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 4038 as it further undermines the safety of millions of children who are seeking protection from the very terrorism we are seeking to defeat.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley  
President