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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

December 8, 2015

Senator Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Dear Chairman Cochran:

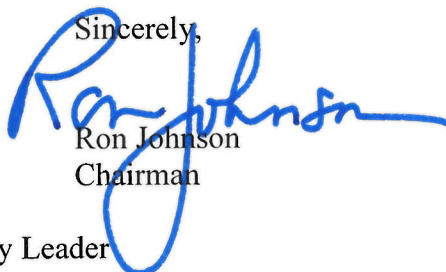
I write today to urge Senate action on enhancements to the Visa Waiver Program. Specifically, I respectfully request that you include my bill, the Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015, in the Senate's FY2016 omnibus appropriations package to ensure that we address this important topic before we recess for the year.

After the horrific attacks in Paris, I quickly convened a hearing to discuss U.S. vulnerabilities. At the hearing, experts testified that the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) must be reviewed, particularly since the known attackers in Paris were nationals of countries that are part of the program. In response, I have introduced a Senate companion to H.R. 158, the Visa Waiver Program Improvement Act of 2015, with additional needed reforms to the program.

As you know, the bill takes significant steps towards enhancing the Visa Waiver Program. It will deny VWP status to individuals who have connections to terrorist hotspots, demand strong intelligence and law enforcement information sharing, enhance screening of all travelers in VWP countries, help prevent extremists from using documents to evade detection, increase threat monitoring of VWP countries, and take steps to ensure VWP travelers do not falsify their background information. My bill will also promote preclearance, enhance the Electronic System for Travel Authorization, and codify efforts to increase the use of Federal Air Marshals.

I believe, together, these reforms will strengthen the Visa Waiver Program and take significant steps toward preventing those who seek to cause us harm from entering our country through this program, while at the same time maintaining legitimate travel and the benefits associated with this partnership. As the holiday season approaches, we must ensure that Congress acts swiftly. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson  
Chairman

Cc: Senator Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader