



Syrian Refugee Interview: The Diane Rehm Show

November 18, 2015

**The Diane Rehm Show on NPR (National)
Call in at 7:00am Pacific Time 10:00am EST
Live at 7:06am Pacific and 10:06am EST**

- You will be talking to the guest host Susan Page, current Washington Bureau Chief for USA Today.
- You will call [REDACTED]
- A landline preferred, but cell phone is acceptable.
- Contact is Senior Producer Lisa Dunn, Senior Producer, O: [REDACTED] M: [REDACTED]

Topic: White House conference call

- **Summary of the meeting:**
 - Representatives from the Obama administration outlined the federal screening processes, particularly for Syrian refugees coming to the United States...in response to questions raised by Governors. There was a commitment to follow-up in writing.
 - There is clearly bipartisan support among the states for increased transparency/collaboration with state officials
 - State leaders were assured that there will be continued dialogue and collaboration for increased information sharing and public transparency.
- **This isn't the type of issue that can be resolved with one conference call.**
- **Good to start the conversation, but our original concerns still exist.**
- We have received little to no security information...on these refugees' backgrounds. We need more collaboration and basic information such as where these refugees are residing.

Topic: Syrian Refugees

- North Carolina has a proud tradition...and humanitarian obligation...to provide a hand-up for those in need...including international refugees.
- However, because President Obama earlier this year increased the number of refugees from Syria coming into the United States from 2,000 to 10,000
- And because of the terrorist attacks in Paris...and the very real possibility that one of the terrorists entered France as a recent refugee...
- I am requesting that the federal government not send refugees from Syria to North Carolina until we are satisfied with the thoroughness...and effectiveness of federal background and security checks conducted on refugees entering our country.
- We are also reviewing refugee security from 33 special interest countries...in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security...and asking for more information on those who have arrived here to determine if additional direction is needed.
- **From January 2014 until October 2015 North Carolina has received 59 refugees from Syria.**
- To date...we have received little to no security information...on their backgrounds. We need more collaboration and basic information such as where these refugees are residing.
- I have instructed my Secretary of Health and Human Services Rick Brajer...and Secretary of Department of Public Safety Frank Perry...to work with and coordinate with appropriate federal representatives...and report their findings back to me.
- This concern is warranted.

- North Carolina has had connections to major terrorism activity in the past:
- For example, some of the terrorists involved in the 9-11 attacks had flight lessons in NC
- In September...a task force of the Homeland Security Committee...of the U.S House of Representatives...issued a report on “Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.”
- The task force issued 32 key findings...one of which was **“U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies remain concerned about terrorists posing as refugees. Agencies have made improvements to the refugee security screening process, but more must be done to mitigate potential vulnerabilities.”**
- Let me share with you another quote from the report, **“Members of terrorist groups like ISIS...have publicly bragged they are working to sneak operatives into the West posing as refugees...and European officials are worried that this is already the case.”**
- My primary duty as governor is to protect the citizens of North Carolina, which is why I am taking the steps I have outlined today.

Potential Questions:

Q: Governors from other states have **told** the president that they will refuse Syrian refugees, why is it that you are **asking** the president to stop sending Syrian refugees to North Carolina?

A: I am acting within my authority as governor, granted by the constitution, to ensure we keep North Carolina safe.

Q: To date, has there been any credible intelligence of any terrorist threats in North Carolina?

A: Not to my knowledge, at this point in time.

Q: Does North Carolina fund the NC Refugee Assistance Program?

A: All funding for the NC Refugee Assistance Programs is 100 percent federal.

Q: How many Syrian refugees have been relocated in North Carolina in recent months?

A: 59 refugees from Jan. 1 2014-Oct. 31 2015

Q: What are you planning to do with the 59 Syrian refugees that have already settled in North Carolina?

A: I have instructed my Secretary of Health and Human Services, Rick Brajer, and Secretary of Department of Public Safety, Frank Perry, to coordinate with appropriate federal representatives to gather more information about those Syrians who have been relocated to our state.