

HR 158

Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Immigration

Introduced: Jan 6, 2015

Current Status: Received in the Senate.

Latest Action: Received in the Senate. (Dec 9, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/158>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Miller, Candice S. [R-MI-10]

Party: Republican • **State:** MI • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (93 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. McCaul, Michael T. [R-TX-10]	R · TX		Jan 6, 2015
Rep. Sessions, Pete [R-TX-32]	R · TX		Jan 16, 2015
Rep. Messer, Luke [R-IN-6]	R · IN		Jan 20, 2015
Rep. Hudson, Richard [R-NC-8]	R · NC		Jan 26, 2015
Rep. Brooks, Susan W. [R-IN-5]	R · IN		Feb 3, 2015
Rep. Cramer, Kevin [R-ND-At Large]	R · ND		Nov 30, 2015
Rep. Kaptur, Marcy [D-OH-9]	D · OH		Nov 30, 2015
Rep. Kirkpatrick, Ann [D-AZ-1]	D · AZ		Dec 1, 2015
Rep. Loudermilk, Barry [R-GA-11]	R · GA		Dec 1, 2015
Rep. Dent, Charles W. [R-PA-15]	R · PA		Dec 2, 2015
Rep. Ruppersberger, C. A. Dutch [D-MD-2]	D · MD		Dec 2, 2015
Rep. Black, Diane [R-TN-6]	R · TN		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Byrne, Bradley [R-AL-1]	R · AL		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Collins, Chris [R-NY-27]	R · NY		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Cook, Paul [R-CA-8]	R · CA		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Culberson, John Abney [R-TX-7]	R · TX		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Donovan, Daniel M., Jr. [R-NY-11]	R · NY		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Esty, Elizabeth H. [D-CT-5]	D · CT		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Fortenberry, Jeff [R-NE-1]	R · NE		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Foster, Bill [D-IL-11]	D · IL		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Harper, Gregg [R-MS-3]	R · MS		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Johnson, Bill [R-OH-6]	R · OH		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Latta, Robert E. [R-OH-5]	R · OH		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Nunes, Devin [R-CA-22]	R · CA		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Pittenger, Robert [R-NC-9]	R · NC		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Poliquin, Bruce [R-ME-2]	R · ME		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Quigley, Mike [D-IL-5]	D · IL		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Sinema, Kyrsten [D-AZ-9]	D · AZ		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Smith, Jason [R-MO-8]	R · MO		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Stewart, Chris [R-UT-2]	R · UT		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Stivers, Steve [R-OH-15]	R · OH		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Wagner, Ann [R-MO-2]	R · MO		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Walorski, Jackie [R-IN-2]	R · IN		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Zinke, Ryan K. [R-MT-At Large]	R · MT		Dec 3, 2015
Rep. Abraham, Ralph Lee [R-LA-5]	R · LA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Aderholt, Robert B. [R-AL-4]	R · AL		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Ashford, Brad [D-NE-2]	D · NE		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Benishek, Dan [R-MI-1]	R · MI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Bilirakis, Gus M. [R-FL-12]	R · FL		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Bishop, Mike [R-MI-8]	R · MI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Bishop, Sanford D., Jr. [D-GA-2]	D · GA		Dec 7, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Boustany, Charles W., Jr. [R-LA-3]	R · LA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Bustos, Cheri [D-IL-17]	D · IL		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Carter, Earl L. "Buddy" [R-GA-1]	R · GA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Cicilline, David N. [D-RI-1]	D · RI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Cole, Tom [R-OK-4]	R · OK		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Courtney, Joe [D-CT-2]	D · CT		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Duckworth, Tammy [D-IL-8]	D · IL		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Duncan, Jeff [R-SC-3]	R · SC		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Ellmers, Renee L. [R-NC-2]	R · NC		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]	D · NY		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Garamendi, John [D-CA-3]	D · CA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Hartzler, Vicky [R-MO-4]	R · MO		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Hensarling, Jeb [R-TX-5]	R · TX		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Hill, J. French [R-AR-2]	R · AR		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Huffman, Jared [D-CA-2]	D · CA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Huizenga, Bill [R-MI-2]	R · MI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Jenkins, Evan H. [R-WV-3]	R · WV		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Jenkins, Lynn [R-KS-2]	R · KS		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Katko, John [R-NY-24]	R · NY		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Kline, John [R-MN-2]	R · MN		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Lance, Leonard [R-NJ-7]	R · NJ		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Long, Billy [R-MO-7]	R · MO		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Luetkemeyer, Blaine [R-MO-3]	R · MO		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Lujan Grisham, Michelle [D-NM-1]	D · NM		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Lummis, Cynthia M. [R-WY-At Large]	R · WY		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Lynch, Stephen F. [D-MA-8]	D · MA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Marino, Tom [R-PA-10]	R · PA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. McKinley, David B. [R-WV-1]	R · WV		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. McSally, Martha [R-AZ-2]	R · AZ		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Meehan, Patrick [R-PA-7]	R · PA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Miller, Jeff [R-FL-1]	R · FL		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Moolenaar, John R. [R-MI-4]	R · MI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Newhouse, Dan [R-WA-4]	R · WA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Perlmutter, Ed [D-CO-7]	D · CO		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Perry, Scott [R-PA-4]	R · PA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Peterson, Collin C. [D-MN-7]	D · MN		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Polis, Jared [D-CO-2]	D · CO		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Rangel, Charles B. [D-NY-13]	D · NY		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Richmond, Cedric L. [D-LA-2]	D · LA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Rouzer, David [R-NC-7]	R · NC		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Sanchez, Loretta [D-CA-46]	D · CA		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Schrader, Kurt [D-OR-5]	D · OR		Dec 7, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Smith, Adrian [R-NE-3]	R · NE		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Thompson, Bennie G. [D-MS-2]	D · MS		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Trott, David A. [R-MI-11]	R · MI		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Welch, Peter [D-VT-At Large]	D · VT		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Westerman, Bruce [R-AR-4]	R · AR		Dec 7, 2015
Rep. Boyle, Brendan F. [D-PA-13]	D · PA		Dec 8, 2015
Rep. Graves, Garret [R-LA-6]	R · LA		Dec 8, 2015
Rep. Royce, Edward R. [R-CA-39]	R · CA		Dec 8, 2015
Rep. Woodall, Rob [R-GA-7]	R · GA		Dec 8, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Homeland Security Committee	House	Referred to	Jan 23, 2015
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	Feb 2, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Immigration

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 2029	Related bill	Dec 18, 2015: Became Public Law No: 114-113.
114 S 2362	Related bill	Dec 7, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015

(Sec. 2) This bill amends the Immigration and Nationality Act regarding the visa waiver program to require that an alien, when applying for program admission, possess a valid unexpired passport that:

- is machine-readable, tamper-resistant, incorporates document authentication identifiers, and otherwise satisfies the internationally accepted standard for machine readability; and
- beginning on April 1, 2016, is an electronic passport that is fraud-resistant, contains relevant biographic and biometric information, and satisfies internationally accepted standards for electronic passports.

A program country must certify that:

- it issues passports that satisfy the internationally accepted standard for machine readability, and as of April 1, 2016, passports that satisfy internationally accepted standards for electronic passports; and
- by October 1, 2016, except for travel between countries within the Schengen Zone (26 European countries that have abolished passport and any other border control at their common borders), it has in place mechanisms to validate such passports at each key port of entry.

(Sec. 3) An alien shall be ineligible for program participation who:

- has been present, at any time on or after March 1, 2011, in Iraq or Syria, in a country designated as one that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, or in any other country or area of concern designated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS); and
- regardless of whether the alien is a national of a program country, is a national of Iraq or Syria, a country designated as a country that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, or any other country or area of concern.

Such prohibitions shall not apply to an alien who was present in such a country to perform military or official government service for a program country.

DHS may waive such prohibitions if in U.S. law enforcement or national security interests, and shall report annually to Congress on each waiver made in the previous year.

DHS shall determine and review annually whether such prohibitions shall apply to any country or area, considering whether:

- the presence of an alien in the country or area increases the likelihood that he or she is a credible U.S. security threat,
- a foreign terrorist organization has a significant presence in the country or area, and
- the country or area is a safe haven for terrorists.

(Sec. 4) A program country shall:

- report the loss or theft of one of its national's passports to the United States within 24 hours; and
- except in the case of a country without an international airport, and except for travel between countries within the Schengen Zone, certify to DHS that it is screening each entering or departing non-citizen or non-national for

unlawful activity by using Interpol databases and notices, or other means designated by DHS.

If DHS and the State Department jointly determine that a program country is not sharing information or conducting required screening, DHS shall terminate the country's program status, subject to specified conditions for reinstatement.

(Sec. 5) Certain reporting requirements are amended.

(Sec. 6) DHS shall evaluate program countries annually and identify and suspend from program participation any country whose nationals present a high U.S. security risk.

In suspending a country DHS shall consider:

- the number of nationals determined ineligible for U.S. travel during the previous year,
- the number of nationals identified in U.S. government databases related to the identities of known or suspected terrorists during the previous year,
- the estimated number of nationals who have traveled to Iraq or Syria at any time on or after March 1, 2011, to engage in terrorism,
- the country's capacity to combat passport fraud,
- the level of cooperation with U.S. counter-terrorism efforts, and
- the adequacy of the country's border and immigration controls.

DHS shall give Congress an annual evaluation and threat assessment of each country that presents a high U.S. security risk.

(Sec. 7) DHS shall:

- research opportunities to incorporate anti-fraud/deception technology into the electronic system for travel authorization; and
- collect from an applicant information on any additional or previous countries of citizenship, and consider such information when making admissions determinations.

DHS shall report annually to Congress on: (1) the number of individuals denied travel eligibility under the program or whose travel eligibility was revoked during the previous year, and (2) the number of such individuals who were determined to represent a U.S. security threat.

DHS shall report to Congress on steps to strengthen the electronic system for travel authorization.

(Sec. 8) DHS shall provide assistance in a risk-based manner to non-program countries to assist them in:

- submitting theft or loss of passport information to Interpol; and
- issuing and validating at ports of entry electronic passports that are fraud-resistant, contain relevant biographic and biometric information, and otherwise satisfy internationally accepted standards for electronic passports.

(Sec. 9) The electronic travel authorization system is renamed the electronic system for travel authorization.

(Sec. 10) It is the sense of Congress that:

- the International Civil Aviation Organization should establish electronic passport standards and obligate member countries to utilize them as soon as possible, and
- such passports should be a combined paper and electronic passport that contains biographic and biometric

information that can be used to authenticate identity through an embedded chip.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 9, 2015:** Received in the Senate.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** Mr. Goodlatte moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H9047-9061)
- **Dec 8, 2015:** ORDER OF PROCEDURE - Mr. Goodlate asked unanimous consent that debate on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 158, as amended, be extended by ten minutes on each side of the aisle. Agreed to without objection.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with one hour of debate on H.R. 158.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** At the conclusion of debate, the Yeas and Nays were demanded and ordered. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 8, rule XX, the Chair announced that further proceedings on the motion would be postponed.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** Considered as unfinished business. (consideration: CR H9061-9062)
- **Dec 8, 2015:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 407 - 19 (Roll no. 679).(text: CR H9047-9049)
- **Dec 8, 2015:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Dec 8, 2015:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 407 - 19 (Roll no. 679). (text: CR H9047-9049)
- **Dec 7, 2015:** Reported (Amended) by the Committee on Homeland Security. H. Rept. 114-369, Part I.
- **Jun 25, 2015:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Jun 25, 2015:** Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.
- **Feb 2, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.
- **Jan 23, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security.
- **Jan 6, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **Jan 6, 2015:** Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.