

S 1860

FIRST Freedom Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Immigration

Introduced: Jul 23, 2015

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S5533-

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (text of measure as introduced: CR S5533-5537) (Jul 23, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1860>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]

Party: Democratic • State: IL • Chamber: Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Jul 23, 2015
Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]	D · HI		Aug 5, 2015
Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI]	D · WI		Oct 6, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jul 24, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Immigration

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 3194	Related bill	Sep 8, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.

## Further Independence of Religion for Security and Tolerance Freedom Act of 2015 or the FIRST Freedom Act

This bill expresses the sense of Congress that:

- the protection and promotion of international human rights, including religious freedom, should be an important U.S. priority; and
- the United States should pursue new strategies to deter and punish the perpetrators of severe violations of religious freedom, including non-state actors, and to protect the victims of such violations.

The Immigration and Nationality Act is amended to authorize the Department of State to designate refugee groups:

- whose resettlement in the United States is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest; and
- who share common characteristics that identify them as targets of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, or having been so identified share a common need for resettlement.

The one-year time limit for filing an asylum claim is eliminated. A two-year window is provided for certain aliens to reopen a claim denied because of failure to file within one year.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is authorized to study: (1) whether immigration officers are engaging in improper conduct, and (2) the impact of interview delays on asylum claims.

The International Religious Freedom Act is amended to authorize appropriations for the Commission through FY2017.

Any alien who was responsible for, or directly carried out, at any time, particularly severe violations of religious freedom is inadmissible or deportable. (Current law is limited to foreign government officials who commit such acts.)

The federal criminal code is amended to require that any person who outside the United States commits, or attempts or conspires to commit, religious persecution against a U.S. person: (1) be fined, imprisoned for not more than 20 years, or both; and (2) if the death of any person results from the violation, be fined and imprisoned for any term of years or for life.

No person may be prosecuted, tried, or punished for such a violation unless the indictment or the information is filed within 10 years after commission of the offense.

### Actions Timeline

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- **Jul 23, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
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