

to the concerns voiced by more than half of the Nation's Governors, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle on both sides of Capitol Hill, and the American people from across the entire country.

After the September 11 attacks, we paused our refugee admission program to reassess its security vetting procedures, so there is precedent for suspending the refugee program, and this bill does not suspend the refugee program—only in regard to the single instance that I know; that is, we have been threatened that people were going to be snuck into the country under the umbrella of refugee, and of course that is from Iraq and Syria.

We need to move cautiously in accepting refugees from Iraq and Syria given the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, CA, and even elsewhere around the world. We need to fully understand the risks and the schemes that these terrorists are using before we open our doors to 10,000 more Syrians. Other countries face the same challenge.

Just last week, the French Interior Minister warned his colleagues about the intent of the Islamic State to use authentic-looking Syrian and Iraqi passports to smuggle its operatives into Europe. There is no doubt that the group has obtained thousands of blank passports and intends to facilitate travel by counterfeiting those documents, but more importantly, we must consider a pause in accepting these refugees until we can be sure our background checks and investigations are the best they can be. However, today there is little doubt, even from our leading intelligence officials that we may not be able to stop a Paris-like attack because we cannot tell who among the thousands of Syrian refugees that the administration wishes to resettle here are terrorists.

The Director of the FBI, James Comey, said: "My concern is that there are certain gaps . . . in the data available to us" in screening Syrian refugees. This data, such as fingerprints, background or biographic information, is crucial for adequate screening of potential refugees entering the United States. Director Comey also said: "There is risk associated with bringing anybody in from the outside, but especially from a conflict zone like that."

The United States has been successful in fighting off many large-scale terrorist attacks on our soil, but of course it only takes one mistake. Just last month, the FBI arrested two individuals who reside in the United States and entered the country as refugees, one of whom was arrested for attempting to knowingly and willfully provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant.

A Federal agent testified last week that one of the men charged planned to set off bombs at two Houston malls. I asked for the immigration and criminal histories of these individuals to investigate further and satisfy myself,

and I am still waiting for their response. The concerns are real. The threats are real. We cannot jeopardize our national security simply by rolling out our welcome mat to these terrorists.

President Obama's lack of strategy in Syria has exacerbated this human catastrophe. Similarly, this administration has no inclination or strategy to create conditions where refugees can one day return home safely to their own homes. By housing these refugees, the United States is only aiding in a short-term treatment of this whole massive refugee problem and the problems of warfare in the Middle East while at the same time risking the safety of the American people. We must instead focus on defeating ISIS and alleviating the current humanitarian misery, all while creating a future for Syrian refugees in their homeland.

The No. 1 responsibility of the U.S. Federal Government is to protect the homeland and to secure the country against all threats. Moving this bill on our vote tomorrow is one step we can take to advance this principle and to show our concern that the No. 1 responsibility of the Federal Government is the defense of the American people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADOPTEE CITIZENSHIP ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Adoptee Citizenship Act, legislation that will secure citizenship for adopted children. I wish to thank Senator COATS for co-sponsoring the bill with me, along with Senator MERKLEY, and Senator GILLIBRAND is also a cosponsor.

The Child Citizenship Act of 2000 guaranteed citizenship to most international adoptees. This was very important because sometimes children have been adopted, they come over to live in this country for years, and, in fact, for some reason—the paperwork wasn't filed—they do not actually have their citizenship. The problem with that law back in 2000 was that it did not apply to adoptees who were over 18 at the time the bill was passed. I am sure there were some reasons for that, but it really makes no sense because a kid who was 17 at the time and had been legally adopted was no different from a child who was 19 at the time who had been legally adopted.

What our bill does is very limited. It fixes that. The loophole denies some adult adoptees the right to citizenship even though they were legally adopted

by U.S. citizens and raised in the United States. They are over 18, so they have for the most part lived in the United States for a very long period of time. In fact, they were over 18 back in the year 2000.

The bipartisan Adoptee Citizenship Act would fix this problem by giving citizenship to international adoptees—people who were legally adopted, who were 18 in the year 2000 or older—regardless of how old they were when the Child Citizenship Act passed. These adoptees grew up in American families, they went to American schools, they lead American lives, yet adopted children who are not covered by the Child Citizenship Act are not guaranteed citizenship. Because of their lack of citizenship, adoptees have been refused admission to college and turned down for jobs. This constant threat to the life they know is unjust, and this bill would simply ensure that international adoptees are recognized as the Americans they truly are.

The bill is especially important in my home State of Minnesota. Many people don't know this, but Minnesota actually has one of the highest rates of international adoption in the country. Minnesota families have opened their homes and their hearts to children from all over the world—from Vietnam, to Guatemala, to Nepal, to Haiti.

As cochair of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, I have worked with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support adoptive families and children. Our children—all kids—deserve so much more than a roof over their heads and a bed to sleep in. Each and every child deserves a loving home, a nurturing family, and a brighter future. That is what this bill is all about. It fixes something. It closes a loophole. It has bipartisan support. I ask my colleagues to consider voting for it. There is obviously a lot of interest from adoptees all across the country who have been living with this, through no fault of their own, for years and years and years.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

MAJOR ADRIANNA VORDERBRUGGEN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor U.S. Air Force Maj. Adrianna Vorderbruggen, who was tragically killed in the line of duty 4 days before Christmas when a Taliban suicide bomber rammed his motorcycle carrying explosives into a joint NATO-Afghan patrol near Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan. She was the highest ranking military officer there who was killed. There were several others who tragically lost their lives as well.

Today I had the honor of attending the major's funeral service at the Fort Myer Memorial Chapel. Senator FRANKEN was also there. She was laid to rest with full military honors at the Arlington National Cemetery. She is survived by her wife Heather, her son Jacob, her father Joseph, and her brothers, Dan, John, and Chris. I will