



JANE CORWIN
Assemblywoman 144th District
Minority Leader Pro Tempore

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Corporations, Authorities and
Commissions Committee

COMMITTEES
Education
Environmental Conservation
Mental Health
Ways and Means

November 17, 2015

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing with a heavy heart and the grief and solemnness felt by compassionate people all over the world during this very tragic and disturbing time. On behalf of the thousands of concerned citizens, not only in my district, but across our state and nation, I am reaching out to you, as the Chief Executive in New York State, to learn what plans you have been and will be implementing to ensure the highest level of our domestic security and safety for our state.

While the geo-political events leading to the tragic displacement of thousands of Syrian refugees extends far beyond the scope of New York State's jurisdiction, based on the comments of Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, it is clear that local officials and residents are looking to both federal and state governments for direction and procedures regarding the accommodation of international refugees.

While many residents are more than willing to offer aid and assistance to refugees, the very justifiable fear causing hesitation to do so stems from the lack of transparency, public information, or semblance of a strategy to vet incoming refugees or a comprehensive contingency plan to accommodate them as well. Exercising caution does not represent a lack of compassion; it represents a common-sense approach to a global conflict that already has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent people.

The reality of the situation is, that given the horrific tragedies that devastated our state on September 11, 2001, the abhorrent attacks in Paris and Beirut this past week, and the myriad global attacks in between, New Yorkers recognize that the hatred and malice of terrorist organizations knows no bounds. It should go without saying that protecting our families and neighbors as well as protecting our borders from terrorist infiltration is of the utmost importance; however, the cavalier manner in which our federal government has agreed to intake refugees without presenting a comprehensive vetting process to the public is frankly disturbing.

In light of the federal government's mandate on refugee acceptance, I respectfully request the following:

- 1) A comprehensive and detailed plan of New York State's strategy to investigate the background and risks of every refugee entering our country;
- 2) A detailed procedure that every single individual entering our country must go through before being admitted into New York State;

- 3) The detailed process for placing, tracking and monitoring incoming international refugees; and
- 4) All of the aforementioned information be made public and presented to local law enforcement in order to maintain the highest level of security.

I am confident that you appreciate the gravity of the situation, and you are cognizant of the fear felt by the refugees fleeing their homes out of persecution, as well as that of so many in our community fearing the fight in the Middle East coming to our shores. I am also confident that you are aware of the importance of our vigilance in this matter and that our state's security protocols must be taken seriously.

I eagerly await your response to my request and look forward to working with you to provide continued security for New York State. If I can be of any assistance to you during this process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane L. Corwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jane L. Corwin
Member of Assembly
144th District