

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Governor Terry E. Branstad ☞ Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, Nov. 16, 2015

CONTACT: Governor's Office 515-281-5211

Governor Branstad orders halt to Syrian refugee
resettlements by state agencies

Governor calls for improved intelligence community review of process to ensure Iowans protected

(DES MOINES) – Today, Gov. Terry Branstad ordered all state agencies to halt any work on Syrian refugee resettlements immediately in order to ensure the security and safety of Iowans. In light of the Paris attacks, resettlement of Syrian refugees in Iowa should cease until a thorough review of the process can be conducted by the U.S. intelligence community and the safety of Iowans can be assured.

It has been publicly reported that the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, has expressed concern over the ability of the Islamic State to “infiltrate waves of Syrian war refugees flowing into Europe and potentially the United States.”

In the past, the federal government has failed to be forthcoming and transparent with information on refugee resettlement and immigration issues. Openness and transparency on resettlement is paramount to the safety of Iowans. The federal government must assure that refugees have been properly screened and security protocols have been taken before being allowed in the United States.

“We have welcomed refugees from around the world into Iowa. We must continue to have compassion for others but we must also maintain the safety of Iowans and the security of our state,” said Branstad. “Until a thorough and thoughtful review is conducted by the intelligence community and the safety of Iowans can be assured, the federal government should not resettle any Syrian refugees in Iowa.”

###