

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 12, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our deep concern with the growth of ISIL in Libya and ask that you use the authority recently granted to you by Congress to make individuals who travel to the North African country ineligible for visa free travel to the United States.

As you know, the “Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015” was signed into law on December 18, 2015. This law requires that foreigners who travel to Syria, Iraq, or countries designated as state sponsors of terrorism receive a visa before they can enter the U.S., even if they are otherwise eligible for the Visa Waiver Program. The law also requires the Administration to review and identify additional “countries and areas of concern” that should be subject to the law, due to their role as safe havens for foreign terrorist activity. This first determination under this provision must be made by February 16, 2016.

While we urge you to consider whether each of the countries where ISIL now has a presence should be added to the list that Congress included in the law, the case for adding Libya is clear. ISIL is exploiting the collapse of central authority and the proliferation of militias to create a safe haven in the energy-rich country. Current estimates suggest that there are more than 6,000 ISIL fighters currently in Libya, a threefold increase in just two years. Many are battle-tested fighters relocating from Syria and Iraq. These brutal terrorists now control hundreds of miles of Libyan coastline in and around the seaport city of Sirte – just 300 miles from Europe.

Indeed, as Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL Brett McGurk testified to the Foreign Affairs Committee this week, in Libya “they rose the flag of ISIL and it drew a lot of recruits like a magnet. We’ve seen the direct flow of resources, of command-and-control, of propaganda from ISIL core into Libya.” As Special Envoy McGurk explained, ISIL is trying to do in Libya “what they did in Syria – establish a state like structure.” This echoes testimony from CIA Director John Brennan, who told a Senate committee this week that “we see Libya as the most important theater for ISIL outside of the Syria-Iraq theater.”

We have already seen ISIL use Libya as a base from which to launch terrorist attacks. Last year the group struck twice in neighboring Tunisia, killing 20 foreign nationals at the Bardo Museum and 38 tourists at a seaside resort. Mr. Secretary, to help prevent ISIL from using Libya as a base

The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
February 12, 2016  
Page 2

from which to attack the United States, we strongly encourage you to make individuals who travel to Libya ineligible for visa free travel to the United States.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE



BOB GOODLATTE



MICHAEL McCAUL



CANDICE MILLER

Cc: Secretary of State John Kerry  
Director of National Intelligence James Clapper