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U.S. senators warn of terrorism concerns over Canada's acceptance of Gaza refugees

By **Clayton DeMaine, True North Wire** | July 26, 2024

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United States senators are sounding the alarm about Canada's plan to take in more refugees from Gaza and what that means for American security.

Senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, among others, penned a letter asking for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to increase security along the Canada-United States border, given the possibility of unvetted Hamas terrorists making their way to Canada through the Trudeau government's resettlement efforts.

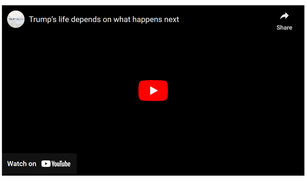
"The possibility of terrorists crossing the U.S.-Canada border is deeply concerning given the deep penetration of Gazan society by Hamas," the letter said. "It would be irresponsible for the U.S. to not take necessary heightened precautions when foreigners attempt to enter the United States."

The letter raises concerns about improperly vetted Gazans, who could have ties with terrorism, obtaining internationally recognized travel documents from Canada once their refugee claim is accepted, allowing them across America's "porous northern border."

Because Canada is expanding its temporary resident visa program to Gaza and the West Bank, the senators note that asylum seekers would be given a refugee travel document, which acts as a valid form of travel ID.

They said asylum seekers from the region are at higher risk due to "unreliable identification" and, as a result, would lack the same level of scrutiny and vetting as immigrants from other countries.

"Irrespective of Canada's immigration policies, the U.S. should not waive common-sense terrorist screening and vetting for any individual entering the U.S. through other countries," the letter said.



The senators noted the record numbers of suspected terrorists being caught at America's northern border as one reason to heighten security and disregard Canada's vetting process for immigrants from the region.

Conservative immigration critic Tom Kmiec said Justin Trudeau has to answer for this.

"It is common sense that any person coming to Canada from a conflict zone be properly screened to protect our national security," Kmiec told True North. "Justin Trudeau needs to answer for how 233 alleged terror suspects entered Canada and the even more embarrassing fact that U.S. border agents had to intercept them because Trudeau isn't doing his job."

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Field Operations has encountered more than 233 suspected terrorists at America's northern border so far in the fiscal year of 2024.

Canadian immigration experts have also raised concerns about the Canadian government's plans.

"The Gaza program is extremely ill-advised," immigration lawyer Sergio Karas told True North in an interview. "For lack of a better word, it's really stupid to have a program where you're going to bring in people without being able to vet them fully."

Karas said the infrastructure in Gaza makes background checks unreliable and therefore impossible.

"When you are vetting people from countries where terrorism is a way of life, who are you going to ask for information? How are you going to determine if a person has ties to Hamas or any other terrorist organization or if a person has family members who are connected with Hamas," he said.

Karas had outlined concerns with bringing in Gazan refugees before, in which he highlighted a survey which found over 70% of Gazans and those in the West Bank endorsed the Oct. 7 terrorist attack on Israel.

"All of these individuals that we're bringing without proper vetting are going to undermine Canada's relationship with the United States and the relative ease Canadians have enjoyed when travelling to the United States," he said.

He said the potential scrutiny Canada could face regarding its immigration policy could damage business, as travellers face delays and heavier screening and to Canada's reputation.

"We better get this under control and our own house in order before the Americans tell us what to do. They have the largest economy in the world and their population is like 10 times bigger than ours," he said. "They can live without us, and we cannot live without them, so we had better make nice of this."

Immigration Minister Marc Miller did not respond to a request to comment.

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