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OPINION COMMITTEE

CHARLES PERRY
TEXAS STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 28

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November 16, 2015

The Honorable Ken Paxton
Attorney General of Texas
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Attorney General Paxton,

In light of recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Governor Greg Abbott issued a strongly worded letter this morning to President Obama stating that Texas would not be accepting Syrian refuges. I wholeheartedly support our governor in this action and I am writing today to inquire about the legal authority available to the State of Texas as it relates to state and federal refugee programs.

Earlier this year ISIS released a list of potential future targets, with seven Texas cities explicitly mentioned: Abilene, New Braunfels, San Antonio, Wylie, Fort Hood, Bedford, and Killeen. With this knowledge, it is even more important for our state to know what actions are available to protect Texans against potential threats by those looking to seek refuge in our country and our state.

Below are questions I am seeking an opinion on in order to give the legislature and state policy makers further guidance on this issue.

- Must the State of Texas comply with restrictions on federal refugee dollars that are not found in the text of federal law?
- If the State of Texas is not bound by the restrictions mentioned above, is there a legal prohibition to the State of Texas performing security verifications when allocating refugee funding?

As a Texas State Senator, I took an oath to execute my duties to defend the United States Constitution and the Texas Constitution and I will continue to defend that oath with every fiber of my being. It is with this, I inquire into what the state's options are to protect itself from an inept and unresponsive executive branch that has left the citizens of the nation prone to attacks.

Sincerely,

Charles Perry
Texas State Senator

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