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## Multifaith Alliance Denounces House vote on Syrian Refugees

**New York, NY** – Today’s passage by the House of Representatives of the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015 – the so-called “SAFE” bill – is a step backwards for our nation. “Rather than enhancing the safety of our citizens, this bill chooses bigotry over compassion, hysteria over sound policy,” noted the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees, a project of Tanenbaum. By ratcheting up screening procedures for Syrian and Iraqi refugees, the bill could effectively prevent their resettlement in America at all.

During a highly-charged, sometimes xenophobic, debate which evaded the usual legislative scrutiny processes of the House, bill supporters attempted to characterize their action as a “pause” rather than a “halt.”

“By taking this action, the House undermines American values and history, and transforms our screening and security procedures, already the most stringent in the world, making them almost insurmountable,” said Alliance founder Dr. Georgette Bennett. “By equating Syrian refugees with terrorists, the House is blaming victims of terror for the evil actions of terrorists. The House action ensures continued suffering for even the most vulnerable and is a knee-jerk reaction to the horrific events of last week rather than a plan that will really protect us from harm.”

Dr. Bennett went on to note that pitting national security against resettling Syrian refugees is a false choice. “We can and must do both.”

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*The Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees, a project of the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, is a coalition of more than 50 faith-based and secular organizations. MFA mobilizes global support to alleviate the Syrian humanitarian crisis, heighten awareness of its growing dangers, and advance future stability in the region. Our activities include giving briefings in the U.S. and abroad about the crisis, facilitating relationships between complementary partner organizations working to help Syrian war victims, and nurturing transformative people-to-people diplomacy in the region.*