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[H.R. 4403, Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act, as amended](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Wednesday, April 13, 2016, the House will consider [H.R. 4403](#), Enhancing Overseas Traveler Vetting Act, as amended, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 4403 was introduced on February 1, 2016 by Rep. Will Hurd (R-TX), and was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security. The Committee on Foreign Affairs ordered the bill reported, as amended, by voice vote on February 2, 2016.

SUMMARY

H.R. 4403 would authorize the Secretaries of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State (DOS) to develop open-source software to vet travelers against terrorist watch lists and law enforcement databases, enhance border management, and improve targeting and analysis. No later than 60 days after H.R. 4403 is enacted, the Secretaries of DHS and DOS would be required to submit a report to Congress on a plan to carry out the requirements of this legislation.

This software and any related technical assistance may be made available to foreign governments or multilateral organizations in accordance with existing federal laws. No later than 15 days before this software transfer, the Secretaries of DHS and DOS, with concurrence from the Director of National Intelligence, shall certify to Congress that sharing this software is in the United States' national security interests.

BACKGROUND

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. has spent billions of dollars to help our allies close security gaps which may allow terrorists and foreign fighters to travel internationally, avoiding detection. However, the lack of a risk-based approach has increased the chances that gaps may still exist. Improving our allies' capacity would help improve security beyond national borders to mitigate threats before they reach the U.S.

In March 2015, the House of Representatives launched a bipartisan Task Force on Combatting Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel. Eight Members of Congress were charged with examining the threat to the United States from foreign fighters. The Task Force assessed domestic and overseas

efforts to obstruct terrorist travel and identified potential security gaps. They issued a final report on September 29, 2015.¹

A recommendation of the Task Force was made to direct the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to use ready-made hardware and software to help foreign partners conduct watchlisting, screening, and targeting of terrorists and foreign fighters.²

COST

A Congressional Budget Office estimate is not available at this time.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Molly Newell](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 2-1374.

¹ See [Final Report on the Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel](#) at 2.

² *Id.* at 51.