

Response to Questions for the Record from Rep. Russell Fry

Restoring Integrity and Security to the Visa Process

Hearing Date: June 25, 2025

1. Would you agree that foreign adversaries exploit our immigration system? Yes.

Foreign adversaries, such as terrorists, spies, gangs, and cartel operatives, have successfully exploited our immigration system for decades, and especially during the Biden Administration's tenure, when vetting standards were loosened and benefits such as parole and work permits were issued to a number of aliens who were a national security threat. Examples include dozens of terrorists who have used legal pathways to enter the United States ([How Militant Islamic Terrorists Entered the U.S.](#)), Chinese spies who have entered on student, exchange, and work visas ([Survey of Chinese Espionage in the United States Since 2000 | Strategic Technologies Program | CSIS](#)), MS-13 and 18th Street gang members who entered as unaccompanied minors, including some who later received Special Immigrant Juvenile Status ([RECORDS: HHS Sent Unaccompanied Minors to Sponsors with MS-13 Ties, Potential Trafficking Rings](#) and [USCIS Report Uncovers Significant Abuses in the Special Immigrant Juvenile Program | USCIS](#)), and most recently, Tren de Aragua and Hezbollah operatives from Venezuela who entered on parole and were awarded Temporary Protected Status (['Ghost criminals': How Venezuelan gang members are slipping into the U.S.](#) and [Report: ICE Releases Border-Crossing Terrorist Suspect from Venezuela Despite FBI Recommendation](#)).

2. Is it wise to lift a travel ban for Iranian nationals, or nationals from high-risk nations, who could exploit our immigration system? No. The United States does not have the ability to vet individuals from Iran and other countries with which we have a hostile relationship, or no relationship. Until these governments see fit to share security-related information with our government, we should only very rarely issue visas to nationals from high-risk nations like Iran.

3. Does Executive Order 14161 close security gaps in our visa process more effectively than the previous administration's approach, if so then how? Rather than operate on the hope that we can detect security threats, the Trump administration's approach recognizes that we cannot perform adequate vetting of applicants from certain countries, and so adopts a cautious, risk-assessment-based approach that seeks to stop visas in certain categories for certain travelers that have proven to be a risk. Some countries, like Sierra Leone for example, are subject to partial bans focused on the categories with high overstay rates. The

measurement of these overstay rates is *evidence* of a problem, and not a mere risk assessment.