

ELIMINATE THE VISA LOTTERY TO FURTHER THE GOALS OF THE 9/11 REPORT

The visa lottery was established by the Immigration Act of 1990, and grants approximately 50,000 foreign nationals per year visas to come and live permanently in the United States based on pure luck!

The 9/11 Commission Report states: “The challenge for national security in an age of terrorism is to prevent the very few people who may pose overwhelming risks from entering or remaining in the United States undetected.” It goes on to say that “For terrorists, travel documents are as important as weapons ... terrorists use evasive methods, such as altered and counterfeit passports and visas ... and immigration and identity fraud.”¹

Far greater than merely permitting terrorists to travel into the country, the visa lottery system may actually be granting terrorists and foreign spies the coveted status of legal permanent resident. With this tool in hand, terrorists would be free to travel, meet and plan terrorist activities with far less questioning than those who enter with fraudulent visas.

Eliminating the visa lottery would further the 9/11 Commission Report recommendation that “the United States should combine terrorist travel intelligence, operations, and law enforcement in a strategy to . . . constrain terrorist mobility.”² Perhaps no federal government-sanctioned program would do more to allow terrorist mobility than the visa lottery program.

The visa lottery program is wrought with fraud. A recent report released by the Center for Immigration Studies states that it is commonplace for foreign nationals to apply for the lottery program multiple times using many different aliases and other false personal information. In addition, the visa lottery program has spawned a cottage industry featuring sponsors in the U.S. who falsely promise success to applicants in exchange for large sums of money.

Eliminating the visa lottery program would further the 9/11 Commission Report recommendation that “At many entry points to vulnerable facilities, including gates for boarding aircraft, sources of identification are the last opportunities to ensure that people are who they say they are and to check whether they are terrorists.”³

H.R. 775, sponsored by Congressman Bob Goodlatte, would simply eliminate the visa lottery program and make the nation safer from terrorists.

¹ 9/11 Commission Report, pp. 383-384

² 9/11 Commission Report, p. 385

³ 9/11 Commission Report, p. 390