

Bonner County calls for halt to resettlement of refugees

SANDPOINT, Idaho (AP) — Bonner County commissioners are calling for the resettlement of refugees from Iraq and Syria to stop until security procedures are reviewed.

Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution Monday echoing Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter's call for the immediate halt of resettling new refugees until vetting rules can be reviewed, The Bonner County Daily Bee reports (<http://bit.ly/1I7Cgcr>).

The resolution says that approximately 4 million Syrian nationals have fled the country since 2011 and that there is a concern that members of terrorist organizations could infiltrate the country by posing as a refugee.

Commission Chairman Cary Kelly called the resettlement issue a big problem.

"I can assure you we're going to do everything we can to get our governors and people that represent us in Washington to put a halt to this," he said. "And that's what this resolution says — to halt the program until the whole vetting process is looked at."

The resolution was met with support from the crowd, with many in attendance saying they worry resettlement is at worst an attempt to overpopulate America with Muslims so Sharia law can be implemented, and at best a well-intentioned program that will import terrorists.

"We are opening the doors to people who hate us because we are non-believers of their Islamic faith," said John Weyant. "They will do anything and everything — lie, deceive, whatever they have to do — to get into this country."

While most meeting attendees were supportive of the plan, Mary Haley said the resolution will fuel misconceptions that North Idaho is full of racial and religious intolerance.

"This will have no effect other than to paint a Nazi symbol on North Idaho again,"
Haley said.

Information from: Bonner County (Idaho) Daily
Bee, <http://www.bonnercountydailybee.com>

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