



Letter: Let's debate the need for Trump's travel ban

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While the legality of President Donald Trump's temporary travel ban continues to be debated in the courts, we should also be considering the need for the ban.

Trump has argued that the ban is needed to develop new "extreme vetting" procedures. Over five months have passed since the initial order, and no new vetting procedures are in place. Refugees from the targeted countries continue to enter the country and yet there has been no increase in terrorist attacks.

Trump has said that the ban is necessary to keep Americans safe. However, a Department of Homeland Security report, first cited by the Associated Press, concluded that citizenship is an "unreliable" threat indicator and that people from the countries named in the ban have rarely been implicated in U.S.-based terrorism.

Trump's ban would not have prevented the major terrorist attacks in America, since the perpetrators were not from the countries covered in the ban. For example, of the 19 terrorists implicated in 9/11, not one was from the banned countries. The same is true for the attacks in San Bernardino, Orlando and Boston.

To put terrorist attacks in the United States in perspective, the Guardian reported that Americans are twice as likely to be shot dead by a toddler than to be killed by a terrorist. Further, a study by the Cato Institute noted that, on average, nine people have been killed per year by Islamist extremists in the U.S. since 9/11. By comparison, in 2015 alone, over 13,000 people were killed in the U.S. by firearms.

In summary, the Trump travel ban ignores the data and is not needed.