

Immigration ban could stymie progress

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To the editor:

What chutzpah! (This IS a family newspaper.) Are you really serious about those Feb. 25 complaints regarding poor President Trump's mistreatment at the hands of Democrats, Robert Lee? Let us consider just one area of current Trump policy: immigration bans.

One in over 3.5 million; one in over 3.6 billion. Those are your chances of being killed in a terror attack on U.S. soil by, respectively, a foreign-born terrorist, or by a refugee. A 2016 study by the respected Cato Institute included other items of interest in the current immigration debate.

From 1975 through 2015, 154 foreign-born terrorists killed 3024 people in attacks within the U.S. Besides the 2983 deaths that Cato points to on one tragic day, Sept. 11, 2001, another 41 died on American soil at the hands of foreign-born terrorists during that period. None were killed by terrorists native to the seven nations, first identified by the previous administration, now within the crosshairs of President Trump. The 19 terrorists responsible for those 9/11 deaths, notably, hailed from other nations. Interestingly, 168 deaths charged to American-born terrorist Timothy McVeigh, in Oklahoma City, exceeded the average per terrorist (157) on 9/11.

Since an American is 253 times more at risk of being murdered, here, by someone other than a foreign terrorist, over Cato's study period, couldn't President Trump better direct his efforts at, say, rational gun legislation, instead?

What else could a myopic response to terror cost? Consider a ban on immigration from Iran, alone. An Iranian native — an engineering professor — has proved critical to Mars rover research over several years. Research by another Iranian native has helped control the Ebola virus. Yet others have been working on new ways to treat HIV/AIDS; human genetics and tuberculosis; astrophysics; quantum computing, etc. Sadly, some have been snagged in the netherworld of post-Jan. 20 immigration orders.

Given these considerations, will an American someday be more likely to thank this president for saving him/her from the microscopically low risk of murder by a foreign terrorist; or, blame him as America falls far behind in important scientific research? What critical medical breakthrough could you miss?