

# Tennessee to Sue Feds Over Unconstitutional Refugee Resettlement

[69 to 25 margin.](#)

“Today we struck a blow for Liberty by finally adopting SJR467,” State Senator Mark Norris (R-Collierville), the co-sponsor of the resolution who shepherded it through the State Senate, tells Breitbart News.

“The General Assembly clearly understands the importance of public safety and state sovereignty as demonstrated by the overwhelming support of this Resolution for which we are thankful. The Syrian surge heightens our sense of urgency to get this properly before the courts, and we urge the Attorney General to act without delay,” Norris adds.

Tennessee, which withdrew from the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program in 2008, will now become the first state to sue the federal government over its operation of the program within the borders of its state on Tenth Amendment grounds. [Alabama and Texas are currently suing](#) the federal government over the refugee resettlement program on the narrower grounds that it has failed to comply with the Refugee Act of 1980.

“As a state legislator, it is my duty to fulfill my oath and to exercise Constitutional authority,” House sponsor State Rep. Terri Lynn Weaver (R-Lancaster) tells Breitbart News.

“I take it seriously to do all I can to protect the sovereignty of our great state. Either we abide by the Tenth Amendment or we ignore it,” she adds.

“It’s time for states to say no more federal overreach and [I] really believe that the federal government was created by the states and not the other way around,” Weaver says.

“Proud to have been involved in the process. It’s been a long road,” State Rep. Judd Matheny (R-Tullahoma) tells Breitbart News, adding:

*I held our first hearing in 2013 to look into this issue and I believe we have exhausted very option other than a law suit. I am very proud of [House resolution lead sponsor] State Rep. Terri Lynn Weaver (R-Lancaster) and her steadfastness, as well as the House Republican Caucus for sticking with this fight to this conclusion.*

The House added an amendment to the resolution that first sailed through the State Senate in February which specified the lawsuit would be conducted at no cost to the state. The State Senate passed that amended resolution Tuesday.

It is now a certainty that Tennessee will sue the federal government.

The only unknown is whether Gov. Bill Haslam, a Republican, will add his support to the resolution, and whether Tennessee Attorney General Herbert Slatery will represent the Tennessee General Assembly.

Haslam [previously indicated](#) he has reservations about the law suit.

Under Tennessee law, resolutions of the Tennessee General Assembly do not require the governor’s signature to become effective.

The resolution calls for the Attorney General to consider representing the General Assembly in federal court. Should the Attorney General choose not to represent the General Assembly, the [Thomas More Law Center](#), a respected public

interest law firm, has said it will represent the state at no cost.

It is unclear how long the General Assembly will give the Attorney General to make up his mind.

Tennessee is one of twelve states that have withdrawn from the program in which the federal government has, without statutory authority, handed over the resettlement of refugees to “voluntary agencies” (VOLAGs) under a regulation concocted from thin air by the Department of Health and Human Services known as “the Wilson-Fish alternative program.”

The other Wilson Fish alternative program states are Alaska, Alabama, Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Vermont.

State legislatures, governors, and gubernatorial candidates in several of these states have already expressed an interest in following Tennessee’s lead or joining Tennessee’s lawsuit, sources tell Breitbart News.

As Breitbart News reported, the operation of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program has become a [lucrative industry](#) for a number of voluntary agencies, many of which are affiliated with Christian organizations.

The passage of the resolution is timely, as the Obama administration has stepped up its efforts to increase refugee resettlement recently.

The administration announced it would [accelerate the vetting time for Syrian refugees](#) from two years to three months in order to meet its self-imposed goal of bringing in 10,000 refugees from that country during the fiscal year which ends in September.

In March, the Partnership for a New American Economy, a left-wing pro-immigrant group [announced](#) that they have selected twenty American communities to receive “Gateways for Growth” financial grants because of their receptive attitude to immigrants.

Pro-immigrant activists within and external to the U.S. State Department appear intent on distributing resettled refugees to many small and medium-size cities around the country.

In South Dakota, for instance. a Wilson-Fish alternative program state, the small city of Aberdeen (population 26,000) has recently been targeted by that state’s voluntary agency, Lutheran Social Services, as a