Newsmax

Dem Rep. Stephen Lynch: 72 DHS Employees on Terror Watch List

Monday, December 7, 2015 09:18 AM

Seventy-two Department of Homeland Security workers are on the U.S. government's terror watch list, according to a Democratic congressman.

In an interview last week with on **National Public Radio station WGBH** in Boston, Rep. Stephen Lynch said the number of DHS employees on the watch list was uncovered as part of a broader investigation of the Transportation Security Agency.

The probe also uncovered a massive failure of the TSA's screening process and resulted in the **resignation of TSA Director Melvin Carraway.**

"Back in August, we did an investigation — the inspector General did — of the Department of Homeland Security, and they had 72 individuals that were on the terrorist watch list that were actually working at the Department of Homeland Security," Lynch told Boston Public Radio hosts Jim Braude and Margery Eagan.

"The director had to resign because of that.

"Then we went further and did an eight-airport investigation. We had staffers go into eight different airports to test the Department of Homeland Security screening process at major airports. They had a 95 percent failure rate. We had folks — this was a testing exercise — so we had folks going in there with guns on their ankles, and other weapons on their persons, and there was a 95 percent failure rate."

Lynch was one of 47 Democrats in the House that backed a GOP bill to make stricter the screening process for Syrian refugees entering the United States. President Obama has floated a plan to allow 10,000 Syrian refugees into the U.S. and in his Thanksgiving address compared them to **Pilgrims on the Mayflower.**

But Lynch and other Democrats in the House agree with Republicans that bringing in refugees with an unreliable vetting process creates an **enormous security risk.**

"I have very low confidence based on empirical data that we've got on the Department of Homeland Security," Lynch said. "I think we desperately need another set of eyeballs looking at the vetting process. The vetting that's being done at major airports where we have a stationary person coming through a facility, we're failing 95 percent of the time.

"I have even lower confidence that they can conduct the vetting process in places like Jordan, or Belize or on the Syrian border, or in Cairo, or in Beirut in any better fashion, especially given the huge volume of applicants we've had seeking refugee status."

The terror watch list also has been a hot button in the fight over gun control. Democrats are pushing to ban those listed from being allowed to buy guns. The move is also **supported by NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton.**

"If Congress really wants to do something instead of just talking about something, help us out with that terrorist watch list, those thousands of people that can purchase firearms in this country," Bratton said Sunday on **"Meet the Press."**

But Republicans say the list is too broad and shows how liberals immediately target **gun laws.**

Related Stories:

- **GOP May Use Spending Bill Against Obama's Refugee Plan**
- **Sen. James Risch: ISIS Has 'Found a Back Door' Into US**