



January 29, 2017

At IICONN, we denounce the executive order announced late Friday afternoon that follows through on President Trump's extreme and troubling campaign promises. The executive order takes extremely severe and un-American measures under the guise of "protecting the nation from terrorism by foreign nationals." The executive order:

- Suspends the US refugee admissions program for four months, effective February 3rd
- Announces the implementation of revised "extreme vetting" procedures for refugee admissions
- Ceases the processing of Syrian refugees and bars Syrians from entering the United States indefinitely
- Upon resumption of the refugee program, reduces the ceiling of refugee admissions in FY17 (October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017) from 100,000 to 50,000 and prioritizes refugees who were persecuted in their own countries on the basis of their religion

IICONN adamantly opposes these actions and calls upon the Judicial and Legislative branches of our government to take all possible action to prevent and/or rescind these actions from being taken. At IICONN, we steadfastly stand on the side of refugees knowing that the United States has a long history of being a nation of refuge and opportunity for all people seeking peace, safety and freedom. The US has been a leader in refugee resettlement and, for close to 40 years, this program has had deep bipartisan support. The United States has a proud tradition of welcoming people feeling violence and persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. The refugee resettlement program saves lives. If the program is suspended we will be leaving in limbo thousands of people - who have already been approved for admission - the majority of whom are languishing in refugee camps or continued humanitarian crisis.

We strongly oppose a policy change that would deny access to refugees based on their religion or nationality. The refugee admissions program is designed to bring persecuted people out of humanitarian crisis and give them an opportunity to live in safety, with security, education, health care and all the basics human rights to which all people are



entitled. To open the program to some - but not all - eligible refugees is deeply discriminatory, and is counter to our national values of equality and inclusion. Using such ideas as a religious litmus test for safety is an affront to religious liberty. At IICONN, we adamantly oppose any measure that bans or limits entry to the United States by law-abiding citizens of specific countries or specific faiths.

The current security vetting process for refugees is already “extreme.” Each refugee must undergo multiple security screenings (by the National Counterterrorism Center, Department of Homeland Security, FBI, Department of Defense, and State Department), in-person interviews, medical screenings, and biographical and biometric checks. This rigorous, detailed process ensures that refugees are vetted more intensively than any other category of traveler to the US. Each step of the security check process is time sensitive and a pause will force refugees who were set to arrive in the United States soon to instead wait months and even years to go through fingerprinting, interviews, health screenings, and multiple security checks all over again, while their lives are in danger.

The draft order purports to protect America from terrorism. As Madeline Albright said on Friday: “The truth is that America can simultaneously protect the security of our borders and our citizens and maintain our country’s long tradition of welcoming those who have nowhere else to turn. These goals are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, they are the obligation of a country built by immigrants.”

At IICONN, our mission is to assist refugees and immigrants resolve legal, economic, linguistic and social barriers so that they become self-sufficient, integrated and contributing members of the community. We remain fiercely committed to this mission. **Our work will continue, even if programs and federal funding are suspended or reduced.** We are here and will remain on the side of the communities we serve. Today, our work is more important than ever.

Your help can make a significant difference to the immigrants, refugees and survivors we serve. Please consider a gift to the International Institute of Connecticut



so that we can maintain our capacity to help those we serve. Today, your help is needed more than ever.

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Take action:

- Please visit this link for an analysis of yesterday's executive order: <https://thefugeecenter.org/how-will-president-trumps-executive-order-affect-refugees/>.
- **Call Congress** - Your Senators and Representatives: (202) 224-3121* (Please call this line 3 times to be connected with your 1 Representative and 2 Senators)
- **Send a message** to whitehouse.gov/contact and comment on a post on the White House Facebook page: [Facebook.com/WhiteHouse](https://www.facebook.com/WhiteHouse)

IICONN has been working since 1918. We stand strong. Thank you for standing with us.

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