

INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION COALITION

African American Ministers in Action
American Baptist Home Mission Societies of
the American Baptist Churches, USA
American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish Committee
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Bethany Christian Services
Bread for the World
Bridges Faith Initiative
Center for Migration Studies
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Refugee and Immigration Ministries
Christian Community Development
Association
Christian Reformed Church
Church of the Brethren World Service
CLINIC | Catholic Legal Immigration
Network, Inc.
Columban Center for Advocacy and
Outreach
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Daughters of Charity
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faith in Action
Faith in Public Life
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
HIAS
Ignatian Solidarity Network
Interfaith Worker Justice
Irish Apostolate USA
Jesuit Refugee Service
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Justice Revival
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
Muslim Public Affairs Council
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters
of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Justice for Our Neighbors
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social
Justice Lobby
Pax Christi USA
Presbyterian Church USA Office of
Immigration Issues
Scalabrian International Migration Network
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Sojourners
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Association of
Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness
Ministries
United Methodist Church, General Board of
Church & Society
UNITED SIKHS
U.S. Jesuit Conference
World Relief

February 11, 2020

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chairman
Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doug Collins
Ranking Member
Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler and Ranking Member Collins,

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition is composed of 55 national, faith-based organizations brought together across many theological traditions with a common call to seek just policies that lift up the God-given dignity of every individual. In partnership, we work to protect the rights, dignity, and safety of all refugees and migrants. As co-chairs of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, we write in support of the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214). The NO BAN Act must be passed in committee with no changes or amendments, except that which update the bill to reflect the January 21, 2020 presidential proclamation, "Improving Enhanced Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry." We find the current Muslim Ban and its recent expansion morally reprehensible.

Our diverse faith traditions compel us to welcome one another with love and compassion, regardless of place of birth, religion, or race. All of us are called to love our neighbor—all of our neighbors. Generations of immigrants and refugees have made this country great with their ideas, hard work, resilience, and traditions. U.S. policies on immigration and refugee resettlement should recognize the gifts, contributions, and struggles of immigrants and refugees, ensuring justice and protection for all.

Interfaith Immigration Coalition leaders offer the following quotes about the expanded Muslim ban:

"Since 2017, families from the countries covered by the original travel ban have been frustrated time and again in their efforts to reunite with loved ones. The administration's promised waivers for humanitarian travel are all but nonexistent. Adding more countries to this shameful policy will serve only to keep more families stuck on opposite sides of the globe from each other," said **Bishop Jaime Soto, board chair of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.**

"Communities across the country have been organizing against racist, xenophobic and anti-Muslim policies such as the Muslim ban, and will continue to organize. We understand that an attack on any of us—especially targeted communities—is an attack on all of us. Urgent action is needed to protect the lives of people from countries affected by the ban, but instead the U.S. is continuing a dark history of legalized oppression. These countries in the expanded ban are mostly African, highlighting the ways in which this administration continues to target immigrants of Black and African origin. AFSC calls upon people from all faith traditions as well as those without religious affiliations to join us and stand in solidarity with the Muslim and African community. We will not stand for xenophobic policies that target and criminalize Muslims or any other communities," said **Mary Zerkel, Coordinator of American Friends Service Committee's Communities Against Islamophobia Program.**

"The Christian Reformed Church has long encouraged its 'congregations and individual members to speak out against, and seek to reform, laws and practices concerning the treatment of immigrants that appear to be unduly harsh or unjust,' so we are compelled to speak out in opposition to new travel restrictions placed on these additional countries. This policy change is not only discriminatory, but it also prolongs the separation of families longing to be reunited with loved ones and limits our ability as the Church to fulfill our biblical calling to welcome the stranger," said **Rev. Reggie Smith, Director, Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America.**

"Today we hear that, again, our government will further limit the peoples who can enter this nation. We know that, with this announcement, families will remain separated, and those in danger will have no safe place to turn," said the **Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, "As Presbyterians, we worship God and that worship is guided by the teachings in Isaiah 58. We cannot please the Lord with fasting and prayer if we also oppress and deny others their dignity. Worship that is pleasing to the Lord lifts the yoke of oppression and shares hearth and home. We will continue to be faithful and demand that the actions done in our name do not further harm those who are oppressed and those separated by borders."

"Three years ago, when President Trump introduced his first discriminatory ban, we pledged to fight it at all costs. With the expansion of the ban, we remain as committed to that fight as ever," said **Reverend John L. McCullough, President and CEO of Church World Service**. "We have seen the horrific impact of the ban on the refugee and immigrant families we serve, so expanding it is not only morally reprehensible, but contrary to everything that has long made the United States a beacon of hope. Keeping loved ones apart, simply because of where they come from, takes that hope and replaces it with despair. We call on Congress to defend our values and stand up to such brazenly discriminatory policies."

Sheila Katz, CEO, National Council of Jewish Women, stated: "As Jews, we know what it's like to wish others would respond while policies rooted in religious injustice are carried out. We know what it's like to seek a haven and a better life in the United States. We know what it's like to be turned away out of fear and prejudice under the guise of 'security.' The Muslim Ban is an affront to these Jewish values and the U.S. Constitution."

"For Christians, the president's Muslim ban is an issue of faith. How we treat people of different backgrounds, particularly immigrants and other marginalized groups, is a test of our faith in the scriptures. No family or community should be separated because of their religion, their national origin, or the color of their skin—but that's exactly what Trump's Muslim ban has done and what his expanded ban would continue to do. We must protect the rights of people of all religious backgrounds and nationalities to be with their families. The president's Muslim bans have not been about national security, but have been consistent with his rhetoric vilifying and insulting Muslims, people from African countries, and people of color in general. Therefore, we will continue to oppose the administration's Muslim bans and urge Congress to pass legislation that prevents the president and future occupants of the Oval Office from banning people because of their religion, race, or nationality," said **Paola Fuentes Gleghorn, the Immigration and Women and Girls Campaign Coordinator for Sojourners**.

"Today, we remember in sadness families separated and hopes for protection dashed in the first refugee and Muslim ban announced three years ago. In our remembering, we are recharged to continue our efforts to ensure religious discrimination will never be allowed to infect our U.S. policies towards the refugees and immigrants our faith calls us to welcome. Scripture urges we 'set at liberty the oppressed'; not oppress the liberty of the world's most vulnerable," said **Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea, Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries**.

Stephen Schneck, PhD, Executive Director, Franciscan Action Network said: "The Muslim ban goes against everything that we stand for as Franciscans and against what Jesus and Francis of Assisi taught and lived. It is morally wrong to single out one group of people based on their faith. Our country was founded to be a place of refuge and community, not fear and hate."

"Enshrined and inherent in America's founding is the assertion that all people are created equal. Muslim bans, no matter what new rhetorical flourishes are used to describe and defend them, are just that: bans on Muslims," said **Hannah Graf Evans, the Immigration and Refugee Policy Legislative Representative for the Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)**. "No president should be able to enact such racist, Islamophobic policies – policies that blatantly target Muslim citizens, immigrants, and visitors – in the near complete absence of congressional action or oversight. Freedom of religion – and the first amendment – must stand for something."

"In our ever-evolving, interconnected world, the exclusion of innocent people has no place. President Trump's expanded Muslim ban is anathema to the American spirit. Our common humanity calls us to meet the other with respect, guided by internationally agreed upon laws and informed by human rights, the dignity of the person, compassion and mercy," said **Lawrence E. Couch, director of the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd**.

Sincerely,

Katie Adams

Policy Advocate for Domestic Issues
United Church of Christ
Co-Chair, Interfaith Immigration Coalition

Faith Williams

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Co-Chair, Interfaith Immigration Coalition