



The Friends Committee on National Legislation's Statement for the Record, as it pertains to the House Committee on the Judiciary Markup of the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214)

February 12, 2020

The Friends Committee on National Legislation strongly opposes President Trump's indefinite bans on nearly all travel from now thirteen nations, unduly targeting Muslim-majority and African nations. These bans – in all their iterations – result in heartbreak and injustice for countless families across the globe. **FCNL urges members of Congress to end the executive authority to enact such discriminatory bans by passing the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214).** We applaud this Committee's strong message that racism, bigotry, and Islamophobia cannot be the basis for immigration or security decisions.

We read in America's founding documents the assertion that all people are created equal. We read in scripture a clarion call to love thy neighbor without exception. The NO BAN Act is a long overdue congressional solution to end the unchecked, expansive, and discriminatory Muslim, refugee, and asylum bans issued over the last three years that stand against these values.

No president should be able to enact such wide-reaching and destructive policies, especially absent stronger congressional oversight mechanisms. The basis of each of these bans is section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), which has been broadly interpreted by the Trump administration to exclude major groups of people. It is essential that Congress revise the INA so that no other president can issue such a wide-ranging executive order determining who our nation welcomes based on religious animus or bias. **FCNL strongly supports the NO BAN Act mark-up and passage on the House floor.**

The NO BAN Act would amend section 212(f) by:

- **Outlawing discrimination** against immigrants or travelers entering into the U.S. based on religion, in addition to the existing legal protections against discrimination based on race, sex, nationality, place of birth, and place of residence.
- **Repealing each ban iteration** that existed upon introduction of the bill, which unduly affected Muslims, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- **Adding additional requirements and reporting mechanisms** to limit any future administration's authority to issue similar bans in the future without clear justification and robust congressional oversight.

It is especially important to FCNL that the government not use religion as a determining factor to ban people from traveling to or calling this nation home. Members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) came to this country more than three hundred and fifty years ago amid religious persecution in Europe. As a Quaker-governed institution, FCNL urges members of Congress to do everything in their power to re-affirm our commitment to protect religious freedom and eradicate racism and bigotry in our national policies.