

Statement for the Record from TX-29 constituent Elizabeth Morales impacted by Muslim Ban

Dear Congresswoman Garcia: I am writing to you today to ask for help in my K-1 Visa case. I am the petitioner for my Iranian fiancé, Behrouz Sharifi. More than two and a half years ago my life changed when I met my now fiancé through one of my really great friends, his brother. Shortly after getting engaged in Turkey on August 19, 2017, we decided to apply for the K-1 Visa. At the time, fiancé visas were still not removed for approval when the Muslim Ban (H.R. 810) was introduced. We rushed in getting all of the necessary requirements and fees to be able to submit our petition before anything could change. To our surprise, a month later K-1 visas were also implemented in this bill. It has now been two years since the last time I was able to see my fiancé other than by Facetime. Our plans to see each other in Turkey again, fell through after I was laid off from my job in March 2019. Everything just seemed to be piling up and by not having him here while all of this was happening, took a toll on my health. Not a day goes by where I am not on the CEAC website checking the status of our case. I constantly e-mail the Abu Dhabi Embassy, where he had his interview more than 14 months ago. However, an automated e-mail has been the only response we get since shortly after his interview took place. Our calls go unanswered and if they were, the officers just do not seem to have a response as to when our petition for the K-1 Visa will be approved. We are still in Administrative Processing with no change or update since his interview; July 12, 2018. The ban affected us all deeply. Exactly what and why are we waiting for an approval this long? At the time of his interview, he was not allowed to submit statements for the waiver nor was he given an explanation as to what it was or how the waiver process worked. I simply do not understand how a bill could go into effect when the immigration officers do not even know how it works. Nobody does. It is pointless and I feel as if it was directed towards a certain group of people.

I, as an American Citizen, feel that the right to fall in love with whomever I CHOOSE to, has been taken from me. All due to the fact that he was born in Iran. My fiancé didn't have the right to choose to be born in Iran either and yet that seems to be the only obstacle standing in the way of our happiness. When will I get to share my happiness with all of my family and loved ones? I myself don't even know when this nightmare will end. What gives anyone the right to choose for me or stand in the way of a future next to Behrouz, a wonderful, hardworking and honest man?

I have tried reaching out to our other two State Senators, but I have had no luck; they are Republicans and I cannot count on them to have empathy towards our case. I received a message from Senator Cornyn applauding Trump's cause and not offering any help for my case. It was a door shut straight on my face. These past two years have taken a toll on my dreams, yet my hope and faith still keeps me strong to keep fighting for this cause. My next step was to contact someone that would give my case a voice louder than what I could give. I implore you, if there is anything you can do to help my case move towards and approval, I will be eternally grateful. You are my voice and I am thankful for your representation. Sincerely, Elizabeth Morales

Beneficiary Name: Behrouz Sharifi