

A JOINT STATEMENT IN OPPOSITION TO PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ANTI-IMMIGRATION EXECUTIVE ORDERS

February 1, 2017

We, the undersigned Hawaii-based organizations, join the Muslim Association of Hawaii to oppose and reject the recent anti-immigration executive orders issued by President Donald Trump. There is no place in Hawaii and our nation for racist, discriminatory and ill-advised national policies as put forth by the Trump Administration. These orders, that (1) halt refugee admissions from all countries for at least 120 days, (2) indefinitely halt the admission of Syrian refugees, (3) lower the number of refugee admissions to the United States, (4) directs Department of Homeland Security to determine the extent to which state and local jurisdictions may have greater involvement in determining the placement or resettlement of refugees in their jurisdictions, and (5) suspend all entry of individuals from certain Muslim-majority countries are based on the misguided idea that certain religious and ethnic populations are more prone to violence and are incompatible with American values. The Trump Administration's executive orders are an un-American and mean spirited ban on Muslims, issued under the guise of protecting our country.

This is not the first time we have seen national security used as the basis to discriminate against ethnic minorities. Executive Order 9066, issued in 1942 during World War II, resulted in the unlawful internment of over 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry based solely on their race. Like Executive Order 9066, these orders will not make our communities safer or our nation stronger, and in fact undermine our standing in the world community as an enduring symbol of freedom and democracy.

Our communities have experienced exclusion by law from the 1800s through the 1960s — with bans on country admission like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Immigration Act of 1924. Our communities, especially our Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and South Asian communities were viewed with suspicion and hate, and subjected to violence in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

Our rights and liberties as Americans are not made stronger by excluding others. Rather, the strength of our local communities and our nation is based on embracing people from all over the world. We are a state and a nation of immigrants that should honor our native peoples as well as those who seek refuge here.

Refugees, like other immigrants, enrich our communities and contribute significantly to American society. We oppose efforts to reduce the number of refugees entering the United States and recognize the hope that the United States represents to those in humanitarian crises. Refugees encounter a high level of scrutiny and security screening before arriving in the United States, often taking almost two years. Those refugees who are admitted for resettlement are usually the most helpless and vulnerable and have fled violence or persecution.

Muslim Americans have made lasting and significant contributions to the United States in business, science, engineering, sports, entertainment and many other facets of American society. This long-standing history and relationship began in 1777 when the predominately Muslim Kingdom of Morocco became the first country to recognize the United States, and in 1787, ratified the Treaty of Peace and Friendship that still remains in effect. America is better and stronger today because of the contributions of Muslims who were part of U.S. history from its very beginnings. President Barack Obama said it best, "Muslim Americans are our friends and our neighbors, our coworkers, our sports heroes. And yes, they are our men and women in uniform who are willing to die in defense of our country."

We stand together as partners in peace and justice with our Muslim brothers and sisters here in Hawaii, throughout the U.S., and abroad in opposing the Executive Orders put forth. We stand together to support the rights of immigrants and refugees and will oppose further policies that rely on exclusion based on religion and ethnicity. Our multi-cultural, multi-racial community in Hawaii is a testament to the fact that we are stronger together as inclusive, diverse, respectful, peaceful communities and we call upon other organizations, communities, and individuals to stand together with us, demonstrating our spiritual values of compassion, respect, kindness, and aloha.

In strength and solidarity,

AFRICAN AMERICAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF HAWAII
AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION, HAWAII CHAPTER
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, HAWAII CHAPTER
FILIPINO AMERICAN ADVOCACY NETWORK
FILIPINO AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HONOLULU
HARRIS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
HAWAII COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS
HAWAII STATE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
HAWAII FILIPINO LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
HAWAII FORGIVENESS PROJECT
HAWAII FRIENDS OF CIVIL RIGHTS
HAWAII J20
HAWAII WOMEN LAWYERS
HONOLULU HAWAII NAACP
JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE, HONOLULU CHAPTER
MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII
NATIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, HAWAII CHAPTER
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FILIPINO AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS, REGION 12
PACIFIC GATEWAY CENTER
THE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE HAWAII
UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION, HAWAII CHAPTER
YOUNG PROGRESSIVES DEMANDING ACTION