



CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER JOHN CHIANG

NEWS RELEASE

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Treasurer Chiang, 27 Asian American Office Holders Decry President Trump's Muslim Ban

*****Read Letter in Full Below*****

SACRAMENTO – State Treasurer John Chiang and influential Asian Pacific Islander Americans elected to local, state and federal offices today asked President Donald Trump to rescind his “unconstitutional executive order shutting our nation’s borders to travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries based solely on their race and religious beliefs.”

The letter, included below, is signed by:

John Chiang, California State Treasurer

Betty Yee, California State Controller

Fiona Ma, Chairwoman, California State Board of Equalization Member, Second District

Ted Lieu, Member of Congress, House of Representatives, 33rd Congressional District

Dr. Richard Pan, Member, California State Senate, 6th District

Rob Bonta, Chair, California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus
Member, California State Assembly, 18th Assembly District

David Chiu, Member, California State Assembly, 17th Assembly District

Phillip Y. Ting, Member, California State Assembly, 19th Assembly District

Kansen Chu, Member, California State Assembly, 25th Assembly District

Ash Kalra, Member, California State Assembly, 27th Assembly District

Evan Low, Member, California State Assembly, 28th Assembly District

Adrin Nazarian, Member, California State Assembly, 46th District

Ed Chau, Member, California State Assembly, 49th Assembly District

Al Muratsuchi, Member, California State Assembly, 66th District

Theresa Mah, State Representative, Illinois General Assembly, 2nd District

Ron Kim, Member, New York State Assembly, 40th District

Yuh-Line Niou, Member, New York State Assembly, 65th District

Mark L. Keam, Member, Virginia House of Delegates, 35th District

Stephen Sham, Vice Mayor, City of Alhambra, California

Jeffrey Koji Maloney, City Council Member City of Alhambra, California

Ali Sajjad Taj, Mayor, City of Artesia, California

Mark Pulido, Councilmember, City of Cerritos, California

David E. Ryu, Councilmember, City of Los Angeles, California

David Lim, Mayor, San Mateo City Council

Rishi Kumar, City Councilmember, City of Saratoga and Director, California, California League of Cities API Caucus

Basim Elkarra, Trustee, Area 5, Twin Rivers Unified School District

Ameya Pawar, Alderman, City of Chicago, Illinois

Josina Morita, Commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, Illinois

Here is the full text of the letter:

Dear President Trump:

The Asian Pacific Islander American community is outraged over your unconstitutional executive order shutting our nation's borders to travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries based solely on their race and religious beliefs.

Your 2,800-word executive order drips with cruel irony as it turns away refugees trying to escape the same Islamic terrorism and violence that you naively claim will be repelled from our shores if we only embrace your bigoted and cowardly directive.

Your ban on Muslims is not only unconstitutional, it forsakes the core values that make America great: equality, fair play, and the shimmering promise that the United States is a welcoming place for those "yearning to be free."

As Americans we have been taught to take pride in our diversity and our constitutional right to religious freedom. As Asian Pacific Islander Americans we will not stand idly by as you attempt to pervert this nation's melting pot into a boiling cauldron of intolerance, hate, and division.

APIA federal, state and local elected officials demand an immediate cancellation of your order. In just days, you have managed to sow fear and confusion among thousands of travelers, impacting foreign visitors and legal United States residents alike. There are no reports – or even claims – that any of those who have been turned away from flights or detained posed a credible terrorist threat. They are students, scientists, and interpreters serving America's interests.

As Asian Pacific Islander Americans we also know what it is like to be labeled "other," to become victims of state-sponsored racism, bigotry and xenophobia. Our Chinese ancestors came here to build the transcontinental railroad in the mid-1800s, only to be officially excluded from our shores with Congress' passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Many of our families were left out of the United States because of the Immigration Act of 1924 which banned Arabs and Asians from coming to our country.

And we can never forget World War II, when we locked up innocent U.S. citizens because, in a misguided hysteria to further national security, we deemed the Nisei enemy agents, simply because they were Japanese American. Many of those incarcerated went on to heroically fight in the U.S Army, helping to defeat Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and Imperial Japan.

We wrongly believed these shameful ill-begotten episodes had been consigned to the junk pile of American history – and that the sins of our past, seared into our social memory, would forever inform and guide our better future.

Yet here we are. It is happening again – in 2017 – leaving us shocked, angry and forced to wear the shroud of indignity you have tossed so casually over the nation. Our Muslim brethren are being mistreated because of their faith, dress, and customs. This is un-American.

President Trump, your executive order is breaking up families; separating children from parents; casting a pale over our centuries' old rule of law and punishing people because of the pigmentation of their skin and the deity they worship.

The history of Asian and Pacific Islander American communities allows us to walk in the shoes of Muslims, today. That is why we stand in solidarity with our fellow Muslim-Americans and immigrants. We view your attack on them as an attack on us.

If there is ever a time to stand on the right side of history, it is now.

Please, Mr. President, reverse your divisive and illegal order. America deserves better.

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