

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 1, 2017

A broad group of Maine community groups, faith leaders and advocacy organizations issued the following statement in response to President Trump's executive orders that target Muslim immigrants and refugees:

We are community organizers, ministers, rabbis, imams, lawyers, and teachers. We are mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, brothers, and friends. We were born in Somalia, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mexico, the United States and other countries. We are all in America for different reasons, and we are all here for the same reasons.

We were born here. We came to get an education. We were recruited to work in American industries. We came because our homes and our towns were burned to the ground. We fled threats against our lives and the lives of our families, because we cooperated with the American government or spoke out against corrupt leaders or have the wrong political or religious beliefs.

Some of us may speak differently, dress differently, or pray differently than you do – just as French Canadian and Irish immigrants before us did – but we want the same things.

We are here because we are trying to live the best lives that we can. Because America offers the promise of safety, of freedom, of hope, for ourselves and for our families. This is the American dream.

President Trump's executive orders are everything the American dream is not. They are meant to drive fear into people's hearts. They are meant to divide our communities and turn neighbor against neighbor. They value the religious beliefs of some over others. And they ignore the lessons of history, which teach us that when we make policy based on fear, not fact, we always look back in shame.

President Trump's executive orders have already caused chaos and confusion. They have left families divided by oceans. They have left our Muslim brothers and sisters feeling alienated and unsafe. And they have called into question our president's commitment to the Constitution.

Today, we join together to call on Maine's elected leaders to do everything in their power to put a stop to these unconstitutional policies. The very fabric of our nation is at stake.

Signed,

ACLU of Maine  
Belinda Ray, City Council, District One, Portland  
Catama Productions  
Catherine Besteman, anthropologist

Community Financial Literacy  
Congregation Bet Ha'am  
Dd Swan, Nonprofit Coach and Minority Health Consultant  
Ethan K. Strimling, Mayor, City of Portland  
Frannie Peabody Center  
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project  
Immigrant Resource Center Of Maine  
Iraqi Community Association of Maine  
Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine  
Kristen Cloutier, City Council President, City of Lewiston  
Mabel Wadsworth Center  
Maine Equal Justice Partners  
Maine People's Alliance  
Maine Women's Lobby  
Mano en Mano | Hand in Hand  
Martin Luther King Jr. Fellows  
Morning Glory Arts Therapy  
NAACP Portland Branch  
New England Arab American Organization  
New Mainers Resource Center  
New Ventures Maine  
Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund  
Planned Parenthood of Northern New England  
Rev. Christina Sillari, First Parish Portland Unitarian Universalist  
Rev. Jennifer Emrich, First Universalist Church of Yarmouth  
Rev. Maria Anderson-Lippert, St. Ansgar Lutheran Church, Portland  
Rwandese Community Association in Maine  
Sarah Lewis, nonprofit director  
Southern Maine Workers' Center  
Welcoming the Stranger

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