

JCPA Guidance on New Executive Order Targeting Refugees

While we believe that this ban is less draconian than the original, it is still highly problematic, as it still restricts the entry of refugees from Muslim-majority countries. It also should be understood as a direct challenge to America's "nation of immigrants" narrative so fundamental to our identity. There are a few key differences from the original January 27th order. Specifically, the new order:

- Applies to six not seven countries: Sudan, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen—Iraq was removed from the list. However, like the original, no visas will be issued to people from these countries for 90 days.
- Halts all refugee admissions for 120 days, but no longer marks Syrian refugees for harsher treatment than others. The original order barred Syrian refugees indefinitely.
- No longer applies to legal permanent residents or green card holders, or people who had visas by January 27.
- No longer gives preferential treatment to refugees from a minority religion in their home country. This provision in the original order was widely interpreted as a work-around that would have enabled the US to continue accepting Christian refugees from the specified countries.
- Authorizes the Department of Homeland Security to make additional changes to the refugee and visa process, such requiring more information from applicants from certain countries.
- Caps FY17 refugee admissions at 50,000, which is less than half of what the Obama administration committed to last year.
- Revokes the January 27th order and takes effect March 16, whereas the previous order took effect immediately.

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New York, NY – In light of the revised White House Travel Ban from Six Muslim majority countries of today, David Bernstein, President and CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, issued the following comments:

“While the revised Executive Order makes a few changes that limit the effect of the original ban, we continue to oppose such a travel ban because it reduces the number of refugees coming into this country and still specifically names Muslim-majority countries. There’s no evidence that refugees from these countries represent a special threat.”

“I’m very concerned about the overall impact of the Executive Order, deportations and remarks about immigration coming from the White House. America is at its best when it is at its most hospitable. We are a country that prides itself on being a safe-haven for refugees. Immigrants and immigration have always been an incredible source of vitality. Unlike many other countries, America has a special knack for integrating and incorporating immigrants. It’s a source of pride. We should be proudly proclaiming

our immigration narrative from our rooftops, not shrinking from it and closing our borders. JCPA's opposition to the Executive Order has as much to do with the challenge it poses to America's sense of self as a nation of immigrants than any specific policy."