



Statement from the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care on the Executive Order on Refugees and Immigrants

January 29, 2017

The National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC) publicly dissents to the Executive Order issued by the President on Jan. 27, 2017 restricting temporary entry of refugees into the United States. This order not only blatantly discriminates against Muslims, it directly undermines the human rights of refugees and constitutional protections of others seeking entry into the US, and it runs directly against the social justice core values of our organization.

The NCIHC is a multidisciplinary organization whose mission is to promote and enhance language access in health care in the United States and we represent thousands of individuals who have devoted their lives to assure the well-being and equal treatment of all individuals in accessing quality health care. The NCIHC pursues our mission with a commitment to social justice, respect for and acceptance of all peoples, including small communities, native peoples, and cultural communities whose tradition is oral, the empowerment of limited-English-proficient communities, and the evolution of culturally appropriate practices in training. Our goals include a framework that promotes acceptance and respect for all individuals and we sponsor a national dialogue of diverse voices and interests. Refugees are key stakeholders to our organization as they work as interpreters and translators, are hospital administrators and health care workers, and are patients with rights to equal access to care.

We are proud of the work we have done through our internationally recognized *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care*. Significant tenets in those documents include **Impartiality** -- equal access for anyone and everyone; **Respect** for all parties; and a core value of **Beneficence**. As we write this statement, we are practicing yet another tenet – that of **Advocacy** which is exercised when the health, well-being, or dignity of individuals is at risk. The Executive Order to ban individuals from entering into our country runs counter to these tenets and core values of our profession. It targets our stakeholders which is not only in violation of our organizational mission but goes against basic constitutional and internationally recognized human rights. Access to a safe home and adequate health care, regardless of status, nationality, or religion, should be protected at all costs. For these reasons, NCIHC strongly denounces this ban and urges authorities to rescind this Executive Order.

NCIHC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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National Council on Interpreting in Health Care

2614 Connecticut Ave, NW, #119 | Washington, DC 20015 | 202.505.1537 | info@ncihc.org | NCIHC.org