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CMEAA Statement on Banning Immigrants on Basis of Nationality

LANSING, Michigan - On Friday, January 27, 2017, the White House issued an Executive Order titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States" relating to visa issuance, screening procedures, and refugees. The Executive Order "suspends" the immigrant and nonimmigrant entry of nationals from the designated countries of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen to the United States for at least 90 days. It also suspends refugees' entry into the United States for a minimum of 120 days, and in the case of Syrian refugees, indefinitely.

We join all Americans in our concern about national security but the newly signed series of executive orders is tearing apart families and further displacing thousands of vulnerable refugees, in desperate need of a place of refuge. Furthermore, the Administration has let down nationals from the seven affected countries, as well as, the refugees who have already underwent an arduous immigration process. Despite this, no assurances can be made to the refugees as the Administration has provided limited explanation of the changes or what to expect in the future.

There is still confusion about the interpretation of the executive orders, leading to uncertainty and fear in many households. To those Michigan families, the Commission pledges its support to help them understand the nuances of the executive order and impact upon the Middle Eastern American community.

We wish to impress upon all the importance of the United States remaining a beacon of hope for those seeking refuge from oppression and persecution. As a nation built of immigrants, we must stand together against these divisive policies aimed at the exclusion of human beings solely on the basis of race, religion, or ethnicity.