

As the elected body that represents Duke's 3,400 faculty, we wish to express our strong disagreement with President Trump's January 27th executive order banning entry to the United States of the citizens of seven majority Muslim nations. Section 5(b) of the order entertains entry of Christians and other religious minorities from these seven nations, but not their Muslim compatriots. That notion is inconsistent with America's highest ideals of religious tolerance and the free expression of religion.

The order also directly undermines the free exchange of students, faculty and staff across international boundaries, an exchange that lies at the heart of the twenty-first century research university. We are especially concerned that the order may prevent some of us, and some of our students and colleagues, from entering the United States to engage in the kind of education, medical research and collaboration for which Duke is known. It will also prevent members of our community from leaving the United States, for fear that they will not be readmitted.

Like other institutions across the country, Duke draws its community of committed faculty, staff and students from nations around the world. The closing of our borders is therefore a direct challenge to the very heart of our enterprise. The need to protect the United States from terrorism requires careful vetting of all visitors, but does not justify a ban on all refugees and on the citizens of these seven nations.

Moreover, we urge the President and Congress to respect America's ideal of religious tolerance and to support the free exchange of students, faculty and other scholars across international boundaries.