



January 31, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

As President of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) I am reaching out to you on behalf of our 124,900 members and with respect to recent actions you have taken on immigration and homeland security. These actions have resulted in significant confusion and concern among the medical community in general and in particular our members and the patients they serve. As the physicians most likely to provide critical primary care services in this country to all who reside here, we are writing to express the importance of this nation continuing its historical tradition of welcoming immigration and the talent and energy these individuals bring to this country. The AAFP promotes and advances the work of family physicians from all religions, races, ethnicities and cultures in the United States and around the world.

The AAFP membership reflects the diversity that makes our country strong. As an organization, we are adamantly opposed to discrimination of all types, including policies that identify or isolate individuals based on their gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality or geographic location. We are deeply troubled that any individual family physician and her/his patients could face discrimination or be singled out for scrutiny based on any of these criteria because of this executive order. Fully engaging all talent and expertise in the healthcare community leads to better health outcomes, diversity in medicine and should be encouraged.

We are deeply concerned that steps your Administration has taken will have a chilling effect on our nation's physician workforce, biomedical research, and global health. It is often America's physicians who answer the call to assist people around the world when a public health crisis occurs. Imagine a world where physicians fail to answer the call of the needy because they fear they may not be able to return to their home and families in the United States.

Many family physicians are international medical graduates, who have completed all or part of their education and training in the United States. They are professionals who dedicate their careers to the service of their patients in communities large and small, urban and rural. In fact, 20 percent of our membership and over 25 percent of family medicine residents are comprised of international medical graduates. The AAFP applauds and supports wholly the contributions of these individual family physicians to their patients and communities and we celebrate their diversity.

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We recognize that one of your primary responsibilities as President is to ensure the safety and security of the country and its citizens. This is, without question, a daunting responsibility. But we strongly urge that the methods of doing so be examined carefully, so that the many people who can add so much to our country through immigration have the opportunity to do so, and those who are doing so already are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. It is only this way that our values and highest aspirations can be fulfilled.

We request that your Administration urgently re-evaluate the scope and breadth of your Executive Order issued on January 27, 2017. As previously stated, we fear that its continued application will have a chilling effect on the medical profession in this country and the delivery of health care and may negatively impact access to care for millions of people in this country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Meigs, Jr." followed by initials "MS".

John Meigs, Jr., MD, FAAFP
President