

February 2, 2017

Dear Colleagues and Students,

This past weekend, we communicated to the university community that we would assess the impact that the recent [White House executive order](#) on immigration would have on UConn and our students, faculty, and visiting scholars.

As you may know, the executive order has blocked refugees from entering the U.S. and specifically bars people from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen from entering the U.S. for a period of time.

We have determined that no UConn students or faculty have been stranded as a result of this action. In addition, following our assessment, UConn's Office of Global Affairs provided [this information and guidance to our community this week](#).

This guidance includes advising affected international faculty and students – and their families – not to travel outside of the U.S. during the period of time this order is in effect, as they would not be allowed to return.

This is among the most disturbing and dispiriting pieces of advice we have had to provide in our professional lives.

As a university and as a state agency, UConn is firmly non-partisan and is neutral on questions of politics. When public policy is enacted that will affect the university or members of our community, we believe it is our responsibility to provide an honest assessment of what that effect will be.

In keeping with that, we strongly believe this action is, and will continue to be, harmful to UConn – and all American colleges and universities. It has created an unjust hardship for thousands of scholars and students. It has potentially prevented them from returning from abroad to their U.S. institution, forced them to decide against returning to their home country for fear they will be barred from reentering the U.S., and has likely divided families in the process.

We at UConn place great value on our international population, as they help make us a truly global institution and enrich our campuses. We are deeply disturbed by the nature of this action and by its effects.

Yet this order transcends both politics and public policy. At issue are our fundamental values as a nation, and as a people.

February 2, 2017

Page 2

For millions of Americans, this is not an abstraction; it is highly personal because so many of us are immigrants, or are the children or grandchildren of immigrants. Many came to the U.S. because they were fleeing war, famine, or persecution by oppressive governments – including persecution based on religion. And America promised liberty and the opportunity for a better life.

As a university, we are steadfastly committed to openness, inclusion, and to treating our fellow human beings with dignity, compassion, and respect. The executive order issued last Friday is antithetical to these values.

We will continue to do all we can to work with allies such as the Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities, and others, to oppose this harmful action and try to mitigate its negative effects.

Sincerely,

Susan Herbst  
President

Jeremy Teitelbaum  
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs