

Resolution # 66-09

**The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)
The Pennsylvania State University**



of the 66th Assembly
February 1, 2017

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

**Call for Support to the Students Affected By the Executive Order on
Immigration**

(Decided: [Y / N / A])

Nature of the Situation:

One of GPSA’s primary goals is to create a forum in which issues and concerns of graduate and professional students can be addressed. Moreover, as representatives of the graduate and professional student body, it is incumbent upon us to introduce resolutions that provide protections and support for our constituents.

President Trump issued an executive order on Friday January 27th, 2017 titled “*Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.*” This order, in summary, prevents entry of nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries into the United States for at least 90 days. It also prevents entry of refugees for at least 120 days from all countries and indefinitely in the case of Syrian refugees. This order directly impacts Penn State students and professionals who are citizens of the mentioned countries. This entails that students from these countries cannot enter the U.S. once they leave it. If a student happened to be outside the country when the order was issued, he or she will be denied entry upon returning. It is important to note that the latest federal courts’ rulings regarding the emergency stay on the order only affects permanent residents (a.k.a. Green Card holders) and not individuals on student or exchange visas such as most students at Penn State, who are not protected by the Immigration and Nationality Act. The White House Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus, has mentioned the possibility of adding more Middle Eastern countries to the list on “*Meet the Press.*”

1 International students make up one in four students in the graduate school and 10% of the whole
2 Penn State student population including undergraduates. According to the Director of
3 International Student and Scholar Advising, about 200 Penn State individuals are citizens of the
4 countries listed in the executive order, including undergraduate, graduate, law and medicine
5 students across all campuses. One visiting scholar from Iran is stranded in his home country
6 unable to come to the U.S. Another case involves a graduate student whose wife couldn't come
7 back because she was visiting back home (source: *The Daily Collegian*).
8

9 This order has been met with protests by students at Penn State throughout the weekend and on
10 Monday. An online petition has been circulated asking the university to take further steps to
11 protect the affected students.
12

13 **Recommended Course of Action:**
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- 15 1. On behalf of the graduate and professional student body, the GPSA recognizes President
16 Eric Barron's commitment to the protection of the affected students enrolled in the Penn
17 State system, and asks that the University maintains that support.
- 18 2. GPSA urges all students from the affected countries to remain vigilant and follow the
19 guidelines outlined by President Barron in his message as well as the guidelines set forth
20 by Dr. Adewumi (Vice Provost for Global Programs).
- 21 3. GPSA asks Penn State University to take the following steps to protect the affected
22 students:
 - 23 • Advocate for U.S. Congressional action that allows students on F-1/2 visas to re-enter
24 the country, similar to permanent residents.
 - 25 • Provide legal resources to students within Penn State and those stranded in airports
26 and make sure that students are well-informed regarding their legal rights.
 - 27 • Provide the appropriate counseling through Counseling and Psychological Services
28 (CAPS) to meet the psychological needs of the affected students who might not be
29 able to return home for a considerable amount of time.
 - 30 • Take all reasonable steps to allow students who cannot physically be on campus due to
31 the executive order to continue their education online.
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Respectfully submitted,

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Delegate, At-Large (College of Engineering)

Matthew Krott
Chair, GPSA Advocacy Committee; Delegate,
College of Engineering

Kyler J. Sherman-Wilkins
Chair, GPSA Human Diversity Sub-Committee; Delegate, College of the Liberal Arts

President _____ Affirm Veto