



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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NYC Council Caucuses Issue Statement on Anti-Immigrant Executive Orders

New York — The New York City Council’s Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus (BLAC) and Progressive Caucus (PC) stand together in fierce opposition to President Trump’s executive orders implementing more aggressive exclusion and deportation operations for immigrants and the announced executive order banning entry of refugees and other migrants from majority-Muslim countries. These actions are rooted in racism, protectionism, and xenophobia, and they harken to the ugliest moments in modern human history.

Members of the City Council Progressive Caucus and the BLAC unite under the charge to create a more just and equal New York for all New Yorkers, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or documentation status. As champions of progressive values in New York City and advocates for New York City’s communities of color, our Members are often on the front lines against institutional racism and other discriminatory practices—especially those threatening constitutional protections. We are alarmed and outraged at the President’s regressive proposals and his continual affront to immigrant communities and threats to cities that protect them. We unequivocally rebuke these executive orders as obstacles to unity and insults to the rich cultural contributions of our nation’s immigrant population.

Our caucuses have long fought against Islamophobia and xenophobia, most recently joining together in 2016 to adopt Resolution 1230 “[d]eclaring support for Muslim communities, affirming the religious pluralism of the United States, and urging all residents to stand together for peace and understanding,” and to adopt Resolution 1321 “[a]ffirming that despite president-elect Donald Trump’s senseless threats, New York City will remain a Sanctuary City for immigrant residents.” We will continue to stand in solidarity with Muslim and immigrant communities and ensure that we live in a city that is a sanctuary for all New Yorkers.

“President Trump’s Order is not about national security. It is an act against humanity based upon religious and cultural persecution. How many of our world’s leaders are Latino? Muslim?...As people of color, we must ask the most pertinent question, “What group may be next? As the Co-Chair of one of the largest organizations of elected officials of color in the United States, we have banded together to let our Latino and Muslim brothers and sisters know that we are united with you and we denounce President’s Trump’s actions.” **said Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., Co-Chair of the BLAC.**

Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Co-Chair of the Progressive Caucus and member of the BLAC, said, “We must send a message to the Trump administration that these policies are simply unacceptable. The functioning of this country depends on its immigrants, and refugees depend on this country for their lives. As a first-generation son of immigrant parents, I want to make sure that everyone, regardless of where they come from, has the same opportunity I was given. I am proud to stand with my Council colleagues to say we must remain a sanctuary city, no matter the cost, and that we must build bridges, not walls.”

Council Member Ritchie Torres, Co-Chair of the BLAC and member of the Progressive Caucus, said, “The President’s upcoming orders to build walls and selectively prevent immigrants from coming to the United States based on their country of origin do not align with our American ideals, our foundation as a nation of immigrants, and are simply destructive. By choosing to isolate our nation, our neighbors and discriminate against immigrants, the President is undermining American values that make America great.”

"The United States is a country that was built on the back of immigrants and are a part of the American story," said **Council Member Donovan Richards, Co-Chair of the Progressive Caucus and member of the BLAC**. "In today's political and social climate, it is as important than ever that we all work together to root out discrimination and intolerance. These proposals for a ‘Muslim Ban’ and a ‘Mexico wall’ are deeply troubling and disheartening as our neighbors of all religious and cultural backgrounds deserve to live in a world where they are not persecuted for their beliefs."

“Though we suspected these executive actions would come in the first weeks of a Trump administration, it does not make them any less detestable or contrary to established American values that have endured through all modern Presidencies – both Republican and Democratic,” said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin, Co-Vice Chair of the BLAC and member of the Progressive Caucus**. “I join my Progressive and Black, Latino and Asian Caucus colleagues in denouncing these actions, as well as the hate and prejudice that has, sadly, made its home in the White House.”

"New York City is and always has been a City of immigrants. No Trump wall or executive order will ever change that and force us to betray our values," said **Council Member Ben Kallos, Vice-Chair for Policy for the Progressive Caucus**. "During these extremely challenging times, all New Yorkers must stand united against divisive rhetoric and policies that run contrary to the beliefs New Yorkers hold dear."

“To be the leader of the free world, America must live up to its values. Our refugee settlement program has long been a beacon to the world, and has, over the last number of decades, helped more than 3 million people in the hour of greatest need. President Trump’s executive order banning refugees from the very places whose people need relief the most is a stunning betrayal of our moral responsibilities. His proposed border wall is a physical symbol of the same cowardly and politically craven worldview. I join my colleagues in condemning the President’s actions,” said **Council Member Rosenthal, Vice-Chair for Budget Advocacy for the Progressive Caucus**.

"These despicable actions go against everything our country stands for," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, member of the BLAC and the Progressive Caucus**. "A wall is a silly, expensive and ineffective way to solve a non-existent problem. We also damage our standing on the

world stage when we deny refugees a safe haven, especially when they flee a conflict America has contributed to. We will speak loud and clear that these actions are not in our name and will only yield self-inflicted wounds in the eyes of people around the world and here at home.

“Since its founding, America has been a beacon of hope for people across the world, and it is a shame in his first week in office President Donald Trump has decided to undermine what this country espoused: opportunity and freedom.” said **Councilman I. Daneek Miller, member of the BLAC and the Progressive Caucus**. “Since his campaign, my fellow Muslim brothers and sisters have come together to express our dismay with the rhetoric that has incensed violence in New York and across the country. His actions have been irresponsible and neglects the great contributions which Muslim, Latino, and other immigrants from around the world gave to America. We know that our country is better than this and I call on him to stop these actions and enact policies that bring us together instead of tearing us apart.”

“Our City, neighborhoods of immigrant families, will unite, resist and protect each other. While the President orders the building of a wall and a dozen other measures to reinforce our borders, here in NYC, we have already built a wall against hate. While the President orders the end of sanctuary cities and announces aggressive interior enforcement, here in NYC, we are a proud city of sanctuary for every New Yorker and we are working around the clock to ensure that we are prepared to defend immigrant New Yorkers through existing legal support programs. While the President orders a ban on the entry of individuals from Muslim majority countries, here in NYC, we passed a resolution supporting Muslim communities, affirming the religious pluralism of the US, and urging all residents to stand together for peace and understanding. We do not stand with the divisive, inhumane and backward policies that have been announced today,” said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca, Chair of the Committee on Immigration and member of the BLAC and Progressive Caucus**.

“Here in Queens, we know that our different backgrounds and faiths make us stronger, and we will stand united against anyone who seeks to divide us. If the President institutes a Muslim registry, I will register. If he follows through on his threats to deport hardworking immigrants, who are our neighbors, family, and friends, I will join with millions of others in keeping them safe. We will stand united against hate and fight back in defense of our shared values,” said **Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, member of the Progressive Caucus**.

“Keeping immigrant families together is our top priority in New York City. We will not allow the Trump Administration to create a racist witch hunt that will destroy communities and uproot families. We will not cooperate with ICE and its deportation efforts that disrupt our security. And we will not be intimidated by threats to strip Federal funding. The New York City Council will defend every New Yorker and their right to remain in their homes and thrive.” said **Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Chair of the Committee on Finance**.

“New York City will not be bullied by President-elect Trump’s xenophobic Executive Orders into abandoning the core rights and values that define our diverse immigrant city,” said **Council Member Brad Lander, member of the Progressive Caucus**. “The NYC’s Progressive Caucus will continue to support and tirelessly defend the rights of NYC’s immigrants against this administration and any other that attempts to undermine our ideals of equality, inclusion and justice for all.”

“This goes against the philosophy on which Lady Liberty stands in our New York Harbor: ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...’ For centuries, America has embraced immigrants and now President Trump wants to spend \$10 billion to keep people out of our country as opposed to keeping that \$10 billion to pay down our national debt. This makes absolutely no sense. It’s time for President Trump to respect our country’s commitment to all humanity,” said **Council Member Andy King, former co-chair of the BLAC.**

“This is an affront to the very nature of our democracy,” said **Council Member Corey Johnson, member of the Progressive Caucus.** “Our national pride is rooted in the fact that all people from all walks of life can come here to seek opportunity and be welcomed as fellow human beings. That’s true of New York City and it ought to be true of our country as a whole. I stand with my colleagues in the Progressive Caucus in denouncing President Trump’s plan to take America into a new dark age of xenophobia and racism.”

“This is as un-American as it gets,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin, member of the Progressive Caucus.** “Our nation was founded on the values of liberty and freedom – especially the right to religious expression. There is nothing patriotic about turning our backs to those in need. Nothing courageous about closing ourselves off to the world. There is no room for xenophobia and hate in our City, much less our nation. I look forward to working with the BLAC and Progressive caucuses to continue protecting New Yorkers from the Trump administration’s attempts to wipe away the progress we’ve made as a nation.”

“Since its inception, our country has valued religious independence and welcomed immigrants from all backgrounds. It is outrageous for any American President to ban immigration or immigrants based on religion or ethnicity, especially when the people are seeking refuge. As the land of the free, a ban on Muslim refugees goes against the fabric of our nation and I join with my colleagues to vehemently oppose President Trump’s plan,” said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson, member of the BLAC.**

The Administration has recently stated the importance of national unity—we couldn’t agree more. It is of the utmost importance that New Yorkers be represented by leaders that champion their values and safeguard their interests. To that end, our Members are committed to protecting immigrant and Muslim New Yorkers from racial profiling and religious persecution. We fundamentally disagree with the notion that exclusion and suspicion will protect American society, and as long as the President continues to implement divisive policies, we will never meet our noble standard of “freedom and justice for all.”

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