

ASHG opposes new executive order restricting travel to the US

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The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) opposes and urges the White House to rescind its recent Executive Order "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," issued March 6.

Effective March 16, the Executive Order will suspend entry of nationals from six countries into the United States, and of refugees whose applications have not yet been approved by the Department of State.

"As a global organization that deeply values collaboration, we believe this order will harm the progress of scientific research in the United States and abroad," said Nancy J. Cox, PhD, president of ASHG.

"Beyond its practical effects, this travel ban sends a message to some in the international scientific community that their presence is unwelcome—a message we do not endorse," she added.

ASHG is the world's largest genetics organization, and nearly one-third of its members reside outside the U.S. The Society has long recognized the important contributions to the genetics enterprise that come from all over the world, and believes that research in the U.S. benefits greatly from the influx of international researchers to laboratories around the country.

"Restricting the travel of scientists threatens the United States' status as a world leader in genetics and genomics research," Dr. Cox said. Every year at the ASHG Annual Meeting, scientists from more than 65

countries come together to share their latest findings and ideas. This cross-pollination, at the ASHG meeting as well as other international conferences, is essential for sparking new avenues of inquiry and establishing partnerships.

"As geneticists, we are all students of human variation and we value - indeed, celebrate - the diversity that has contributed to our survival as a species. Similarly, the diversity of experience, perspective, and expertise that comes from a globally connected research community moves the science forward, and that benefits all of us," Dr. Cox said.

Provided by American Society of Human Genetics

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