

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

February 2, 2017

[Andrea Estrada](#)

A Threat to American Higher Education

UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang and 47 other American college and university presidents today sent a letter to President Trump urging him to “rectify or rescind the recent executive order closing our country’s borders to immigrants and others from seven majority-Muslim countries and to refugees from throughout the world.”

“If left in place,” the letter states, “the order threatens both American higher education and the defining principles of our country.”

The letter was initially drafted by Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber and University of Pennsylvania President Amy Gutmann.

The text of the letter follows:

February 2, 2017

President Donald J. Trump

The White House

United States of America

Dear President Trump:

We write as presidents of leading American colleges and universities to urge you to rectify or rescind the recent executive order closing our country's borders to immigrants and others from seven majority-Muslim countries and to refugees from throughout the world. If left in place, the order threatens both American higher education and the defining principles of our country.

The order specifically prevents talented, law-abiding students and scholars from the affected regions from reaching our campuses. American higher education has benefited tremendously from this country's long history of embracing immigrants from around the world. Their innovations and scholarship have enhanced American learning, added to our prosperity, and enriched our culture. Many who have returned to their own countries have taken with them the values that are the lifeblood of our democracy. America's educational, scientific, economic, and artistic leadership depends upon our continued ability to attract the extraordinary people who for many generations have come to this country in search of freedom and a better life.

This action unfairly targets seven predominantly Muslim countries in a manner inconsistent with America's best principles and greatest traditions. We welcome outstanding Muslim students and scholars from the United States and abroad, including the many who come from the seven affected countries. Their vibrant contributions to our institutions and our country exemplify the value of the religious diversity that has been a hallmark of American freedom since this country's founding. The American dream depends on continued fidelity to that value.

We recognize and respect the need to protect America's security. The vetting procedures already in place are rigorous. Improvements to them should be based on evidence, calibrated to real risks, and consistent with constitutional principle.

Throughout its history America has been a land of opportunity and a beacon of freedom in the world. It has attracted talented people to our shores and inspired people around the globe. This executive order is dimming the lamp of liberty and staining the country's reputation. We respectfully urge you to rectify the damage done by this order.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Barchi , President , Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Joanne Berger-Sweeney, President , Trinity College

Lee C. Bollinger, President , Columbia University

Robert A. Brown, President , Boston University

Ronald J. Daniels, President , Johns Hopkins University

Nicholas B. Dirks , Chancellor , University of California, Berkeley

Adam F. Falk, President, Williams College

Patrick Gallagher, Chancellor , University of Pittsburgh

Amy Gutmann , President, University of Pennsylvania

Philip J. Hanlon, President, Dartmouth College

Ralph J. Hexter , Interim Chancellor , University of California, Davis

Kimberly W. Benston, President , Haverford College

George Blumenthal , Chancellor , University of California, Santa Cruz

Richard H. Brodhead, President , Duke University

Kimberly Wright Cassidy, President , Bryn Mawr College

John J. DeGioia, President , Georgetown University

Christopher L. Eisgruber, President, Princeton University

Drew Gilpin Faust, President, Harvard University

Howard Gillman , Chancellor , University of California, Irvine

Andrew Hamilton, President , New York University

Sam Hawgood, MBBS , Chancellor , University of California, San Francisco

Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame

Pradeep K. Khosla , Chancellor , University of California, San Diego

David W. Leebron, President , Rice University

Wallace D. Loh, President , University of Maryland, College Park

David Oxtoby, President, Pomona College

Daniel R. Porterfield, Ph.D., President , Franklin & Marshall College

Hunter R. Rawlings III, Interim President, Cornell University

Peter Salovey, President, Yale University

Mark Schlissel M.D., Ph.D., President , University of Michigan

Barbara R. Snyder , President, Case Western Reserve University

Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D. President Stony Brook University

Claire E. Sterk, President , Emory University

Marvin Krislov, President, Oberlin College

Ron Liebowitz, President, Brandeis University

Anthony P. Monaco, President , Tufts University

Christina H. Paxson, President , Brown University

Carol Quillen, President, Davidson College

Clayton Rose, President, Bowdoin College

Michael H. Schill, President , University of Oregon

Valerie Smith, President, Swarthmore College

Debora L. Spar, President, Barnard College

Sonya Stephens , Acting President , Mount Holyoke College

Marc Tessier-Lavigne, President, Stanford University

Satish K. Tripathi, President , University at Buffalo

Henry T. Yang , Chancellor, University of California, Santa Barbara

Mark S. Wrighton, Chancellor , Washington University in St. Louis

Nicholas S. Zeppos, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.