

I, Ismail Elshikh, Ph.D. declare the following:

1. I am an American citizen of Egyptian descent, and a resident of Hawai‘i. I have been a resident of Hawai‘i for over a decade. My wife, Dana, who is of Syrian descent, and my five children are also American citizens and residents of Hawai‘i. I am proud to be an American citizen, and consider the United States to be my home country. Because of my allegiance to America, and my deep belief in the American ideals of democracy and equality, I was deeply saddened by the passage of the President’s first and second Executive Orders, in January 2017 and then March 2017, barring nationals from Muslim majority countries from entering the United States. I am also deeply saddened by the President’s September 24, 2017 proclamation, entitled “Presidential Proclamation Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry Into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats.” This third ban – on immigration and travel – still targets six Muslim-majority countries, including Syria, where I have several close family members. And unlike the prior ones, this ban is permanent.

2. I am the Imam of the Muslim Association of Hawai‘i. As Imam, I am a leader within the local Hawai‘i Islamic community. I believe strongly in the First Amendment, religious equality, and that individuals of different faiths should be allowed to exercise their religious beliefs, free from government suppression, and in a way that does not harm others. The members of my Mosque consider Hawai‘i

to be home. They are integrated into local society and culture. They have friends and family within and outside of the local Islamic community.

3. My five children are 12, 10, 8, 5 and 2 years of age. They have all been United States citizens, and Hawai'i residents, since birth. All of my children were born at Kaiser Hospital in Honolulu, Hawai'i. My older children attend school in Honolulu, and they have many friends from all walks of life. My children were aware of President Trump's first and second travel bans, and were deeply saddened by the message that both conveyed – that Muslims are uniquely dangerous and unwelcome, and that a broad travel ban is “needed” to prevent people from certain Muslim countries from entering the United States. They were, and still are, deeply affected by the knowledge that the United States – their own country – would discriminate against individuals who are of the same ethnicity as them, including members of their own family, and who hold the same religious beliefs. My children did not fully understand why the President issued those Executive Orders, but they felt hurt, confused, and sad.

4. The first and second travel bans, if they had been fully implemented, would have had a direct personal effect on me, my wife, and my children, by creating an obstacle to the ability of my mother-in-law (and my children's grandmother) to visit us in Hawai'i. My wife's mother is a Syrian national, and up until this past July 2017, she had been living in Syria. My wife filed an I-130

Petition for Alien Relative, on behalf of her mother, with the United States government in September 2015. The Petition was approved in February 2016, and my wife's mother was eagerly anticipating the completion of the rest of her visa application process. On January 31, 2017 – days after President Trump signed the first Executive Order putting in place the original travel ban – I called the National Visa Center to inquire as to whether the first Executive Order would impact my mother-in-law's visa application. I was told that it would; namely that as a result of the first Order, her application for an immigrant visa was on hold and would not proceed to the next stage in the process. On February 3, 2017, the District Court for the District of Washington temporarily enjoined the enforcement of the first travel ban, and the Ninth Circuit denied the Government's application for a stay. On March 2, 2017, we received an email from the National Visa Center informing us that my mother-in-law's visa application was in fact proceeding to the next stage of the process, and her interview would be scheduled at an embassy overseas. On March 6, 2017, the President signed the second travel ban. We expected that it was going to put us back in the position we were in on January 31 – that her application would be put on hold – but the Hawai'i District Court issued a preliminary injunction, and the Ninth Circuit and Supreme Court upheld the part of the injunction that pertained to my mother-in-law. My mother-in-law had her visa interview in May and this past July, she received her immigrant visa from the U.S.

embassy in Lebanon. In August, she came to live with my family in Hawai'i. We are enjoying her company immensely.

6. President Trump's September 24 Proclamation is once again against going to directly impact my family. My wife has four brothers who are Syrian nationals, all living in Syria with their families. Like my mother-in-law, they have for many months wanted to visit our family in Hawai'i. Because of the President's new Proclamation, my brothers-in-law will be banned from obtaining visas and blocked from visiting us indefinitely. In fact, one of my brothers-in-law recently filed for a visitor visa, on October 5, 2017, and his application is pending. My three sons were all born in the month of March, and they hope that this coming year – in March 2018 – they can celebrate their birthdays in one big party for which they'd invite their relatives. They especially want to invite their uncles to come from Syria, and celebrate this triple-birthday. The latest travel ban has destroyed their dream. They told me with a sad voice, "Dad, this is not fair."

7. As a result of the Proclamation, once again, I, my wife, and my children, will be denied the company of our close relatives solely because of our religion and nationality. This is very upsetting to us. Once again, the new Proclamation denigrates our faith and makes us feel that we are second-class citizens in our own country.

8. As an Imam, I work with many members of the Hawai'i Islamic community. Many members of my Mosque are upset about the President's Proclamation, and some are very fearful. They feel that the new immigration and travel ban targets Muslim citizens because of their religious views and national origin. The bans will have very real and direct impact upon their lives. Although many members of my Mosque consider Hawai'i to be home, many have family and friends still living in the countries affected by the Proclamation. While it remains in effect, these individuals live in forced separation from those family members and friends.

9. I have also seen the effect of the President's refugee bans on the members of my Mosque. At least one current member of our Mosque is a refugee from a Muslim-majority country, and in the past, the Mosque had as members a family in which the husband, wife, and oldest son were applying for political asylum. It is my experience that all members of my Mosque are enriched by our relationships with refugees from Muslim-majority countries, who join our Mosque to worship with us. I, and the members of my Mosque, perceive the President's bans on refugee admissions to be yet more attacks on Muslims.

10. I personally know of more than 20 individuals who are members of my community and mosque, who have immediate relatives in the six Muslim-majority countries designated under the Proclamation – especially Syria, Iran, and

Yemen. These persons will, once again, be unable to receive visits from their relatives, including spouses, parents, and children.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawai'i, October 6, 2017.



ISMAIL ELSHIKH, Ph.D.