

# 17060      **Support for Trump travel ban in line with anti-Muslim attitudes in America**

Olivia Solon    The Guardian    Thursday 2 February 2017

Some of Silicon Valley's most prominent technology companies, including Alphabet (Google), Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, Uber and Stripe, have co-authored a draft letter formally opposing Donald Trump's executive order on immigration, arguing that "a blanket suspension is not the right approach".

Two surveys suggest the executive order restricting travel and immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries has more supporters than opponents.

The executive order, released on 27 January, temporarily banned people from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States, including Syrian refugees and people who had been approved for a visa. The move caused chaos at airports across the country, and left many tech workers unable to travel for fear of having their visas revoked. Since then, many technology company executives have individually condemned the travel ban and Amazon has pledged legal support to action against Trump.

The letter is the first coordinated push from large US businesses to oppose Trump's travel restrictions. The letter highlights the importance of immigration to entrepreneurship and corporate America. "As entrepreneurs and business leaders, our ability to grow our companies and create jobs depends on the contributions of immigrants from all backgrounds."

"We share your goal of ensuring that our immigration system meets today's security needs and keeps our country safe. We are concerned, however, that your recent executive order will affect many visa holders who work hard here in the United States and contribute to our country's success. In a global economy, it is critical that we continue to attract the best and brightest from around the world."

Technology companies recruit heavily from overseas and have been lobbying for an increase in the allocation of visas for several years.

Civil rights groups are encouraged by the letter's condemnation of the "blanket suspension of admissions" of refugees and the calls for Trump to support the legal status of 750,000 Dreamers – undocumented young immigrants who were protected under Barack Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (Daca) policy.

"I think it's a very positive and encouraging development insofar as it goes beyond the specific concerns about hi-tech employment and includes a statement about compassion for refugees," said Ben Wizner of the American Civil Liberties Union. One example of action business leaders could take is to lobby for the rights of refugees in the same way they lobby for more visas for highly skilled employees. "These companies have lobbied on issues relating to their bottom line. It would be a truly significant development if these companies dedicated some of their lobbying resources towards promoting human rights," said Wizner.

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