

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
48th JAACL National Convention
Washington, D.C.
July 7, 2017

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN
CITIZENS LEAGUE CONDEMNING DE FACTO AND DE JURE
RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL PREJUDICE IN ASYLUM POLICIES OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13780 signed on March 6, 2017 suspends the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days and restricts admission and halts new visa applications of citizens from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen for 90 days; and

WHEREAS, Judge Derrick K. Watson of the U.S. District Court of Hawaii found that “significant and un rebutted religious animus was driving promulgation of the Executive Order,” referencing a December 7, 2015 press release calling for “a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States,” an October 9, 2016 statement declaring that the “Muslim ban had morphed into extreme vetting,” and a January 23, 2017 statement favoring preferential treatment of Christian refugees; and

WHEREAS, the United States is obliged to recognize valid claims for asylum under the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, as codified and expanded with the passing of the Refugee Act of 1980 by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, under international agreements and Federal statutes, refugees are defined as persons who are outside their country of nationality or place of habitual residence, who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution on account of a protected ground, are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of the state; and

WHEREAS, protected grounds include race, nationality, religion, political opinion, and membership in a particular social group; and

WHEREAS, religious prejudice, hysteria over acts of terrorism, and failures of political leadership are contributing to and fueled by proscriptions on the admission of Muslim refugees under Executive Order 13780 signed in 2017; and

WHEREAS, racial prejudice, war hysteria, and failures of political leadership contributed to the imprisonment of Americans of Japanese descent under Executive Order 9066 signed in 1942; and

WHEREAS, similar to Executive Order 9066, these orders will not make our communities safer or our nation stronger, and will undermine our standing in the world community as an enduring symbol of freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, our rights and liberties as Americans are not made stronger by excluding others; rather, the strength of our local communities and our nation is based on embracing people from all over the world; and

WHEREAS, refugees, like other immigrants, enrich our communities and contribute significantly to American society; and

WHEREAS, refugees encounter a high level of scrutiny and security screening before arriving in the United States, often taking over two years to complete; and

WHEREAS, those refugees who are admitted for resettlement are usually some of the most vulnerable and are seeking relief and protection from discrimination, persecution, and overt prejudice.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Council of the Japanese American Citizens League that the JACL affirms its support for asylum policies that are free of religious and racial prejudice and condemns the denial of asylum on de facto or de jure religious grounds as at variance with American values, the U.S. Constitution, and American foreign policy interests; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL is in opposition to the spirit and resulting effect of Executive Order 13780, as it unfairly limits the relocation of refugees seeking relief to our country based on their real or perceived religious affiliation and/or ethnicity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL wholeheartedly supports and commends those policy leaders, community organizations, civic leaders, and individuals who have taken it upon themselves to speak truth to power and oppose these and other racially biased, offensive, and discriminatory Executive Orders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that JACL urges the Administration to cease issuing orders that seek to ultimately limit access to relief through immigration to the United States by refugees living in predominantly Muslim countries and instead support an equitable, just, and non-discriminatory immigration policy for the United States of America; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that JACL transmit certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the chairperson of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

Sponsored by: JACL - Honolulu Chapter
(JACL entity)

Dated: 5/20/17
Month/Day/Year

Approved by: Alison Kunishige
Name (Please Print)

Title: Chapter President

Signed: Ali H. Kuzin
Signature

Sponsored by: New England Chapter JACL Dated: May 20, 2017

Approved by: Kenneth A. Oye / Margaret Yamamoto Title: Co-Presidents

Signed: /s/
Kenneth A. Oye

/s/
Margaret Yamamoto

Please check one:

- Fiscal Impact Statement attached
- No Fiscal Impact