Dear President Trump,

The United States is built on unique twin promises of pluralism and opportunity. As men and women in uniform, we believe that it is our duty to share our experiences with those who have never served, and we hold those twin promises dear. We have carried them, like a torch, through some of the darkest parts of the world, bearing a message: When you come to the United States, you are measured not by where you come from, but whether or not you subscribe to the common values we share.

Accordingly, we the undersigned veterans of the U.S. military demand that you honor our promise -- America’s promise -- to the world by rescinding the punitive and ineffective executive order you issued last Friday targeting immigrants from seven Muslim-majority nations as well as refugees. One only needs look at the people who have been hurt by this order so far to see that it does nothing to keep our country safer and everything to damage the ideals that we hold most dear.

Some of the people hurt by your executive order are refugees from places that have experienced the kind of conflict that most Americans have seen only in their darkest of nightmares. We have welcomed them to our land in the past not only to show leadership to the world and because it was the right thing to do, but because our national security interest demands it; by the force of our example, we reject the philosophy of groups like ISIL who claim that certain groups of people cannot live and thrive within the West. But your executive order breaks that promise.

Some of the people hurt by your executive order are interpreters, who served alongside us on the frontlines in Iraq and Afghanistan. They believed in the values we said we were fighting for, and put their lives on the line to prove it -- helping us navigate language, culture, and terrain, and even picking up a rifle and saving our skins. In exchange for their service, we promised them and their families safe passage to a land where they would be free from those hunting them and judged not by where they were from, but by who they intended to become. But your executive order breaks that promise.

Some of the people hurt by your executive order are the most powerless in any society. The stories from airports across the country, where thousands gathered last night to contest your policy, bear this out: elderly people, sick and in wheelchairs; a husband and wife trying to reunite; children far too young to understand politics or ideologies or anything other than the desire to return to their bed after a long journey home. It is the essence of America that we treat these people not with suspicion, but compassion. But your executive order breaks that promise.

And yes, some of these people are none of these things. They are not the most desperate refugees, the most valiant interpreters, or the most vulnerable children and elderly. Yet still, they are people. People who want to come here to do well not at the expense of others, but for the sake of themselves and their families. We do not want an exception for any one group that
leaves these people behind, because that is not how America should work either. No, we want this entire order rescinded. There are ways to make our country safer, but punishing people based solely on their national origin and targeting those fleeing the worst violence in the world are not among them.

Mr. President, rescind this order. Reaffirm that America is a place promising opportunity and tolerance for all who subscribe to our values, and relight that torch those of us in the armed forces have carried across the world.

Honor our promise, because our global reputation and moral standing depend upon how bright and how far that light is allowed to shine.

For veterans, national security professionals, interpreters, or refugees who would like to sign on to this letter, fill out the form at www.honorourpromise.org and we’ll add your name.

Signed,
Shawn VanDiver, U.S. Navy
Matt Zeller, U.S. Army
Bill York, U.S. Army
Mike Breen, U.S. Army
Kristen Kavanaugh, U.S. Marine Corps
Will Rodriguez-Kennedy, U.S. Marine Corps
Andy Kopp, U.S. Navy
Cliff De Wolff, U.S. Navy
Mark West, U.S. Navy
Tom Lemmon, U.S. Marine Corps
Elizabeth Perez, U.S. Navy
Morgan Hurley, U.S. Navy
Vince Stroud, U.S. Navy
Carrie Tripp, U.S. Navy
Michael Connolly, U.S. Army
Lee Lewis, U.S. Navy
Terron Sims II, U.S. Army
Matthew Rice, U.S. Navy
Douglas Applegate, U.S. Marine Corps
Kevin Emore, U.S. Army
Jonathan Murray, U.S. Marine Corps
Brandon Friedman, U.S. Army
Joseph Stone, U.S. Army
Michael Hanes, U.S. Marine Corps
Stan Levin, U.S. Navy
Matthew Hoh, U.S. Marine Corps
David Gapp, U.S. Air Force
Sean McCrea, U.S. Marine Corps
Colleen Angell, U.S. Navy
Tarak Kauff, U.S. Army
Daniel Feehan, U.S. Army
Amanda Land Ross, U.S. Navy
Will Griffin, U.S. Army
Thomas Jimison, U.S. Navy
LeeVaughn Curry, U.S. Navy
Ruth McGraw, U.S. Marine Corps
Bob Muth, U.S. Marine Corps
Adrian Sisneros, U.S. Army
Mark Jacobson, U.S. Navy & U.S. Army
Nathan Fletcher, U.S Marine Corps
Phillip Carter, U.S. Army
Brian Johnson, U.S. Navy
James L. Smith, U.S Navy
Alex Cornell du Houx, U.S. Navy
Brian O’Rourke, U.S. Navy
Justin DeCesare, U.S. Navy
Jenna Lee, U.S. Marine Corps
Jan A. Ruhman, U.S. Marine Corps
Ted Muga, U.S. Navy
Michael O’Boyle, U.S. Navy
Bishop Garrison, U.S. Army
Justin Ford, U.S. Army
Ryan Waddell, U.S. Navy
Jon Gensler, U.S. Army
Mary Kay de Wolff, U.S. Navy
Trevor Acheson, U.S. Army & National Guard
Samantha Bauer, U.S. Navy
Abby Malchow, U.S. Navy
Eric Dean, U.S. Navy
Paul Martin, U.S. Navy
Alexander McCoy, U.S. Marine Corps
Yong Lee, U.S. Navy
Tony Johnson, U.S. Navy
Andrea Marr, U.S. Navy
Timothy Caudill, U.S. Marine Corps
Brian Carroll, U.S. Army
Joshua Weinberg, U.S. Army
Adam Shearin, U.S. Navy
Neal E. “Rudy” Rickner, U.S. Marine Corps
Kamal S. Kalsi, U.S. Army
Teresa Banko, U.S. Marine Corps
Sonia Fernandez, U.S. Marine Corps
Tenley Lozano, U.S. Coast Guard
Jessica Leas, U.S. Navy
Tripp Adams, U.S. Navy & U.S. Army
Michael Channick, U.S. Air Force
Tom Mullens, U.S. Navy & National Guard
Graciela Tiscareño-Sato, U.S. Air Force
Won Palisoul, U.S. Navy
Kia Thomas Hamel, U.S. Navy
Matt Runyon, U.S. Army
Brendan McKinnon, U.S. Coast Guard
Layton Sumpter, U.S. Navy
Nicholas Segura, U.S. Navy
Nishant Roy, U.S. Air Force
Kristofer Goldsmith, U.S. Army
David Arambula, U.S. Marine Corps
Rodney Hubbard, U.S. Marine Corps
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Matt Pelak, U.S. Army
Morgan Dyson, U.S. Marine Corps
Mary O’Donnell, U.S. Coast Guard
Roman Baca, U.S. Marine Corps
Michael Owens, U.S. Marine Corps
Jeffrey Danovich, U.S. Army
George Hotaling, U.S. Army
Sean McHugh, U.S. Navy
Gordon Griffin, U.S. Marine Corps
Jesse Sloman, U.S. Marine Corps
Ezekiel Duprey, U.S. Navy
Tahlia Burton, U.S. Air Force
Lourdes Tiglao, U.S. Air Force
Kelly Gilliland, U.S. Navy
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Michael Smith, U.S. Navy
Leo Cruz, U.S. Navy
Margaret Mullins, U.S. Army
Jason Cain, U.S. Army
Julia Chen, U.S. Navy
Jonathan Freeman, U.S. Army & National Guard
Peter James Kiernan, U.S. Marine Corps
Ryan McGill, U.S. Navy & U.S. Marine Corps
Lach Litwer, U.S. Army
Jon Keen, U.S. Army
Ian Kalin, U.S. Navy
Donald Martinez, U.S. Army
Joseph Kopser, U.S. Army
Vishnu Kumar, U.S. Marine Corps
Sam Jacobson, U.S. Marine Corps
Koma Gandy Fischbein, U.S. Navy
Shawn Terris, U.S. Marine Corps
Tom Moriarty, U.S. Air Force
Ricardo Reyes, U.S. Marine Corps & National Guard
Rebecca Johnson, U.S. Navy
Robert Hayward, U.S. Army
Tyron Jordan, U.S. Army
Joel Willett, National Guard
Emily Miller, U.S. Army
Justin McFarlin, U.S. Army
Ben Bain, U.S. Army
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Nicholas Hegarty, U.S. Air Force
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David Foster, U.S. Army
Loren Voss, U.S. Air Force
Kelsey Campbell, U.S. Air Force
Peter Lohrman, U.S. Army
Garrett Cathcart, U.S. Army
Hansen Mak, U.S. Army
Conner Maher, U.S. Air Force
Samuel Schumach, U.S. Air Force
Jared Cahill, U.S. Air Force
Chris Marvin, U.S. Army
Ross Cohen, U.S. Army
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Eli Williamson, U.S. Army
Ricardo Aponte, U.S. Air Force
Drew Sloane, U.S. Army
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Shawn Clark, U.S. Marine Corps
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David Anderson, U.S. Marine Corps
David Callaway, U.S. Navy
Eric Saar, U.S. Army
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Meloney Moses, U.S. Marine Corps