



February 6, 2017

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), the largest midwifery organization in the U.S., stands for women and against the executive order dated January 27, 2017, because it hinders access to health care for refugee and immigrant women and their families. We request that the Administration revise the policy to eliminate its harmful impacts on health, especially the health of vulnerable populations, or to rescind this order.

ACNM is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States, of which there are nearly 12,000. Our members are primary care providers for women throughout the lifespan, with an emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and gynecologic and reproductive health care. In numerous studies, midwives have been shown to provide high quality, cost effective, and satisfying care. We are educated at the graduate level, credentialed and licensed as health care professionals working in a variety of settings, and reimbursable by third party payers. Midwives provide accessible health care and are often the preferred care providers for diverse populations, such as refugee and immigrant women. Respect, diversity, and inclusion are core principles of our organization.

Refugee and immigrant women affected by the Jan. 27 executive order are among the most vulnerable in the world, as they have survived health- and life-threatening events, including wars and terrorism, in their countries of origin. These women and their families, who come legally from the countries named in the executive order, have completed the current extremely rigorous U.S. vetting process to assure the safety of all Americans. Refugee and immigrant women have come to the United States seeking a free and safe society. Here they can receive sensitive and culturally appropriate health care where their choices are respected. To the extent that the executive order impedes or discourages women, especially pregnant women, from obtaining the care that they need, it imposes significant human costs. It also imposes significant financial costs on health systems and communities that are left having to address the bad health outcomes of women and children not getting the care that they need.

The ACNM is non-partisan in its support of the health of women and their families. As published, the Jan. 27 executive order jeopardizes the health and wellbeing of refugee and immigrant women by denying them access to basic freedoms, access to health services, and legal entry into the U.S. Because ACNM stands with women and their families and will continue to advocate for them, we request that the order be amended to eliminate its impacts on health or be rescinded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Kane Low", enclosed within a light gray rectangular border.

Lisa Kane Low, CNM, PhD
President, American College of Nurse Midwives