

January 30, 2017

Re: Statement in Response to Executive Order on Immigration on January 27, 2017

Dear Members of the Morehouse Community:

Over the weekend, President Trump signed an executive order designed to temporarily restrict immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries and indefinitely suspend entry of Syrian refugees into the U.S. The widespread uncertainty, confusion and angst surrounding this presidential action renders it troubling to many, including those in our Morehouse community.

Our vision at Morehouse is to help bring about what we call “the world of our dreams.” This is akin to the “beloved community,” a vision shared by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., where society is based on justice, equal opportunity and love of one’s fellow human beings. To that end, Morehouse College has always maintained a student and faculty population rich in diversity with members of our community hailing from around the world. Our most recent Rhodes Scholar, Prince Abudu, is from Zimbabwe, and we have proudly enrolled many students from elsewhere in Africa and across the globe. We are concerned that this ban, albeit temporary, reinforces a climate of hostility towards immigrants and refugees, many of whom are suffering the most tragic of circumstances. That is not who America is and Morehouse will continue to be a voice reflecting our truest values that were poignantly enunciated by Dr. King.

We are an institution that is firmly committed to the ideals of community and inclusion with a strict adherence to a non-discrimination policy that safeguards the rights to privacy, travel and public safety for all of our students, faculty and staff members --whether they are U.S. citizens or citizens of other countries. Morehouse will continue to ascertain the impact of the recent changes to federal requirements on the management of its international programs including study abroad, student/faculty exchanges and collaborative research initiatives. Any students, faculty or staff who believe they may be impacted should consult with the International Students Office or the Human Resources Department.

Please be assured that Morehouse College will continue to recruit, admit and support students without regard to their immigration status. This longstanding commitment reflects our determination to foster a supportive living-learning environment and one marked by a profound respect for religious rights and freedoms. Morehouse will also continue to observe standard procedures pertaining to privacy. We have not and will not share confidential information such as immigration status and related matters.

Now more than ever, the higher education community must add its voice to the chorus of organizations, agencies, legislators and everyday citizens who reject the imposition of any discriminatory practices under the guise of national security. Indeed, Morehouse College is obliged to be in the forefront of this chorus. America has always been a beacon of hope and opportunity. Banning people of a particular faith or creed, racial identity or ethnicity, from entering the United States is antithetical to America’s core values. Thus, in Morehouse College’s 150th anniversary year where we celebrate our founding two years after the end of the Civil War, we call on the Trump Administration to reconsider the implementation of this executive order. We will not be silent on issues that threaten the values of what our most noted alumnus, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called “the beloved community”. We must resist and condemn such discriminatory and divisive measures. Surely, we can do no less.

Onward and Upward,



John S. Wilson, Jr., President