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JABA Applauds Federal Judiciary Response to President's Executive Order

LOS ANGELES -- The Japanese American Bar Association (JABA) strongly supports the rule of law and the protection of civil rights over prejudice and discrimination. JABA commends U.S. District Court Judge James Robart's ruling and the subsequent upholding of that ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that temporarily blocked enforcement of President Donald Trump's immigration ban on refugees and citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries. JABA also disapproves of the President's criticisms against Judge Robart and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, as the judiciary must remain independent from political pressure.

JABA is all too familiar with the consequences of racial hysteria and xenophobia. The parallels between the recently signed Executive Order 13769 and Executive Order 9066 cannot be denied. Nearly 75 years ago, EO 9066 cleared the way for deporting Japanese Americans to internment camps because of alleged concerns that Japanese Americans were disloyal and were spies for Japan. Specifically, EO 9066 stated that "successful prosecution of the war ***requires every possible protection against espionage and against sabotage to national-defense material…***" [emphasis added] Similarly, EO 13769 states its purpose is to "ensure that those admitted to this country do not bear ***hostile attitudes toward it and its founding principles***. The United States cannot, and ***should not, admit those who do not support the Constitution, or those who would place violent ideologies over American law***." [emphasis added] Civil Rights activist, Fred Korematsu once said, "[n]o one should ever be locked away simply because they share the same race, ethnicity, or religion as a spy or terrorist. ***If that principle was not learned from the internment of Japanese Americans, then these are very dangerous times for our democracy***."

While these are uncertain times and tensions are high, we can all agree that we must not forget our history and repeat past wrongs. JABA believes that this ban is based in fear, similar to the basis for EO 9066. This is not a partisan issue, but a humanitarian and civil rights issue. JABA stands in solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters and believes that this country is stronger because of its diversity and not in spite of it. Many of our members are eager to act and if there is a positive to be taken from this, it is that people are energized and galvanized to do something. To that end, JABA recommends the following:

1. **Support groups assisting those being detained**.
    a. Support our longtime partner, Asian Americans Advancing Justice. You can donate here: https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/1442842 or you can volunteer your time by going here: http://www.advancingjustice-la.org/get-involved/volunteer-us.
    b. Muslim Advocates are collecting reports from people, regardless of their immigration status, who have been harassed, searched or detained at the border. Please go here to help assist in that collection effort: https://muslimadvocates-securedform.formstack.com/forms/trump_eo_border
2. **Express your opinions** to those who help shape federal policy. You can find contact information for Senators and Congresspeople here (https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/) and here (http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/).
3. **Engage in calm, intelligent and productive dialogue with those who disagree with you**. As we noted, tensions and emotions are high and the divisions in our country are palpable. JABA recognizes that its own members have varying ideologies. Now is the time to find ways to unite and not widen the divide. Incredible things can happen when people come together and now, more than ever, we urge our members and communities to do so, including contacting JABA at **info@jabaonline.org** whether you want to express your opinion, volunteer, or otherwise.

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About the Japanese American Bar Association

The Japanese American Bar Association (“JABA”) was founded over 40 years ago in Los Angeles, California. Over the years, JABA has provided a special forum for members of the legal profession with interests and ties to the Japanese American community to discuss issues, network, and serve our community.