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**New Travel Ban, Old Concepts**

Despite the fact that the world is experiencing a global refugee crisis that affects 21.3 million people worldwide, the Administration issued a new travel ban on Monday, March 6, that suspends the entire U.S. refugee program for 120 days and bars entry to the U.S. of any traveler from Iran, Sudan, Syria, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen for 90 days, unless the traveler possesses a valid visa as of January 27. The executive order also slashes the number of refugees the U.S. will admit in 2017 by more than half. The new ban goes into effect on March 16, 2017 at 12:01 a.m. E.S.T.

Catholic Charities of the East Bay is deeply troubled by the latest action and the consequences it will have on vulnerable children and families facing terror and trauma.

Refugees are already subject to the most vigorous vetting process of anyone who enters the United States; a process that takes at least 18 to 24 months and involves scrutiny by multiple U.S. agencies including the Departments of State and Homeland Security, and the Bureau of Counterterrorism, among others.

65 million people around the world have been forcibly displaced from their homes by war, terrorism, or persecution; 21.3 million of those displaced are considered refugees who cannot return to their homelands.

For 40 years, Catholic Charities of the East Bay has welcomed refugees to our communities, helping families become successful, contributing members of our society. Parishes and other faith communities have joined us in welcoming refugee families, demonstrating mercy, compassion, and a commitment to human dignity.

Our programs also include immigration legal services, school and community-based mental health services, and services that help families and seniors remain in their homes. We provide hope and healing to vulnerable children, youth, and families in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and serve people in need regardless of religious beliefs.