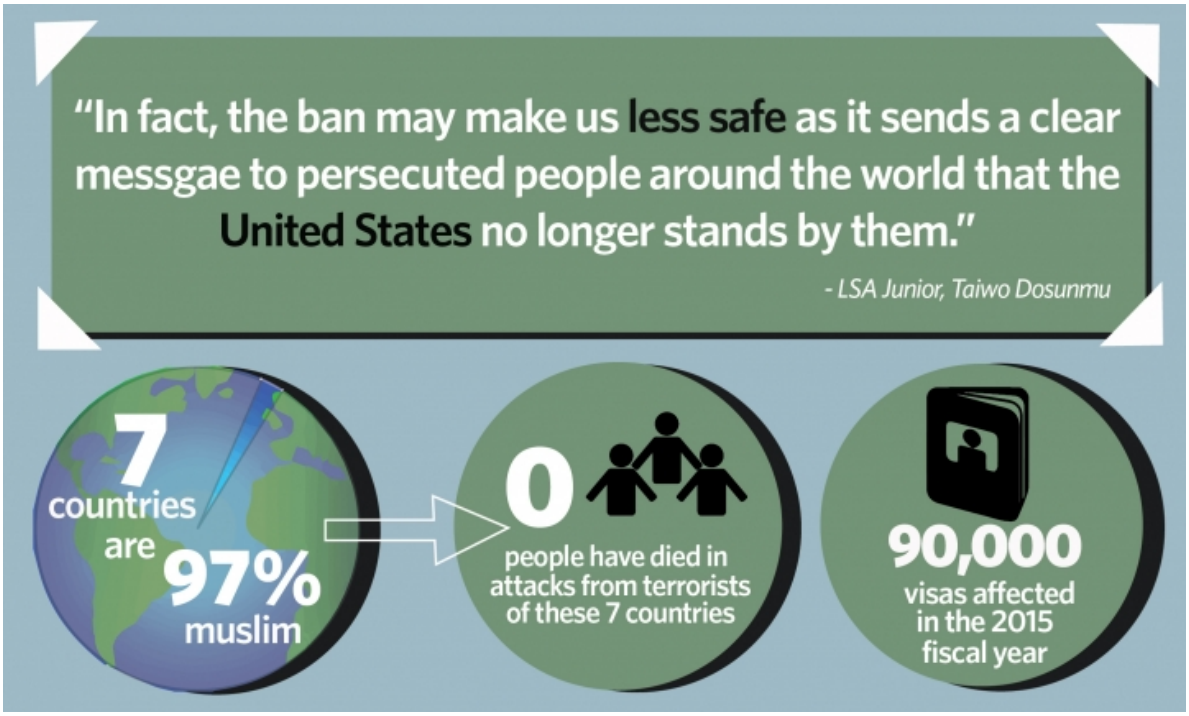
Recent immigration restrictions met with mixed reactions on campus

Tuesday, January 31, 2017 - 3:57pm



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CARLY RYAN
Daily Staff Reporter

Throughout his campaign, President Donald Trump promised to limit immigration from Muslim countries, but nothing could prepare LSA senior Tina Al-khersan for the phone call she received at 2:30 a.m. Sunday.

Al-khersan's sister, a citizen of the United States, Iraq and New Zealand, called because she was detained at the Canadian border while trying to come back home after a trip with her husband. American border patrol officials searched her car and phone, and told her they weren't quite sure what to do with her, implementing Trump's immigration restrictions was above their paygrade. After four hours, Al-khersan's sister demanded to be let in, using her knowledge as an immigration lawyer to her benefit.

"I don't even want to speculate what would've happened if she didn't know her rights," Al-khersan said. "She's a U.S. citizen; they were only treating her differently because her passport said she was born in Iraq."

Al-khersan's family is one of innumerable citizens, green card holders, visa holders and refugees who have been affected by Trump's executive order tightening restrictions on immigration from seven Muslim countries, halting refugee immigration for 120 days and barring Syrian refugees indefinitely.

President Trump said in a statement Sunday his goal is to keep Americans safe, not to ban Muslims, as some critics assert.

"America is a proud nation of immigrants and we will continue to show compassion to those fleeing oppression, but we will do so while protecting our own citizens and border," Trump wrote. "To be clear, this is not a Muslim ban, as the media is falsely reporting. This is not about religion — this is about terror and keeping our country safe."

However, Michigan representatives wrote in a statement by banning admissions and visas from exclusively Muslim-majority countries, the order is clearly religious discrimination. Many of these representatives are working with more than 160 colleagues in the House of Representatives to introduce legislation that would defund Trump's executive order.

"By seeking to halt all refugee admissions in the short term, and slash the number of refugee admissions to a modern historic low, today's order betrays our proud heritage as a Nation of immigrants and a place of refuge," the representatives

wrote.

Engineering freshman Lincoln Merrill, publicity chair of the University of Michigan's chapter of College Republicans, reiterated that while many people have labeled the order a "Muslim ban," the title ignores many Muslim countries that were not affected.

"To be clear, President Trump's immigration order is not a 'Muslim ban,' nor is it a ban on anyone or anything," Merrill said. "If the people calling this order a 'Muslim ban' were correct, that would imply that immigration from around 50 Muslim-majority countries would be terminated and that a religious test would be implemented to enter the country."



Al-khersan pushed back against claims that America's highest risk comes from "terror-prone" regions.

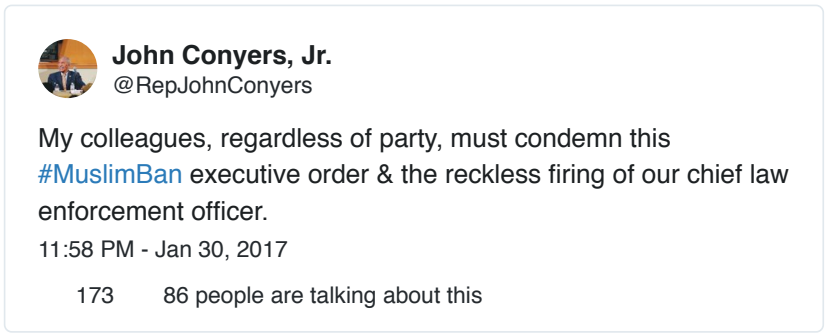
"The U.S. already has the strictest vetting process," she said. "If we really wanted to talk about protecting our citizens, we would have to look within them."

LSA senior Adam Mageed, president of the campus Muslim Coalition, agreed with Al-khersan, and said this policy ignores refugees whose lives could be in greater danger.

"I think that Americans are incredibly safe and take their safety for granted," Mageed said. "Security at the cost of heavy discrimination isn't security."

However, College Republicans president Enrique Zalamea, an LSA junior, maintained that no matter how unlikely terrorist attacks may be, the government's duty is to uphold security.

"I am a first-generation American, and I love this country, but I would rather have a more secure immigration process in order to reduce the risk of future terrorist threats," Zalamea said. "It truly bewilders me to see so many people protesting what is essentially a vital step towards proving our national security."



Still, LSA junior Haleemah Aqel thinks more consideration should be given to the refugees affected. Aqel leads the Books Not Bombs campaign, which advocates for admitting Syrian refugees to the University.

"There's an idea that Americans are at the highest risk, but more Muslims are killed from terrorist groups," Aqel said. "They're the ones that need to flee and that need to be kept safe. They need to flee, we don't need to isolate."

LSA junior Taiwo Dosunmu, communications director of the University's chapter of College Democrats, agreed and said the United States already has an "incredibly thorough" vetting process in place, and making it even stricter could have adverse effects.

"For a would-be terrorist trying to sneak into the U.S., the refugee program is probably the most difficult possible way to enter the country," Dosunmu said. "In fact, the ban may make us less safe as it sends a clear message to persecuted people around the world that the United States no longer stands by them."

Aqel said the Trump administration's recent executive orders ignore the intersectionality of multiple policies' effects on the Muslim community.

"There are Muslims who use Planned Parenthood and pay for it through (Affordable Care Act) insurance," Aqel said. "There are Latina Muslims that are affected, as they are being kept from our country because of a ban and because of the prospects of a wall. Right now we are thinking that these things are separate, but they are really just piling on top of each other."

Implications of the order on international relations worry students as well. Al-khersan noted that with Russia and Iran supporting the Syrian government, the dynamics of the Syrian war could change drastically under the Trump administration.

American Culture Prof. Evelyn Alsultany expressed concern for the potentially negative treatment of Americans abroad and mentioned a worrisome prospect: adverse to the policy's goal, the immigrations restrictions could aid ISIS's mission.

Alsultany fields concerns from multiple students as to whether their families will be able to visit them, and expressed doubts in regards to the effectiveness of this policy domestically.

"I think in terms of fighting terrorism, clearly targeting seven entire nations isn't going to solve a terrorism problem," Alsultany said. "Beyond that, our politicians have been citing the 9/11 attack, the Boston bombing and the San Bernardino terrorism attack, but this particular policy wouldn't have prevented any of those. Many of the terrorists from 9/11 came from Saudi Arabia, and Saudi Arabia isn't a part of this ban. It seems very arbitrary."

Mageed also noted that academic issues, including those pertinent to the University, could be at risk because the ban prevents Iranian academics from seeking asylum in the United States after expressing sociopolitical views not condoned in Iran.

Alsultany expressed gratitude toward the University's resistance to the policy, and expressed hope that the campus would remain a safe and open place for all students. Al-khersan also emphasized action.

"Don't think we're going to be quieted," Al-khersan said. "I've never seen the Muslim populations from all around the globe unite like this."