At their February 15 meeting, Georgetown University’s Faculty Senate passed a resolution regarding the January Executive Order on Immigration issued by President Donald Trump. The Faculty Senate “is a university-wide faculty governance body that advises the University President on academic, administrative, and financial issues that affect all three campuses.” The resolution labels the Executive Order “an affront to human decency” and a threat to the “basic values we stand for as a university.” The resolution follows a January statement by Georgetown University President John DeGioia that was critical of the Trump Administration’s policy and cautioned students affected by the ban to consult an immigration attorney.

Law Center Professor Laura Donohue, who also serves the law campus’ Faculty Senate Vice President, shared her personal thoughts on the resolution as it relates to the original Executive Order. Donohue stressed the importance of Georgetown as an “institution that was built on the exchange of views,” both differing and alike. She communicated that the sharing of ideas with those different from oneself allows for “intellectual growth” and a fuller discussion in the classroom and in the world beyond us. Donohue reflected on the original executive order as “contrary to the history and legacy of Georgetown as a Jesuit institution,” and the subsequent Faculty Senate resolution as a symbol of Georgetown’s commitment to social justice for all. Georgetown’s commitment was further demonstrated as faculty immediately mobilized and headed to Dulles Airport to provide legal support for those directly affected by the order.

The Faculty Senate resolution echoed many of Donohue’s thoughts. It characterized the travel ban as “unjustified and contrary to America’s fundamental values.” These values include “religious freedom and tolerance, which have been driving forces behind immigration to the United States throughout its history.” Notably, the Faculty Senate resolved to “keep personal information confidential unless required to do otherwise by legal process,” in regards to those affected by the original executive order. The resolution also implores members of the Georgetown community to reach out to their Congressional representatives, “asking them to condemn this executive order and urge the administration to withdraw it.”

The Law Weekly also secured comment from delegate Ata Akiner, the primary author of the Student Bar Association resolution passed last month concerning the original Executive Order. Akiner welcomed the Faculty Senate resolution and applauded the “united front of solidarity with affected members of its community in relation to this Executive Order.” Akiner further affirmed the actions taken by Dean William Treanor, the Faculty Senate, and numerous student organizations and individuals associated with Georgetown Law as collectively embodying the principle, “law is but the means, justice is the end.”

The revised Executive Order on immigration, which was issued earlier this week and is slated to becomes effective on March 16, seems unlikely to alter the sentiments echoed by both the SBA and Faculty Senate. While it does not apply to Iraqi migrants, and has relaxed restrictions on visa holders, the core concept of a restriction on immigration from Muslim-majority countries remains intact.
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