



Statement on behalf of AZTESOL, regarding the recent Executive Orders of 2017

February 6, 2017

On behalf of Arizona TESOL (AZTESOL), we are writing to the recent Executive Order of Friday, January 27, 2017, which severely restricts immigration and refugee admission. AZTESOL strongly opposes the Order, which places immediate restrictions on vulnerable people of seven Muslim-majority nations from entering the United States.

AZTESOL is the Arizona state affiliate of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), an international professional organization. Since our organization began in 1954 as the Arizona Bilingual Council, our members have been working with learners of English in Arizona's public and private schools, colleges, universities, and adult education programs. We understand first-hand how this Order places undue burden and fear on refugees and immigrants and their families, who have sought safety here after fleeing war and political persecution.

As we witness the unfolding of these troubling trends, AZTESOL reaffirms the core principles of individual language rights, respect for diversity, multiculturalism, multilingualism, and inclusivity. We proudly welcome professionals and students from all backgrounds and creeds; each year, our member teachers, many of whom are refugees and immigrants themselves, are honored to work with thousands of refugees and immigrants from all over the world in their classrooms.

We recognize the need for the U.S. government to promote security; however, because of the complex issues surrounding security, any changes to the immigration and refugee resettlement system must be fair and reasonable, with thoughtful planning. Refugees and green card holders are already extensively vetted, sometimes taking years to gain admission into the United States, and blanket prohibitions based on religion or nationality in no way promote the security of Americans or visitors residing within our country. Depriving these families of refuge is irresponsible and un-American.

Our organization will continue to support and promote understanding, diversity, and education by working with immigrants and refugees of all faiths, ethnicities, and national origin. We encourage you to refer to TESOL's list of advocacy [tools and resources](#) dedicated to help teachers and students understand and respond to current immigration and refugee concerns.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marjaneh Gilpatrick".

Marjaneh Gilpatrick, EdD
AZTESOL President
Executive Director, Educational Outreach
College of Education, Grand Canyon
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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Slinkard".

Jennifer Slinkard, MA
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