

Interfaith Toolkit

No Muslim Ban - No Refugee Ban

October 18th Day of Action

What's Happening on October 18th?

While the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) was scheduled to hear oral arguments on October 10th challenging the legality of the Muslim and refugee bans created by Trump's executive orders, they have postponed this and may or may not reschedule. Lawyers representing the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), HIAS, and other plaintiffs are making the case that the bans - including the most recent proclamation extending the ban to Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela - violate U.S. law. While rescheduling of the hearing is unknown right now, it is important that we mobilize on October 18th to demonstrate opposition to the Muslim and refugee bans. Events in DC and around the country are being coordinated at www.nomuslimbanever.com.

Refugees Admissions Goal

The Trump administration set the refugee admissions goal for next fiscal year at 45,000 – the lowest goal in U.S. history. The average admissions goal from when The Refugee Act of 1980 passed up till today is 95,000, with an average of 80,000 refugees resettled each year. As people who care about refugees, we must demonstrate a swift and powerful response, so that both the White House and Congress hear loud and clear that any number less than 75,000 is unacceptable.

5 Ways Faith Communities can Stand in Solidarity with Muslims and Refugees

1) SOLIDARITY ACTIONS

Faith communities across the country are joining in actions, press conferences, interfaith vigils, and educational forums. See below resources to host a vigil or press conference. Go to www.nomuslimbanever.com to find an event near you and resources for hosting your own events, sign up to join the October 18th mobilization in front of the Supreme Court in DC, share [downloadable graphics](#) and [click to tweet messages](#), and join a Twitter townhall on September 27th at 1pm EST.

2) CALL CONGRESS TODAY: 1-866-961-4293 (Call 3 times for your Representative and two Senators)

Sample script: "I'm your constituent from [CITY/TOWN]. I strongly support refugee resettlement and am outraged by reports that President Trump may set the refugee admissions goal for next year at less than 50,000. I urge you to do everything in your power to see that the administration resettle at least 75,000 refugees in 2018. My community welcomes refugees, and I urge you to reflect the best of our American values of compassion and hospitality."

3) ONLINE ACTION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Please tweet [@realDonaldTrump](#) and [Congress](#):

- So show your love for the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.
#RefugeesAreWelcome #NoMuslimBanEver #GreaterAs1
- Many of our faith tenants demand we care for the refugee. Denying them is to deny our common humanity. #NoMuslimBanEver #RefugeesWelcome #GreaterAs1
- Refugees are fleeing for their lives, denying them safety is denying our common humanity.
#NoMuslimBanEver #RefugeesWelcome #GreaterAs1
- If you believe refugees and Muslims are part of our communities, host a #NoMuslimBanEver event #RefugeesWelcome #GreaterAs1

See more resources and ideas for social media action in this [Digital Toolkit](#).

4) WRITE AN OPINION EDITORIAL IN SUPPORT OF MUSLIMS & REFUGEES

[ReThink Media Talking Points](#)

5) KNOW & SHARE THE MESSAGE TO SUPPORT MUSLIMS & REFUGEES

[Rejected Report Shows Revenue Brought In by Refugees](#)

[Four 10-minute Educational Videos about Refugees and anti-Muslim bigotry](#)

[Contributions of refugees to the United States](#) (including economic backgrounders)

State-by-State [information on refugee resettlement](#) and [demonstrations of welcome for refugees](#)

Host an Interfaith Vigil

Hosting interfaith vigils provides the opportunity for faith leaders to express how welcoming refugees is part of all faith traditions, reflecting on the deep scriptural and spiritual roots of our work. Even small events, multiplied across the country, will send a powerful message to the Trump administration and Congress that welcoming immigrants and refugees, and standing alongside Muslim community members are part of our values as a country.

Steps to a successful prayer vigil:

- Coordinate a public prayer vigil with faith leaders, immigrants' rights groups, refugee resettlement agencies, immigrant leaders, community members, and if possible local elected leaders.
- Identify the core leaders and speakers, make sure there are impacted people, including refugees and Muslim organizations who are invited to help plan and speak at the event.
- Consider inviting elected officials including Representatives, Senators, City Council Members, or the Mayor.
- Be clear about your goals, what you want to accomplish, and how many people you hope will join the event.
- Identify the best location for the vigil, which is generally somewhere central in a symbolic memorial, state capitol, park or city hall.
- Apply for any permits needed for the location; reserve or order any equipment you'll need such as microphones, cameras, banners, candles, projectors; and make sure you can access electrical outlets.
- Choose a time of day best for attendance and media -- most news reports take place at 5-6 PM and 9-10 PM, so a few hours before those time blocks is best for press events.
- Promote the event through social media, public service announcement, flyers, websites, and congregation bulletins.
- Agree on messaging and talking points.
- Bring signs that are consistent with your messaging and agreed upon ahead of time
- Assign specific talking points to each speaker and ensure they have time limits.
- Invite the media by issuing a media advisory and following up with a press release after the event.
- Invite participants at the vigil to be part of further action and advocacy by writing and calling the White House and their Representatives and Senators.
- If you are able to get a wide range of organizations together, you could hold a 24 or 48 hour vigil outside the office of your Senator or Representative. Create a spreadsheet to sign up each organization with 2 hour blocks of time.

The set-up for the vigil should ensure that all faiths are respected and welcomed with awareness and consciousness. Drawing on the faith traditions and rituals can make vigils much more powerful, raising the creative and dramatic tension.

- Ask clergy attending to wear collars, stoles, robes and any other appropriate religious attire.
- Foot-washing of individuals impacted by policies.
- Procession with candles to symbolic location.
- A Prayer Wall with handwritten prayers for Muslims and refugees.
- Lift up stories in sacred texts.
- Highlight passages in scripture and present to Members of Congress.
- Collect and deliver prayers to your Senators and Representatives.
- Make visuals – photos, drawings, art, etc., that show the consequences of the Trump administration's actions and policies.
- If you want to do a 24 or 48 hour vigil make a signup sheet and assign 2 hour time slots to each organization involved.

Sample Vigil Program:

Welcome—a few words about the focus and purpose of your vigil. Why now? What's the concern? Who's affected? How can this vigil convince your members of congress to support Muslims and refugees? What values shape your faith traditions' response to these concerns? This may take the form of brief comments from one of your speakers, or a welcome and an opening prayer.

Music- Invite local musicians who share similar values to join your vigil, you can have them do one or two songs throughout the program. Choose songs that are connected to the cause, or songs that everyone knows and can sing along.

Opening Prayer—Ask clergy or key lay leader to open with a prayer Song—A singer, choir or instrumentalist can perform, or a few singers can lead participants in singing. Reading—for ideas see suggested readings below.

Speaker—A personal story from a local community member of how the unjust Muslim and refugee ban has impacted families. More than one story can be integrated throughout the program as well. Creative Ritual: Integrate creative symbols or rituals from faith traditions that draw more attention to the importance of supporting Muslims and refugees (see above suggestions)

Prayer—One person may lead the prayers, or you might invite several faith leaders to pray according to their traditions. Involve vigil participants in praying a refrain throughout your prayer time, or pray in a circle so everyone has the opportunity to pray. Consider offering prayers in multiple languages.

Song & Closing—reiterate the focus and purpose of your vigil, and send participants off with a call to welcome newcomers and raise their voices in the public sphere to stop the deportations. Consider a procession or march to another symbolic and strategic location.

Sample Invite to Your Member of Congress:

Dear Honorable Senator / Representative,

Thank you for your support.

We would like to invite you to attend [ORGANIZATION/ COALITION]'s prayer vigil/ press conference on [DATE] at [LOCATION] along with faith leaders and civic leaders who are speaking out against the Muslim and refugee travel bans.

We would be honored to have presence as a speaker at this press conference/ vigil. Other speakers include [list 2-3 top speakers] Please let us know as soon as you can if you are able to attend by contacting me at [email]. If you are able to be there we will connect about the details on messaging and agenda.

Sincerely,

Media Resources

If you have planned an event or vigil, we encourage you to reach out and invite members of the media. Look online at the local publications or outlets you would like in attendance and search for past articles on immigration or refugees, then consider pitching your event to reporters who frequently cover those issues or other community issues if there is not a designated immigration or refugee reporter.

Consider inviting the editorial director at your local newspaper. By inviting members of the press, you will be able to further share our message of welcoming to a larger audience and also inspire local media to cover immigration issues more frequently in a positive way that highlights broad community support for Muslims and refugees.

To invite multiple members of the press, send a media advisory at least two full business days ahead of the event. Ideally, send the media advisory one week before the event and then again the day before your event.

Please see the draft pitch email for media invitation, as well as the media advisory below.

Draft Pitch Email for Media Invitation and Follow Up from Advisory

Hello,

I hope you are well! I wanted to let you know of a potential story opportunity in regards to the Muslim and refugee ban announced by President Trump. On DATE, ORGANIZATION will host an interfaith vigil. Faith and Community leaders including LIST, will join refugees to stand in solidarity with our Muslim and refugee neighbors.

In light of the continued and heated political debate, we would like to highlight the human stories behind the program. Given your past articles highlighting immigrants in our communities, I would love to offer you an exclusive interview with the group next DATE if you are interested!

I have attached the invitation flyer to this email with a full list of individuals in the group, but please let me know if you are interested or if you have any questions!

Sincerely,
NAME

DATE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

NAME, PHONE NUMBER

MEDIA ADVISORY

Date of Event, Time, Location

**As Supreme Court Delays Hearing on Muslim & Refugee Ban, Local (Faith/ Human Rights Group)
Hosts (Vigil/Rally) (Name of Town)**

Your City Name, State Abbreviation – As the (City/Town Name) community seeks to demonstrate interfaith support for Muslims and refugees, leaders from (Organization/Congregation) will host (event type) standing in solidarity with our refugee and Muslim neighbors. They will be joined by XX (list other special guests, especially clergy or elected officials). Participants will discuss how Muslims and refugees positively impact the community. All participants will be available for interviews before and after the event.

WHAT: Event type with faith and community leaders to welcome refugees

WHERE: Address of event

WHEN: Date and time of event

SPEAKERS: List of all speakers and their titles

DETAILS: Add event details such as security (if applicable), special visuals (religious symbols, art pieces, etc.), or any other important event information.

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Get engaged with the No Muslim Ban Ever Campaign

Endorse the campaign by completing the [endorsement form](#) on the microsite.

If you are wanting to join the 10/18 mobilization before the Supreme Court on 10/18 by completing [this form](#).

Visit www.nomuslimbanever.com to learn more about the campaign's principles, messages, and how you can get involved.

Host an event in your local community to raise awareness about the Muslim and refugee bans. You can find ideas on how to organize events and key dates in the No Muslim Ban toolkit, available [here](#).

Share [downloadable graphics](#) with your networks; put them up as profile pictures; and spread the word on social media.

Spread the word about the #NoMuslimBanEver campaign with these [click to tweet messages](#).