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December 23, 2017

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JFS v. Trump Team Responds to Judge Robart Ruling

U.S. District Court in Seattle heard arguments on Thurs. 12/21 in challenge to latest refugee ban

SEATTLE—Today, U.S. District Judge James Robart [issued a ruling](#) largely blocking implementation of the Trump administration's most recent refugee restrictions which suspended the admission of refugees from 11 countries, nine of which are predominantly Muslim, for a minimum of 90 days. The restrictions also stopped the follow-to-join process, which reunites family members with refugees already in the U.S.

This is the latest legal setback for the Trump Administration, which was also handed a loss yesterday by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in the latest iteration of their Muslim Ban. The ruling stops the implementation of the new refugee restrictions for refugees with bona fide relationships to the United States.

The decision follows a [December 21 hearing](#) in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington regarding two challenges to the Trump administration's October 24 ban on refugees.

Jewish Family Service v. Trump was brought by the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP); the National Immigration Law Center (NILC); Lauren Aguiar, Mollie M. Kornreich, and Abigail Shaheen Davis; Perkins Coie LLP; and HIAS, the global Jewish nonprofit that protects refugees, on behalf of Jewish Family Service of Seattle, Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley, and individual plaintiffs.

The second challenge heard as part of the hearing was *ACLU of Washington v. Trump*, brought by the ACLU of Washington, on behalf of plaintiff Joseph Doe, a refugee living in Washington state who seeks to be reunited with his family.

In response to the ruling, the counsel and plaintiffs issued the following statements:

Rabbi Will Berkovitz, Chief Executive Officer, Jewish Family Service of Seattle: "We are thrilled that families will have the chance to be reunited and refugees who have suffered so much will have the chance to make it to safety. As we celebrate this moment, we remember our ancestors who did not have anyone standing with them or for them."

Mindy Berkowitz, Executive Director, Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley: "We are grateful for the judge's ruling and proud to have acted on our Jewish values in defense of our vulnerable refugee clients. We are committed to always doing so until every last refugee is reunited with his or her family."

Mark Hetfield, President and CEO, HIAS: "During HIAS' first 40 years, from 1881 to 1921, this country gave refuge to over two million Jewish refugees while Asians were barred from entry due to the Chinese Exclusion Act. The American Jewish community did not protest because we thought it did not affect us."

Then, in 1921, Congress did the same to us. Today and every day, we defend the rights of refugees, whoever they are, because we know the consequences of shutting our doors.”

Mariko Hirose, Litigation Director, IRAP: “This Administration has attacked refugee resettlement since the first issuance of the Muslim ban, leaving vulnerable refugees left in limbo. This ruling brings relief to thousands of refugees in precarious situations in the Middle East and East Africa, as well as to refugees already in the U.S. who are trying to reunite with their spouses and children.”

Esther Sung, Staff Attorney, NILC: “The courts have once again rejected the administration’s unlawful attempt to turn its back on refugees. We are proud to stand alongside our plaintiffs, refugees, and Muslims in fighting the Trump Administration’s Muslim Bans.”

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