



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Joseph A. Griffo

Sen. Griffo's Statement Concerning President Trump's Executive Order on Immigration

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO January 31, 2017

| ISSUE: **HOMELAND SECURITY, NATIONAL SECURITY, IMMIGRATION**



State Senator Joseph Griffo (R,C,I-Rome) released the following statement Tuesday discussing the latest developments concerning President Trump's executive order on immigration:

Our imperfect immigration policy in the United States has been neglected for some time and has not always been given the attention it deserves, so accordingly I would agree that a review and overhaul of such policy is worthy of consideration and discussion. As we've seen throughout history, our nation's immigration policy has been both lenient and restrictive at times, at one point applying ethnic quotas limiting who could enter our country. But in an effort to address any shortcomings in today's immigration policy, President Trump's recent

executive order concerning refugees and immigrants has understandably created a great deal of confusion, tension and concern within the United States and abroad. Perhaps the President's order was neither thought out nor rolled out as well as it could have been. However, I have no doubt that the court system will thoroughly and carefully review these actions in the days ahead, and ultimately resolve any questions concerning the constitutional viability of the President's order.

In the meantime, we must be supportive of our refugee communities. I represent a district that has a significant population of immigrants and refugees, so I have seen firsthand the positive cultural, social and economic impact that such a diverse population has had on our society. We are proud to be a beacon of hope for those people who are either fleeing oppression and violence in their homelands, or simply seizing an opportunity to pursue the American Dream in our neighborhoods. Despite the challenges that may arise from the President's order, I am confident that our generous community will continue to proudly welcome new people from all across the globe, with warmth and compassion.

What troubles me is the outrageous idea that cities think they can arbitrarily designate themselves as 'sanctuary cities' for immigrants in violation of federal laws. Cities are the most basic level of government within the state and nation, and they are not islands unto themselves that can pick and choose which laws they want to follow. We are a society of laws, and no city has the authority, ability or right to designate itself as something it's not by circumventing federal law, no matter the cause. Any city that chooses to violate federal law by identifying itself as a 'sanctuary city' risks the consequence of losing millions of dollars in federal funding, and I do not believe the State Legislature has the duty to help those municipalities cover their losses if they do not honor the laws of our land. The acceptance of any disregard for our laws, no matter the intentions, sets a troubling precedent that can only invite further erosion of any legal authority.

Finally – This constant drumbeat of politically-motivated whining and crocodile tears that is veering toward irrational demagoguery must stop. We are a nation based on respect for differences of opinions, passionate debate and the right to protest, but this politically-driven hysteria that is ignited on nearly a daily basis does nothing to help achieve thoughtful and informed policy-making. We should all be tired of this seething demagoguery, from all sides of the spectrum, at the expense of a sober and clear-headed review, analysis and discussion of the many serious challenges that must be addressed in order to move forward in a positive direction.

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