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## **GROUPS FILE NEW CHALLENGE TO TRUMP MUSLIM BAN**

**BALTIMORE, MD** – A new federal lawsuit was filed today challenging President Trump’s Muslim ban executive order, charging it violates the Constitution — including the First Amendment’s prohibition of government establishment of religion and the Fifth Amendment’s guarantees of equal treatment under the law — and federal laws.

The lawsuit was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU of Maryland, and National Immigration Law Center on behalf of the [International Refugee Assistance Project \(IRAP\) at the Urban Justice Center](#) and HIAS, along with individuals, including U.S. citizens, impacted by the ban. The complaint was filed in U.S. District Court in Maryland.

**Becca Heller, IRAP's Director, said:** “We represent over 500 displaced families from Syria, Iraq, Somalia, and elsewhere, who are desperate to find safety in the United States. The president’s discriminatory executive order has trapped these vulnerable people in life-threatening conditions. We are currently devoting nearly all of our resources to finding emergency remedies to protect them, when we should be utilizing existing legal pathways that could offer them permanent safety.”

The following are quotes from:

**Omar Jadwat, director of the ACLU’s Immigrants’ Rights Project:** “President Trump’s Muslim ban is unconstitutional. Appropriately, the government is currently prohibited from implementing the executive order, and the plaintiffs in this case stand ready to take further action to protect their rights.”

**HIAS President and CEO Mark Hetfield:** “As an organization that has long partnered with the U.S. government, litigation is unprecedented for HIAS, but we feel we have no other choice. We cannot remain silent as Muslim refugees are turned away just for being Muslim, just as we could not stand idly by when the U.S. turned away Jewish refugees fleeing Germany during the

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1930s and 40s. Our history and our values, as Jews and as Americans, require us to fight this illegal and immoral new policy with every tool at our disposal — including litigation.”

**Nicholas Espíritu, staff attorney at the National Immigration Law Center:** “There is no question that President Trump’s executive order violates bedrock legal principles and protections, and that it singles out Muslims for disfavored treatment. We will not stand for this kind of government discrimination that clearly runs afoul of our Constitution and human decency. These actions are shameful and un-American.”

The complaint can be viewed at:

[https://refugeerights.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/IRAP\\_v\\_Trump\\_Complaint.pdf](https://refugeerights.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/IRAP_v_Trump_Complaint.pdf)

International Refugee Assistance Project at the Urban Justice Center

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