

The American Society of Primatologists (ASP) stands with many other scientific and professional societies – including the American Association for the Advancement of Science – in opposition to the recent executive order on refugee and immigration policies. This executive order will have a detrimental effect on the scientific community as a whole, as well as on individual primatologists. International collaborations are commonplace in all branches of our field. Advancements in our understanding of human evolutionary biology, innovations for improving human health and well-being, conservation of endangered primate species, and the many other research programs we support in both the laboratory and the field (and particularly in the countries on the travel ban list), require the free exchange of ideas and open collaboration across international boundaries. Such research will be irreparably damaged and essential collaborations with host-country investigators are at risk if the freedom to travel to and from the United States is impaired. Furthermore, we recognize that the value of the immigrant, refugee, and international members of our community go beyond their scientific contributions: these individuals are also our friends and families.

The ASP also strongly opposes proposed legislation that would more than double the current minimum salary requirement of \$60,000 for the H1-B visa. The proposed minimum salary of \$131,000 for postdoctoral or even professorial candidates is simply unreasonable in our profession, and will effectively eliminate the ability of U.S. universities and research groups to hire qualified foreign applicants, which in many cases are the most qualified applicants for posts in U.S. laboratory or field teams. We note that, since 2000, 31 of 78 Nobel Prize recipients from the U.S. in Chemistry, Medicine, and Physics were immigrants. All six U.S. Nobel Prize recipients for 2016 are immigrants. Effectively barring some of the brightest and most capable scientists from working in the U.S. will only harm scientific advancement that could benefit U.S. citizens.

Equally disconcerting is the proposed vetting of research from the Environmental Protection Agency by administration officials, and restrictions on the public dissemination of findings from taxpayer-funded research. Climate change is real, and affects all life on the planet, including the lives of nonhuman primates. The ASP reiterates calls from other academic groups insisting that, for our research to be most effective, the free exchange of scientific data and findings must be protected, without fear of censure or retaliation.

In light of pending changes to immigration policy and the EPA by the Trump administration, we encourage our members – and all scientists – to participate in local and national efforts to resist these policies. Call your representatives in Congress. Join the March for Science (www.marchforscience.com) on April 22, 2017 either in Washington, D.C. or your local area. We must make our voices heard to protect our science. In keeping with the March for Science platform, the ASP also wishes to acknowledge all voices within our membership in this call to action. We support and will continue efforts to celebrate and cultivate the diversity of our society in nationality, immigration status, race and ethnicity, sex and intersex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, ability, and socioeconomic status.

Board of Directors, the American Society of Primatologists
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