

DANCE/USA STATEMENT ON THE RECENT TRAVEL BAN

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

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[Dance/USA](#) believes that international cultural exchange is essential to support a flourishing and vibrant dance scene in the U.S. The travel ban, signed under an Executive Order on January 27 limits the opportunity for dancers from the U.S. and abroad to learn from each other and closes the door to new opportunities for cross-cultural understanding.

In the U.S. and around the world, dance has a history of merging diverse backgrounds to create new styles and increasing our own awareness of diverse cultures, strengthening our ties to other countries. Dance is universal, occurring in religious institutions, in nightclubs, on the streets, and in our own homes. Dance communicates in a way that the written word cannot and plays a vital role in strengthening national security, creating common connections both within the U.S. and abroad.

Dance/USA and the broader performing and visual arts communities have long valued international exchange as a fundamental element of our artistic work and service to our communities. Dance/USA has actively advocated to Congress, the White House, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to reduce and make more efficient the artist visa process.

When artists are unable to come to the U.S. for guest engagements, the American public is denied the opportunity to experience international artistry.

The absence of international guest artists costs American artists important employment opportunities when a scheduled performance is canceled.

Delays and unpredictability in the visa process create high economic risks for U.S. nonprofit arts organizations and the local economies they support.

Soft power diplomacy, that includes cultural exchange, plays a vital role in strengthening U.S. national security by strengthening cross-cultural understanding with other countries.

Dance/USA remains committed our [core values of equity and inclusion](#) and believes that increased opportunities for cultural diplomacy not only supports the goals of positive international relations, but also benefits the future of dance by bringing new energy and creativity to dancers around the world.

Dance/USA would like to hear from you on this important matter. If you or your organization anticipates repercussions from this executive order, please contact Brandon Gryde, director of government affairs, at bgryde@danceusa.org.

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