



January 31, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
United States of America

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics, I am writing to you today to express our concerns regarding the executive order issued on January 27, 2017 banning entry to visa holders from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

This week SPIE hosts the world's largest optics and photonics conference, Photonics West, in San Francisco, CA. We were surprised and disappointed to hear that some speakers and attendees for this conference were denied entry into the United States. These scientists had spent considerable time and money preparing to come and contribute to the scientific program, where they have always been welcome and had no reason to think this was not the case again this year.

As a scientific society, a core element of our mission is to provide a forum where researchers can share advances that benefit people everywhere. At this conference specifically, a major focus is on technology and applications in biomedical imaging that help improve healthcare around the world. Scientific collaboration is central to technological advancements that make the world we live in a better place, and the brilliant minds behind these advancements know no border or country of origin.

It is in our nation's best interest to ensure that these types of interactions continue to happen within the United States. SPIE is concerned that the executive order as currently written will discourage the broader scientific community from travel to the United States for conferences such as this.

Therefore, SPIE would like to offer our assistance to work with the administration to develop policies that provides the necessary security checks at our borders without inhibiting international scientific collaboration at conferences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eugene G. Arthurs". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Eugene Arthurs
CEO

SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics