

Dear members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to address this important forum. I'm speaking in my capacity as a Colorado resident. I'm twelve years old, and I wonder where you might think I'm from just by looking at me. To most, I might look and sound American and that's partly true, because I was born and raised in the U.S. My name however, is Kian Ipakchi-Saiy, which carries the enduring stories of my German, Persian ancestors.

At home, I speak English, Persian and German because I'm fortunate to be a child of two exemplary immigrants - an intercultural community advocate and a surgeon who have taught me to always be kind and loving. Both of my grandmothers are German while both my grandfathers are Persian. My mother was raised in Iran during the Islamic Revolution and a war which claimed the lives of up to a million people. And before her, in 1962, after losing her husband, my mother's grandmother risked everything to bring her children out of Communist East Germany and into safety. She courageously fled to West-Germany with her children during a time when war and walls divided loved ones. My grandmothers grew up during one of the most horrific atrocities against humanity, which was motivated by religious and racial intolerance and implemented by way of registries in Hitler's Nazi Germany.

Today as grandchildren of German Iranian grandparents, my siblings and I find ourselves in a most disheartening time and place in history yet again. Due to recent executive orders and travel bans, we have spent the past few weeks in uncertainty - not knowing if we would be reunited with our grandparents for Nowruz (the Persian new year), which takes place on the first day of spring every year. We are again hearing of the same discriminatory practices which include registries, walls, deportations and travel bans. While my siblings and I have been born

and raised in America, both my parents are Green Card holders of Iranian-German heritage. The first executive order put our family in great distress as we were not sure if our parents would be allowed back into the U.S. if we left the country to visit our grandparents in Germany or Iran.

America was built on the ideals of freedom, liberty and justice for all. Along with countless others, my family and I have been affected by the recent executive orders and rhetoric, which target certain nationalities including Iranians. This week, my thirteen-year-old friend of Iranian heritage, who is born and raised in Colorado has had to be enrolled in a new school after becoming subject to racially motivated hate speech by school bullies. In the absence of a zero-tolerance policy for hate speech and bullying at my friend's school, he was the one bearing the burden of moving to a new school. I believe we need laws to protect those who are racially profiled across our communities: in our schools, at our airports and workplaces.

While my German Iranian parents and grandparents who have lived through dark experiences of war and dictatorship, find the recent developments in our country familiar, children in America should never have to become familiar with racial division, hate speech, registries or travel bans, which tear families apart, hurt our economy, national security and global standing. As former Colorado Governor Ralph Carr envisaged, the American constitution protects us all regardless of our skin color, religion or race. I therefore ask the committee to vote yes on HB17-1230 to 'Protect Colorado Residents From Federal Government Overreach' through the 'Ralph Carr Freedom Defense Act', which aims to ensure that the words "Never Again" do apply to all our citizens. Thank you.