

CMU among 31 schools filing amicus brief on Trump travel ban

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By Bill Schackner / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Thirty-one prominent universities, including Carnegie Mellon University and two others in Pennsylvania, filed a federal court brief Friday opposing President Donald Trump's revised executive order on travel and immigration.

The amicus brief was filed in support of the plaintiffs in a case challenging the president's order. The case is on appeal with the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va.

The 32-page document cites contributions that international students and scholars make to their fields, the institutions themselves and to the nation and the world, both materially and through better understanding. They said those individuals, the universities and their academic endeavors would be harmed if the president's order stands.

"These individuals make significant contributions to their fields of study and to campus life by bringing their unique perspectives and talents to amici's classrooms, laboratories, and performance spaces," the brief stated.

"These individuals also contribute to the United States and the world more generally by making scientific discoveries, starting businesses, and creating works of literature and art that redound to the benefit of others far beyond amici's campuses," the brief added.

The document continued, "So too, by studying in the United States, they gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for the values we hold dear, including democratic principles and respect for the rule of law, tolerance, and human rights, values which they may then share with citizens of their home countries."

The filing noted the sizable presence of international scholars and students at the universities, including Carnegie Mellon, whose current president, Subra Suresh, and founder, Andrew Carnegie, were immigrants.

Carnegie Mellon, according to the brief, "has 31 students and 10 faculty and scholars from the six affected countries at its U.S. locations" and 15 percent of its faculty are international, including 20 from the Middle

East.

It noted that Mr. Suresh, an Indian-born engineer, came to America at age 21 with less than \$100, a partially filled suitcase and a one-way airplane ticket purchased with a loan.

On March 6, the president signed a scaled-back version of his January travel ban covering seven Muslim-majority countries, a measure that drew protests across the nation and was blocked by the courts. The latest version leaves off Iraq and removes some more controversial aspects.

It continues to cover those who would visit from six Muslim-majority countries — Iran, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and Libya — and it limits how many refugees are allowed here yearly. It has been blocked by a federal court challenge filed by the International Refugee Assistance Project and others.

Mr. Trump has said that the order is important for national security and the fight against terrorism specifically, and that the country's borders are not adequately secure. Others have said his approach is discriminatory and unconstitutional.

The group of mostly private universities included a number of Ivy League schools, and although all are in the U.S., they have global missions and reach, the document said. In addition to Carnegie Mellon, parties included the University of Pennsylvania and Bucknell University in Pennsylvania.

In addition to the three, filers include: Boston University, Brandeis University, Brown University, Case Western Reserve University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Duke University, Emory University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Middlebury College, Northeastern University, Northwestern University, Princeton University, Rice University, Stanford University, Tufts University, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University, Washington University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Yale University.

Bill Schackner: bschackner@post-gazette.com, 412-263-1977 and on Twitter: @BschacknerPG.

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