# U.S. judge temporarily blocks Trump's travel ban nationwide

By MARTHA BELLISLE
*Associated Press*

SEATTLE — A U.S. judge on Friday imposed a nationwide hold on President Donald Trump's ban on travelers and immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim countries, siding with two states that had challenged the executive order that has launched legal battles across the country

U.S. District Judge James Robart in Seattle ruled that Washington state and Minnesota had standing to challenge Trump's order, which government lawyers disputed, and said they showed their case was likely to succeed.

"The state has met its burden in demonstrating immediate and irreparable injury," Robart said. "This TRO (temporary restraining order) is granted on a nationwide basis ..."

It wasn't immediately clear what happens next for people who had waited years to receive visas to come to America. The Department of Homeland Security wouldn't comment, but the State Department had previously ordered visas from the seven countries revoked.

Trump's order last week sparked protests nationwide and confusion at airports as some travelers were detained. The White House has argued that it will make the country safer.

Washington became the first state to sue over the order that temporarily bans travel for people from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Libya and Yemen and suspends the U.S. refugee program.

State Attorney General Bob Ferguson said the travel ban significantly harms residents and effectively mandates discrimination. Minnesota joined the lawsuit two days later.

After the ruling, Ferguson said people from the affected countries can now apply for entry to the U.S.

"Judge Robart's decision, effective immediately ... puts a halt to President Trump's unconstitutional and unlawful executive order," Ferguson said. "The law is a powerful thing — it has the ability to hold everybody accountable to it, and that includes the president of the United States."

AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

**Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson talks to reporters Friday, following a hearing in federal court in Seattle. A U.S. judge on Friday temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's ban on people from seven predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States after Washington state and Minnesota urged a nationwide hold on the executive order that has launched legal battles across the country.**

Gillian M. Christensen, a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, asked if the agency doesn't comment on pending litigation. The judge's ruling could be appealed to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The judge's written order, released late Friday, said it's not the court's job to "create policy or judge the wisdom of any particular policy promoted by the other two branches" of government.

The court's job "is limited to ensuring that the actions taken by the other two branches comport with our country's laws."

Robart ordered federal defendants "and their respective officers, agents, servants, employees, attorneys and persons acting in concert or participation with them are hereby enjoined and restrained from" enforcing the executive order.

A State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the matter is under litigation, said Friday: "We are working closely with the Department of Homeland Security and our legal teams to determine how this affects our operations. We will announce any changes affecting travelers to the United States as soon as that information is available.?"

Federal attorneys had argued that Congress gave the president authority to make decisions on national security and immigrant entry.

The two states won a temporary restraining order while the court considers the lawsuit, which aims to permanently block Trump's order. Court challenges have been filed nationwide from states and advocacy groups.

In court, Washington Solicitor General Noah Purcell said the focus of the state's legal challenge was the way the president's order targeted Islam.

Trump has called for a ban on Muslims entering the country, and the travel ban was an effort to make good on that campaign promise, Purcell told the judge.

"Do you see a distinction between campaign statements and the executive order," Robart asked. "I think it's a bit of a reach to say the president is anti-Muslim based on what he said in New Hampshire in June."

Purcell said there was an "overwhelming amount of evidence" to show that the order was directed at the Muslim religion, which is unconstitutional.

When the judge questioned the federal government's lawyer, Michelle Bennett, he repeatedly questioned the rationale behind the order.

Robart, who was appointed the federal bench by President George W. Bush, asked if there had been any terrorist attacks by people from the seven counties listed in Trump's order since 9/11. Bennett said she didn't know.

"The answer is none," Robart said. "You're here arguing we have to protect from these individuals from these countries, and there's no support for that."

Bennett argued that the states can't sue on behalf of citizens and the states have failed to show the order is causing irreparable harm.

Robart disagreed.

Up to 60,000 foreigners from the seven majority-Muslim countries had their visas canceled because of the executive order, the State Department said Friday.

That figure contradicts a statement from a Justice Department lawyer on the same day during a court hearing in Virginia about the ban. The lawyer in that case said about 100,000 visas had been revoked.

The State Department clarified that the higher figure includes diplomatic and other visas that were actually exempted from the travel ban, as well as expired visas.

Ferguson, a Democrat, said the order is harming Washington residents, businesses and its education system.

Washington-based businesses Amazon, Expedia and Microsoft support the state's efforts to stop the order. They say it's hurting their operations, too.

## Iraqi 'speechless' after 7-year-wait to get into U.S.

NEW YORK (AP) — Munther Alaskry first bonded with American Marines over a shared love of Metallica. He later cleared roads of bombs for U.S. troops and translated for them, helping the military navigate his war-torn country.

The 37-year-old Iraqi engineer spent nearly a decade working for the U.S. government in his home country and received death threats for doing so.

On Friday, a bespectacled Alaskry, his wife and children stepped onto American soil to begin new lives. His arrival ended an anxiety-filled week in which he was initially banned from the United States because of President Donald Trump's immigration order.

His life, he said, had suddenly turned into a feel-good film.

"I don't believe this is real," he said. "We always watch American movies, and this is just like my life is in one now. I'm speechless."

Alaskry waited seven years for a special visa to the United States. But the last week seemed the longest: He and his family were booted off the final leg of their U.S.-bound flight only hours after Trump's Jan. 27 executive order halted travel from Iraq and six other Muslim-majority countries to the United States for 90 days.

His wife was shaking as she was escorted off the plane in Turkey. Their children were crying.

When they returned to Baghdad, the ordeal kept him up at night. Alaskry thought their hopes of living free from death threats had been shattered. Then the U.S. Embassy called and told Alaskry he would be welcome.

# Future of Oregon Promise uncertain heading into session

By ANDREW THEEN
*The Oregonian/OregonLive*

Madison Gaylin wakes up each weekday and makes the 45-minute drive from her parents' home in Clatskanie to Clatsop Community College in Astoria.

Gaylin isn't paying a dime for her tuition, fees, or books. That's because the 18-year-old is one of 47 students attending the coastal school under Oregon Promise, a state program that acts as a last-dollar scholarship for qualified students to attend community colleges.

Though Gaylin had been eyeing Clatsop coming out of high school, she hadn't been sure she was ready to "jump in and get in debt," she said. Packaged with other scholarships and grants, the promise meant all that angst could wait.

As lawmakers start meeting in Salem this week to plan the budget for the next two years, the fate of the grant program intended to make community college more affordable for thousands of Oregonians like Gaylin is anything but guaranteed.

The Legislature approved the Oregon Promise in 2015 to much acclaim, becoming just the second state in the country to adopt such a program for recent high school graduates and GED recipients. An estimated 6,500 Oregonians are enrolled at 17 community colleges this school year through the promise. Students must first apply for federal financial aid, then any scholarships or grants are deducted from the tuition cost before the state chips in.

Oregon set aside $10 million for one academic year, meaning elected officials must decide whether to ante up in 2017 for the next wave of students.

Gaylin, the daughter of two mill workers, said she doesn't know the specifics, just that she has to apply for the grant again soon and doesn't know whether she'll get the help for a second year as she originally thought. "It's kind of an uneasy feeling," she said.

According to a memo released two weeks ago by the Legislature's chief budget writers — Sen. Richard Devlin, D-Tualatin, and Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene — the promise could be one of many casualties of Oregon's $1.8 billon revenue shortfall. The legislators acknowledged their plan limits the number of students who could enroll and leaves the state "unable to fund" students like Gaylin who are already receiving grants.

Even such higher education advocates as state Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, and the community colleges' lobbying organization, are unsure of the program's future.

"There's no doubt that under the current scenario, all programs, virtually, would take a serious hit," said Hass, who is working on a plan to raise more revenue for the state. "My hope, though, is that (the $10 million earmarked by Devlin and Nathanson) was sort of a line in the sand."

In her recommended spending plan, Gov. Kate Brown fully funded the promise in the 2017-19 biennium. Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission had requested $39.7 million to continue and expand the program.

Andrea Henderson, executive director of the Oregon Community College Association, said state campuses could face a "tremendous shortfall" and are already considering tuition increases this fall.

That means the promise is not first on the list of priorities. Number one is getting more state operating support; number two is securing commitments from lawmakers to expand the Oregon Opportunity Grant offered to low-income students.

The promise would fall third in line, she said.

"It will take lobbying to move the needle," Henderson said of the $10 million in the Joint Ways and Means Committee chair's budget framework.

The uncertainty comes at an awkward time as higher education leaders and school districts across state are already encouraging high schoolers students to apply for the Oregon Promise for this fall.

"We want folks to be in the queue," said Ben Cannon, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, "because we expect, and hope, and are planning to have a program next year."

Even as the program's fate is uncertain, higher education leaders are proposing a number of changes for year two.

Henderson and others are pushing the state to lower the GPA requirements to 2.0. The promise is currently open to qualified high school graduates who earn at least a 2.5 grade point average, or who have earned a GED within the past six months.

By design, the two-year schools are open to anyone from the community, Henderson said. Having a grade requirement runs counter to the colleges' mission. Some students are attending two-year schools for welding certificates or other trades that are more skill-oriented, where past grades would have less relevance than current proficiency.

"To disadvantage those who are under a 2.5 [GPA] is really a problem," she said.

According to several studies, including a 2014 report from the National Association for College Admissions Counseling on colleges that don't require ACT or SAT test scores, high school grades remain a top predictor of success in college.

But Henderson brushed that aside, saying helping students across all spectrums of academic levels is part of a community college's DNA. "That's what we do," she said, "all of our programs are designed around that."