

STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

February 7, 2017

The Brookline Board of Selectmen is deeply concerned by the Trump Administration's recent statements and executive orders on immigration policy. While this Board, along with the rest of the world, continues to try to understand the implications of the administration's unprecedented actions, we wish to reaffirm certain guiding moral principles that this Board believes Brookline values as they relate to the people who have been targeted by the President's executive orders, which includes our commitment to providing welcome and sanctuary to all Brookline residents and visitors, regardless of immigration status.

Because of these principles, Brookline's Board of Selectmen strives to protect the safety and well-being of all Brookline residents and visitors, regardless of immigration status, by supporting the health, mental health, well-being, safe haven, and sanctuary of refugees and immigrants, whether documented or not. We believe the actions of the Trump Administration in targeting and denigrating immigrants and refugees has created an atmosphere of fear and hatred in the country and, potentially, in Brookline. We also believe that an attack on one group will lead to attacks on other groups, as the increased incidence of anti-Semitic attacks in Massachusetts illustrates, and that attacks on immigrants, refugees, and other groups must be resisted and combated by all legal means.

We further reaffirm our support for the sentiments expressed in Town Meeting's Warrant Article 24 voted at the November, 1985 Town Meeting and Warrant Article 26 voted at the November 2006 Town Meeting concerning safe sanctuary in Brookline for immigrants and refugees from all countries regardless of their immigration status.

In addition, the Town will respect the status of those who are lawful Permanent Residents and Visa holders.

The recent developments in Washington portend overreaching enforcement of existing immigration laws that threaten to violate the Constitution and the laws of the United States,

including international treaties respecting immigrants and refugees that are a part of United States Federal law, and undoubtedly in violation of long established American moral principles. The likely aggressiveness of the new administration's actions is evidenced by its threat to commandeer local police forces to perform immigration status checks and enforce immigration laws that are solely the responsibility of the Federal government. In response to these developments:

- The Board of Selectmen has initiated a review of the Police Department's policies as they relate to responding to varying types of requests for assistance by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The Board has elected to solicit the input of the Town's Commission on Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations by asking the Commission to review the current policies and to recommend any changes it believes are warranted, especially changes related to the police department's interactions with immigrants and refugees.
- Town services and resources will be made available to provide for the health, mental health, education, shelter, sustenance, and well-being of all of our residents and visitors, including immigrants, irrespective of their legal status, and refugees; no actions against any person within the Town of Brookline shall be based solely on that person's status as an immigrant or refugee; and no Town employee shall ask for information on the immigration status of any person unless reasonably necessary for the provision of services by Town employees.
- The Board of Selectmen directs Town Counsel to work with other towns and cities and the State Attorney General to develop legal strategies and measures to protect Town actions and to defend against any punitive measures undertaken by the Federal government against state and local governmental entities.
- The Board of Selectmen further requests that Brookline civil society, including houses of worship, service organizations, political entities, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and individuals (1) learn about, (2) provide support, welcome, safe haven,

and sanctuary to, and (3) help integrate into the fabric of our community, all resident or visiting immigrants, irrespective of their legal status, and all refugees.