

Time to Take a Stand

It is time for tech companies to start speaking up about some of the actions taken by President Trump's administration.

There are [many actions](#) from his first week that are objectionable. In repeatedly invoking unsubstantiated conspiracy theories (like the 3 million illegal votes), he's delegitimizing his opponents and continuing to damage our society. So much objectionable action makes it hard to know where and when to focus, and outrage fatigue is an effective strategy.

But the executive order from yesterday titled "Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States" is tantamount to a Muslim ban and requires objection. I am obviously in favor of safety and rules, but broad-strokes actions targeted at a specific religious group is the wrong solution, and a first step toward a further reduction in rights.

In addition, the precedent of invalidating already-issued visas and green cards should be extremely troubling for immigrants of any country or for anyone who thinks their contributions to the US are important. This is not just a Muslim ban. This is a breach of America's contract with all the immigrants in the nation.

This administration has already shown that they are not particularly impressed by the first amendment, and that they are interested in other anti-immigrant action. So we must object, or our inaction will send a message that the administration can continue to take away our rights.

In doing so, we should not demonize Trump voters—most of them voted for him for reasons other than the promise of a Muslim ban. We need their eventual support in resisting actions like these, and we will not get it if we

further isolate them.

The tech community is powerful. Large tech companies in particular have enormous power and are held in high regard. We need to hear from the CEOs clearly and unequivocally. Although there is some business risk in doing so, there is strength in numbers—if everyone does it early this coming week, we will all make each other stronger.

Tech companies go to extraordinary lengths to recruit and retain employees; those employees have a lot of leverage. If employees push companies to do something, I believe they'll have to.

At a minimum, companies should take a public stance. But talking is only somewhat effective, and employees should push their companies to figure out what actions they can take. I wish I had better ideas here, but we're going to have a meeting on Friday at Y Combinator to discuss. I'd love to see other tech companies do the same.

If this action has not crossed a line for you, I suggest you think now about what your own line in the sand is. It's easy, with gradual escalation, for the definition of 'acceptable' to get moved. So think now about what action President Trump might take that you would consider crossing a line, and write it down.

Almost every member of the GOP I have spoken to knows that these actions are wrong. Paul Ryan, Mike Pence, Kevin McCarthy and James Mattis said so themselves when Trump first proposed his Muslim ban. We need to remind anyone involved in this administration that, for the rest of their lives, they will have to explain why they were complicit in this.

In my [first post on Trump](#) last June, I said it would be a good time for all of us to start speaking up. We are now at the stage where something is starting

that is going to be taught in history classes, and not in a good way. This morning, Kellyanne Conway posted on Twitter that Trump is "a man of action" who is "just getting started". I believe her. We must now start speaking up.