

CONTRIBUTOR

Trump's Muslim Ban is Bad For Business

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CARLOS BARRIA / REUTERS

Signing an order causing America's Brain Drain.



[Rana Florida](#) CEO, The Creative Class Group & Best-Selling Author, Upgrade

Trump's "Muslim Ban" (Executive Order "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States") has set in motion will be an unqualified disaster for American business and the economy. In his first press conference after the election, Trump modestly declared that he would be "the greatest job producer God has ever created." Between the trade war that he is igniting with Mexico and China and his immigrant ban, he is setting the stage for an economic catastrophe that will make what happened in 2008 look like a hiccup.

In 2002, in [The Rise of the Creative Class](#), my husband [Richard Florida](#) pointed to the role that tolerance plays in the clustering of the creative class, the highly-educated workers that are the principle drivers of our economy. Five years later, in [The Flight of the Creative Class](#), he noted that "the key to economic growth revolves around one key factor: the movement of talent on a global scale." Over the course of the twentieth century, America's status as the world's most open country had made us the most powerful talent magnet in the world. But the barriers to travel and immigration that were being erected in the wake of 9/11, he warned, were putting our competitive advantage in jeopardy.

Richard isn't the only one who has been banging this drum. In a classic 2012 paper, Stanford's Vivek Wadhwa, University of California Berkeley's Anna Lee Saxenian, and Stanford Law School's Daniel Siciliano [documented](#) the incredible contributions that immigrants have made to our national economy in general and technology industry in particular. 24.3 percent of engineering and technology startups across the US and 43.9 percent of startups in Silicon Valley were founded by immigrants, they noted. As Wadhwa [wrote](#) in *The Washington Post* shortly after Trump's travel ban went into effect, "blocking the path of immigrants into the United States cuts off the exact economic growth serum that has made America great."

Our *real* job creators know this and they are speaking out. Starbucks' Howard Schultz has promised to hire 10,000 refugees from around the world. "We will neither stand by, nor stand silent, as the uncertainty around the new administration's actions grows with each passing day," he [declared](#). Google's co-founder Sergey Brin (who was born in the USSR) joined protestors last weekend at San Francisco International Airport. "I'm here because I'm a refugee," he is reported to have [said](#). Amazon's Jeff Bezos [informed](#) employees in an e-mail that he has spoken out against the ban to congressional leaders and senior officials in the White House and is joining in Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson's lawsuit. "We're a nation of immigrants whose diverse backgrounds, ideas, and points of view have helped us build and invent as a nation for over 240 years," he added. "No nation is better at harnessing the energies and talents of immigrants. It's a distinctive competitive advantage for our country—one we should not weaken." Leaders from Microsoft, Netflix, Reddit, Lyft, Salesforce, Airbnb, Apple, Facebook, Intel and more have added their voices to the chorus.

According to a recent Bloomberg [report](#), the Trump administration is already preparing a new executive order aimed directly at Silicon Valley (which Trump's Alt-right senior advisor Steve Bannon believes has [too many Asian CEOs](#)). Its target is H-1B visas, which allow US companies to recruit highly-talented workers from abroad. Bloomberg reporters saw a draft of the order. "Visa programs for foreign workers," it read in part, "should be administered in a manner

that....prioritizes the protection of American workers—our forgotten working people—and the jobs they hold.”

If Trump has his way, not only will the world’s top doctors, researchers, scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs stop immigrating to America. We may experience a real brain drain, as American-born creatives start emigrating abroad in quest of freedom and economic opportunity.

Never mind all his other flaws, which are legion. Trump should be impeached for economic malfeasance.