



February 7, 2017

President Donald Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We are a group of startups, entrepreneurs, investors, and innovators who believe that immigrants, and the diversity of experiences they bring to this country, are essential to America's economic growth, progress, and innovation. We are deeply troubled by the recent Executive Order banning citizens of seven countries and refugees from entering the U.S., as well as the recently leaked draft Executive Order suggesting plans to roll back worker visa and parole programs. We believe these actions are both morally and economically misguided, and will inflict irreversible harm on the startup community and America's ability to compete globally.

The American startup ecosystem has always welcomed people of all backgrounds and origins. The global preeminence of the U.S. technology sector has been driven in a large part by immigrants and their creation of and contributions to American startups. Many of the most successful technology companies were founded in whole or in part by immigrants, including Uber, Palantir, and Tesla.¹ As of last year, more than half of the startups valued at \$1 billion or more in the U.S. were established by immigrant entrepreneurs.²

Limits on the movement of immigrants—including lawful visa holders—into the U.S. based on their nationality or religion not only seed fear and uncertainty for our friends, families, and coworkers, but are also antithetical to American values and sends the message that the U.S. is no longer open for innovation. Every individual turned away or dissuaded from making America his or her home represents a potential employee or entrepreneur who will no longer be able to contribute to the success of companies in America.

We are also concerned that the new visa guidelines outlined in the draft Executive Order would harm the startups that rely on foreign talent to grow and thrive. The order calls for the evaluation and rolling back of various worker visa and parole programs, and is based on the concerning and misguided presumption that visa programs are harmful to American workers and the broader economy. In reality, it is well-established that immigrant workers at all skill levels make a

¹ See Louis Hansen, "H-1B Visa Program Faces Uncertain Future in Trump Era," The Mercury News, <http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/01/23/trump-administration-brings-uncertainty-to-h-1b-visa-program>.

² National Foundation for American Policy, "Immigrants and Billion Dollar Startups", <http://nfap.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Immigrants-and-Billion-Dollar-Startups.NFAP-Policy-Brief.March-2016.pdf>.

positive impact on the U.S. economy.³ Research that specifically analyzes the impact of H-1B workers has found that for every 100 immigrants with advanced degrees in STEM fields, an additional 86 jobs are created among U.S. natives.⁴ Consequently, in limiting job opportunities for immigrants, your administration faces the possibility of reducing jobs for American citizens, in addition to suppressing growth in the startup economy.

Startups depend on the talents of immigrants to address significant shortfalls in the availability of technical, skilled IT professionals. The fact that so many startups rely on H-1B visas only serves to illustrate this fact, since no sensible, time-constrained startup would opt to rely on a bureaucratically difficult process for hiring foreign-born employees if simply hiring qualified American workers was an option. Additionally, we would advise against further restricting foreign students' ability to enter the American workforce upon completing their degrees from U.S. universities. These proposed limits are based on a misunderstanding of the impact these international students have on the experiences of U.S.-born students. As anyone in a startup incubator or accelerator can attest, working in a community of the best and brightest improves outcomes for everyone involved. Any actions to limit the availability of these and other high-skilled worker visas will only serve to stagnate growth in the tech sector and across the American economy.

Finally, based on our understanding of the draft Executive Order, your Administration appears to reverse the recently finalized International Entrepreneur Rule. As noted above, immigrant entrepreneurs have contributed immensely to the success of the American startup economy, and we believe that the government should make it easier, rather than more difficult, for the world's brightest and best to start and grow their companies here. Encouraging innovators from around the world to launch businesses here is one of the best ways to create jobs in the U.S.

While we recognize the importance of promoting national security and protecting the interests of American workers, we strongly believe that the existing and proposed Executive Orders will not accomplish these goals and in fact, could undermine our ability to found and grow new companies that create jobs here in the U.S. We urge you to reconsider these actions and their impact not only on American values, but also on America's economic future.

Sincerely,

Evan Engstrom
Executive Director, Engine

Bobby Franklin,
President & CEO, NVCA

³ See The Partnership for a New American Economy, "New Americans in Denver," <http://www.renewoureconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/DENVER-METRO-Factsheet.pdf>. Ted Hesson, "Why American Cities Are Fighting to Attract Immigrants," *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/07/us-cities-immigrants-economy/398987/>. Jamie McGee and Lizzy Alfs, "Immigrant entrepreneurs boost 'main streets' in Nashville," *The Tennessean*, <http://www.tennessean.com/story/money/2015/01/14/immigrant-entrepreneurs-boost-main-streets-nashville/21723951/>

⁴ American Enterprise Institute, "Immigration and American Jobs," <https://www.aei.org/publication/immigration-and-american-jobs/>

Payal Divakaran*
.406 Ventures
Boston, MA

500 Startups
San Francisco, CA

Binh Tran*
500 Startups
San Francisco, CA

Dave McClure*
500 Startups
San Francisco, CA

Andrew Schwab*
5AM Ventures
San Francisco, CA

60secondz
Kansas City, KS

Kevin Efrusy*
Accel
Palo Alto , CA

Accel
Palo Alto, CA

Accomplice
Cambridge, CA

Advan Research
Corporation, LLC
New York, NY

Advanced Technology
Ventures
Menlo Park, CA

AfterCollege
San Francisco, CA

Appboy
New York, NY

Amanda Hartsell*
Arboretum Ventures
Ann Arbor, MI

Marcy Marshall*
Arboretum Ventures
Ann Arbor, MI

David Cruikshank*
ARCH Venture Partners
Chicago, IL

Tim Wilson*
Artiman Ventures
Palo Alto , CA

Artiman Ventures
East Palo Alto, CA

Authentise Inc.
Salt Lake City, UT

Eric Ries*
Author -The Lean Startup
Philadelphia, PA

Bento Technologies, Inc.
San Francisco, CA

Byron Deeter*
Bessemer Venture Partners
Menlo Park, CA

David Cowan*
Bessemer Venture Partners
Menlo Park, CA

Betterment
New York, NY

Big Results Coaching
Tulsa, OK

Blue Startups
Honolulu, HI

Borealis Ventures
Hanover, NH

Bright Power, Inc.
New York, NY

Deepak Kamra*
Canaan Partners
Menlo Park, CA

Maha Ibrahim*
Canaan Partners
Menlo Park, CA

Cantora
New York, NY

Casper Sleep Inc.
New York, NY

Cayuga Ventures
Ithaca, NY

Celtra Inc.
Boston, MA

Center of Entrepreneurial
Ecosystem Development
Kansas City, MO

Ernest Andrade*
Charleston Digital Corridor
Charleston, SC

Checkr
San Francisco, CA

Civic Ninjas
Tulsa, OK

CivicMakers
San Francisco, CA

Scott Requadt*
Clarus
Cambridge, MA

Laura Shawver*
Cleave Biosciences
Burlingame, CA

Greg Sands*
Costanoa VC
Palo Alto, CA

Neill Occhiogrosso*
Costanoa VC
Palo Alto, CA

Crea7ive
Miami, FL

CRV
Cambridge, MA

Stepheni Harpin*
CT Innovations
Stamford, CT

Jeremy Sterns*
CTO Vantage
San Francisco, CA

Currant, Inc.
Palo Alto, CA

Department of Better
Technology
Oakland, CA

Development Seed
Washington, DC

Domi Station
Tallahassee, FL

Q Motiwala*
Draper Nexus
San Jose, CA

William H. Draper III*
Draper Richards
Menlo Park, CA

Dwolla
Des Moines, IA

Earnest Inc.
San Francisco, CA

Electric Imp, Inc
Los Altos, CA

Barry Schweitzer*
Elm Street Ventures
New Haven, CT

Christopher K. McLeod*
Elm Street Ventures
New Haven, CT

Brian Jacobs*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Doug Landis*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Gordon Ritter*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Jake Saper*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Jason Green*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Kara Egan*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Kevin Spain*
Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

Emergence Capital
San Mateo, CA

EquityZen
New York, NY

Josh Kopelman*
First Round Capital
Philadelphia, PA

First Round Capital
Philadelphia, PA

Fishbowl
San Francisco, CA

Jeff Bussgang*
Flybridge Capital Partners
Boston, MA

Flywheel Ventures
Santa Fe, NM

Michael Jung*
Founders Circle Capital
San Francisco, CA

Free State Strategy Group
Olathe, KS

FreshPlanet
New York, NY

FUSE Coworking
Lincoln, NE

Global Accelerator
Network
Denver, CO

GeekGirlWeb LLC
New York, NY

Anne Morriss*
GenePeeks Inc.
New York, NY

gener8tor
Madison, WI

General Assembly
New York, NY

Geonetric
Cedar Rapids, IA

Gil Dibner*
Angel List
Boston, MA

Glasswing Ventures
Boston, MA

Jeffrey Harris*
Global Reserve Group
New York, NY

GlobalPetals
Chicago, IL

Goalbook
San Mateo, CA

Adair Newhall*
Greenspring Associates
Owings Mills, MD

Rebecca Potts*
Grove Street Advisors
Newton, MA

Ryan Baird*
GWC Innovator Fund
Santa Clara, CA

Habit Genius llc
Deerfield Beach, FL

Hardin Design &
Development
Madison, WI

Help Scout
Boston, MA

Homebrew
San Francisco, CA

Hunter Walk*
Homebrew
San Francisco, CA

Satya Patel*
Homebrew
San Francisco, CA

Humanyze Boston, MA	John Levy* Hypres Elmsford, NY	Chris Brown* New York, NY
Philip Sanderson* IDG Ventures San Francisco, CA	Instagift Birmingham, AL	Laura Oliphant* Translarity Fremont, CA
Louis Smookler* New York, NY	Jules Maltz* IVP Menlo Park, CA	Steve Harrick* IVP Menlo Park, CA
Edgar Acosta* Janus Health Partners Tulsa, OK	Janus Health Partners Tulsa, OK	Ray Leach* JumpStart Cleveland, OH
JW Player New York, NY	Manu Kumar* K9 Ventures Palo Alto, CA	Kansas City Startup Foundation Kansas City, KS
KeepUp Inc. Buffalo, NY	Kinetic New York, NY	KitHub Los Angeles, CA
Knewton New York, NY	Amol Sarva* Knotel New York, NY	Knotel New York, NY
LaunchPad Labs Tulsa, OK	Lean Team Tuning LLC Plattsburgh, NY	Lightstone Ventures Menlo Park, CA

MakersKit
Portland, OR

Mapbox, Inc.
San Francisco, CA

Navin Chaddha*
Mayfield Fund
Menlo Park, CA

Ursheet Parikh*
Mayfield Fund
Menlo Park, CA

Meetup, Inc.
New York, NY

Shawn Carolan*
Menlo Ventures
Menlo Park, CA

Venky Ganesan*
Menlo Ventures
Menlo, CA

Adrian Fortino*
Mercury Fund
Ann Arbor, MI

Aziz Gilani*
Mercury Fund
Houston, TX

M. Blair Garrou*
Mercury Fund
Houston, TX

Craig Sherman*
Meritech Capital
Palo Alto, CA

Molekule
San Francisco, CA

Elizabeth Stoner*
MPM Capital
Cambridge, MA

Sarah Reed*
MPM Capital
Cambridge, MA

Tony Rosenberg*
MPM Capital
Cambridge, MA

Vin Bhaskar*
MPM Capital
Cambridge, MA

Ms.Tech CO.
Chicago, IL

John DeMartino*

Lynn Layuh*
San Francisco, CA

Neighborland
Boulder, CO

New England Venture
Capital Association
Boston, MA

NewBoCo
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Glenn Rieger*
NewSpring Capital
Radnor, PA

Rob Go*
Next View Ventures
Boston, MA

NourishWise
Nashville, TN

Nutricio LLC
Chicago, IL

Ordr.in
New York, NY

Overtime
Brooklyn, NY

Patreon
San Francisco, CA

Corey McCann*
Pear Therapeutics, Inc.
Boston, MA

Ethan Perlstein*
Perlara
San Francisco, CA

Philadelphia Alliance for
Capital & Technologies
(PACT)
Philadelphia, PA

Pick1
San Francisco, CA

Pinterest
San Francisco, CA

Derek M. Meisner*
Quantopian, Inc.
Boston, MA

RadiateBuzz, Inc
McLean, VA

Rakesh Agrawal*
Houston, TX

Brett Topche*
Red & Blue Ventures
Philadelphia, PA

Ariel Tseitlin*
Scale Venture Partners
Foster City, CA

Kate Mitchell*
Scale Venture Partners
Foster City, CA

Duane Wilson*
Sacramento, CA

ShareProgress
San Francisco, CA

Scott Stanford*
Sherpa Capital
San Francisco, CA

Shervin Pischevar*
Sherpa Capital
San Francisco, CA

Sherpa Capital
San Francisco, CA

Shift
San Francisco, CA

Simplifeye
New York, NY

Simplifeye, Inc.
New York, NY

Benoit Passot*
SimPolaris, Inc
Menlo Park, CA

SimPolaris, Inc
Menlo Park, CA

Singing Electronics, Inc
Lopez Island, WA

SIREN
San Jose, CA

SnapStream
Houston, TX

SocialFlow
New York, NY

SocialFlow Inc.
New York, NY

Andy McLoughlin*
SoftTech VC
San Francisco, CA

Jeff Clavier*
SoftTech VC
San Francisco, CA

SoftTech VC
Palo Alto, CA

Stephanie Palmeri*
SoftTech VC
San Francisco, CA

Ashley Cravens*
SoftTech VC
San Francisco, CA

Vic Parker*
Spectrum Equity
San Francisco, CA

Jens Eckstein*
SR One
Cambridge, MA

Starry, Inc.
Boston, MA

StartEngine
Los Angeles, CA

Survata
San Francisco, CA

Ron Conway*
SV Angel
San Francisco, CA

Svaha LLC
Ellsworth, ME

Switchgear Search &
Recruiting
Tulsa, OK

TeamSnap
Boulder, CO

Thanx
San Francisco, CA

The Feral Few, L.L.C.
Kansas City, KS

Lisa Edgar*
Top Tier Capital Partners
San Francisco, CA

Tostie Productions, LLC
San Diego, CA

TouchPoint Incorporated
Lago Vista, TX

Jacques Benkoski*
USVP
Menlo Park, CA

Chris Brody*
Vantage Venture Partners
New York, NY

Venture Hall
Portland, ME

Barbara Lubash*
Versant Ventures
San Francisco, CA

Ross Jaffe*
Versant Ventures
San Francisco, CA

Village Capital
Washington, DC

Vimeo
New York, NY

Vinetta Project
Los Angeles, CA

Wealthfront Inc.
Redwood City, CA

Wefunder
San Francisco, CA

Jay Cohan*
Western Technology
Investment
Portola Valley, CA

WorkHound
Des Moines, IA

Yushino, LLC
New York, NY

High Mountain Ventures,
LLC
Columbus, OH

* Signed letter in individual capacity, not on behalf of company or firm