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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, January 30, 2017

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## **Statement by Mayor Bernero on Trump’s Executive Orders on Immigrants and Refugees**

(LANSING) – Mayor Virg Bernero today hosted a community dialogue and planning session with local advocates, educators, and leaders from the faith-based community about President Trump’s executive orders concerning immigrants and refugees. Pursuant to this discussion, Mayor Bernero issued the following statement:

“I stand with the thousands of immigrants and refugees that have resettled in Lansing over the decades. Lansing, like America, was built by immigrants from all over the world, who came to this country seeking their own version of the American Dream. Immigrants like my father, Giulio, who started his own small business and then worked for GM to provide a middle-class lifestyle that put his kids through college. Our city is a rich tapestry of multicultural populations, enriching our community with their customs, their ideas and their commitment to a better Lansing for everyone.

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the President’s heavy-handed, inhumane ban on refugees from Muslim countries that instantly tore apart families, left children stranded in airports here and abroad, and continues to disrupt international cultural, educational, economic and scientific exchanges. These actions are a clear violation of the U.S. Constitution and the very principles that define the moral character of our nation.

You see, Mr. President, in Lansing, we actually believe in the Pledge of Allegiance. We believe in human equality, which is why we reinforce these values every year on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. We take to heart the values and goals we share on Cesar Chavez Day, and at our annual Ramadan Unity Dinner.

We are a Welcoming City, and we will stand tall to protect our residents from unequal treatment. In fact, Lansing is ranked by The Brookings Institute as a Top 10 City for refugee resettlement.

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Of course, crime will not be tolerated by anyone— regardless of immigrant status— but neither will we tolerate the coercive targeting of our immigrant populations. Lansing police officers do not ask the immigration status of the citizens they encounter or arrest in the course of performing their duties, and we're not going to start now. The foundation of our law enforcement philosophy is community-based policing.

The Lansing Police Department works every day to build bridges instead of building walls. If we are directed by the Trump Administration to engage in any divisive, draconian activities, Lansing will quickly and forcefully join cities across America in a legal challenge to resist any order that would transform our police officers into immigration officers. We will not burden our police with yet another unfunded mandate that distracts them from real police work. And we will not be bullied into an ultimatum that cuts vital federal grants for cities who refuse to comply with unjust and unprecedented mandates.

We are pushing back. We will resist. We are not turning our America over to you, Mr. President. This is the United States of America, not the United States of Trump. We are a nation of laws, not of men. We know the importance of GOOD men and women. America wasn't waiting for you to make it 'great again.' America already possessed the greatness of diversity, of sharing our culture and our resources and learning from our immigrant and refugee populations.

We know what happens when a demagogue uses scare-tactics to grab power from the people. We will not 'keep our mouths shut.' We the Muslims, We the Latinos, We the African-Americans, We the Women, We the LGBT Community, We the Jews, We the Christians, We the Non-believers, We the Native Americans... We the PEOPLE."

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