Commissioner Gregoire confirms all Sea-Tac Airport travelers affected by immigration order have been legally allowed to travel in the U.S.

02/05/2017

"We can now confirm that all the travelers who came to Sea-Tac Airport last Saturday have been legally permitted to travel in the United States.

"The final traveler returned to the United States today.

"The Port of Seattle has continued to facilitate legal representation for travelers since the abrupt and chaotic implementation of this executive order last Saturday, Jan. 28.

"On the first day of implementation, we identified expert immigration advocates in our community and connected those experts to families waiting for a detained traveler. Where appropriate, we provided operational information that helped families and advocates understand the deadlines and legal landscape. The remarkable and real-time collaboration between public agencies and legal experts ensured that two travelers with legal visas, who were about to be denied entry and returned to their country of departure, were allowed to enter the United States last Saturday.

"That partnership continues to serve travelers today. All week Sea-Tac Airport has made it possible for legal representatives to stay at the airport, ensuring that travelers who might be affected by the ban have access to legal representation and the full benefit of their rights. We have also stayed close with federal, state and local leaders working on immigration issues. We are deeply grateful for the trust and partnership between local elected officials, public agencies and nonprofits who all worked toward the same goal of ensuring representation.

"This executive order runs contrary to our values as the government that operates Sea-Tac Airport on behalf of the people of King County. However, this executive order does not change our deep respect for the federal employees who enforce the laws of our nation. These dedicated individuals continue to maintain professionalism and kindness while operating amid legal and humanitarian chaos."

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