

# The Mercury News

## Trump travel ban: Support among Bay Area conservatives ranges from tepid to red-hot

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Carmen Navarro emigrated from Central America three decades ago and was a longtime Democrat until she voted for President Donald Trump. She has no regrets.

The retired Santa Clara Valley Medical Center translator sees no problem with the president's order barring all refugees for 120 days and cracking down on visitors from seven Middle Eastern countries for three months.

"Whatever he does to keep our country safe is fine," said Navarro, of Milpitas. "I think people should be vetted to come to this country, because I don't want my family, my daughters, my granddaughters, if they go to the airport, to get blown up or get shot at the mall."

From a national perspective, Navarro's point of view is hardly unusual. A Reuters/Ipsos poll released this week found 49 percent of Americans approve of the ban, while 41 percent disapprove.

"I support 100 percent Donald Trump," said Navarro, now a U.S. citizen, who convinced other members of her family to vote for Trump as well. She said she's tired of Democrats failing to live up to their campaign pledges.

But in the Democratic Party stronghold of the Bay Area, where throngs of protesters vented anger over Trump's executive order and cheered arriving foreigners at San Francisco International Airport, people like Navarro are harder to find. Still, they're out there, chewing over a wide range of opinions. Some give Trump's measure their full-throated support, while others like the idea in theory but disagree with the execution. Still others think the order went too far.

Art Kiesel, a moderate Republican and former Foster City councilman, said the rollout of Trump's order was "terrible," but there is a good argument to be made for enhancing border controls. The executive action blocked most citizens of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

"We need to sharpen our pencil on the vetting process, for sure," he said.

Shane Patrick Connolly, treasurer of the Santa Clara County Republican Party, agreed that the introduction of the order was botched, causing “chaos and confusion” for green card holders who initially appeared to be barred from re-entering the country.

Still, Connolly argued, the order was not nearly as onerous as protesters have made it out to be.

“The histrionics from the left, the anti-Trump people, has been over-the-top ridiculous,” he said. “No one was carted off to Guantanamo here. We’re talking about 90 days. So we need to inject some reality into the situation.”

Connolly joined other conservatives in highlighting the president’s authority and responsibility to protect the American people from harm, but critics doubt the order was necessary for national security. Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy analyst with the libertarian Cato Institute, recently noted that terrorists from the seven countries affected by the ban were not responsible for any lethal attacks on U.S. soil from 1975 to 2015.

Over at Stanford University’s conservative Hoover Institution, Timothy Kane argued that the president’s order was too broad. Why, for instance, exclude refugees from places like Vietnam or Ukraine?

Immigration of both high- and low-skilled workers is essential to the American economy, he said, and Trump’s order, even if it’s lifted in a few months, could have a chilling effect on the influx of human capital.

“If we want to have strong economic growth — and the president has promised to push it to 4 percent — he can’t achieve that without having a welcoming immigration policy across the board,” said Kane.