

Immigration order playing well to Trump's fans around nation

31/01/2017 21:49 by admin

Washington: President Donald Trump's order temporarily banning refugees and immigrants from seven mostly Muslim countries is playing well in Trump Country, those places that propelled him to the White House.

Donald Trump

The New York businessman and reality TV star promised to put America first during the campaign, his supporters say, and he's doing it. That includes securing the nation's borders and doing everything possible to prevent terrorists from entering the U.S.

In their view, Trump is being Trump. They add that Democrats and liberal snowflakes and soft-hearted do-gooders just need to calm down.

"He's going to do what he says and says what he does," said Barbara Van Syckel, 66, of Sterling Heights, Michigan. "That's a little frightening for some people."

Thousands have demonstrated at U.S. airports since Trump issued an order Friday blocking people from seven countries in the Middle East and Africa from entering the U.S. and suspending refugee immigration for four months. The protests included a gathering of several hundred people at the Birmingham, Alabama, airport, the largest in a Southern state Trump carried with ease.

Washington's state attorney general filed a lawsuit over the order, and a federal judge in New York issued an emergency order temporarily banning deportations of people from the seven nations. Some Republican lawmakers have questioned the order, with Sens. John McCain of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina saying they fear it will become "a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism."

Yet none of that criticism matters much in Trump Country, those states and counties where Trump claimed the votes to win the Electoral College despite losing the popular vote to Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Retired social service worker Judith Wilkenroh says the order shows Trump "means what he says."

"He's just unafraid. He's just going ahead like a locomotive, and I like him more and more every time he does something," said Wilkenroh, 72, of Fredrick, Maryland.

Trump supporters said they're satisfied with the immigration order and the ideas behind it, from improving national security to watching out for Americans first. Some Trump backers said they might do things a little differently than the president, but their overall reaction is positive.

"We're not the world's Social Security office. We're not here to take care of people," said Jim Buterbaugh, the head of custodial work and maintenance at a public school in the western Montana town of White Hall. "I understand that people need help, but there are other ways besides bringing them here."

Buterbaugh, who has actively fought the re-settlement of Syrians in Montana, was frustrated that Trump's moratorium did not include countries such as Saudi Arabia, where most of the Sept. 11 hijackers were from. The executive order also did not include the creation of safe zones for refugees, which he favors.

Mike Honaker has some misgivings, too. A Trump supporter in a struggling West Virginia coal town, he didn't think "blitzing everybody" with an order that spread chaos around the world was the right way to go.

But Honaker worries about terrorism and does not have a problem with Trump's plan to screen refugees more thoroughly. Overall, Honaker likes 85 percent of what the president has done so far.

"I think he's shaking it up, the whole of Washington, D.C., and half the country, like he said he would," he said.

Attorney Terri King, 56, said Trump's order has widespread support in her Rust Belt city of Middletown, Ohio.

The only people who don't support it are "those who are paid to protest on the left ... and some Democrats," said King, an also-ran in a GOP congressional race last year.

Venitta Ferguson of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, said national security was a priority for her during the election, and Trump has delivered on what he promised.

"I couldn't be more pleased with what he's done," the 59-year-old Ferguson said. "We're in that kind of world where to ignore the possibility that even one person out of 10,000 has ill intentions is foolish."

Charles Lewis, a retired firefighter in Topeka, Kansas, said he voted for Trump in part because of national security issues, and he supports the president's actions.

"We need to know who these people are," said Lewis, 64. "I just don't think this nation is secure. We're a day late and a dollar short on everything."

- Associated Press