



## Craig Whittaker MP

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### **Response to State Visit Donald Trump – February 2017**

Thank you for contacting me about a state visit to the UK by President Trump.

First, let me say that I fully appreciate the strength of feeling on this issue, evidenced by the number of signatures to the petition on the Parliament website and the volume of correspondence I have received. I was pleased to hear that a debate in Parliament has now been scheduled on 20 February on this issue.

I agree with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary who have made it clear that the recent changes to US immigration policy are not measures that the British Government would consider. It is a highly controversial and divisive policy and it is wrong to stigmatise people on the basis of their nationality.

Of course, this country's alliance with the United States is vitally important. On defence, intelligence and security, we work more closely together than any other two countries in the world.

It is therefore my view that it is right that the incoming President of our closest and most important ally should be accorded the honour of a state visit just like every President before him. The Government supports this approach and the invitation has been extended by Her Majesty the Queen, quite properly. It is right that the visit should go ahead.

It is very important to say, however, that where we have differences with the US, we should not hesitate to express them, and I am pleased that so many members of Parliament were in the House of Commons to express their views during the extensive debate on the changes to US immigration policy on 30 January.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP