

RESOLUTION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM
2009 USCMA Annual Meeting
New Orleans, LA
October 25, 2009

“The so called ‘illegals’ are so not because they wish to defy the law, but because the law does not provide them with any channels to regularize their status in the country – which needs their labor – they are not breaking the law, the law is breaking them” (Thomas Wenski, Bishop of Orlando)

Resolution:

In light of the urgency of immigration reform and building on the merits of the 2005 USCMA Resolution “On Behalf of the Stranger,” we the members of USCMA resolve to continue promoting among our constituencies an ongoing consciousness raising of the issue. We call on our membership to urge our House and Senate representatives to enact a just and comprehensive immigration reform.

Rationale

US Immigration laws and policies continue to be restrictive and harmful to some immigrants and asylum seekers. Together with Archbishop Wilton Gregory, we say, “As a great nation and as a country of immigrants, we can no longer accept a status quo that tolerates a permanent underclass of human beings without rights and the opportunity to fully contribute to the life of the nation. That is not what America stands for and certainly is not what has made us a nation of equal justice under the law.” A just and comprehensive immigration reform is urgent.

As USCMA, we recognize the gifts that immigrants bring to our country. We want to celebrate these gifts and we see welcoming the “stranger” as integral to our faith. With Francis Cardinal George and the USCCB, we too urge as a moral matter to “resolve the legal status of those who are here without proper documentation so that they can fully contribute their talents to our nation’s economic, social and spiritual well being.”

Catholic Social teachings on the rights of laborers and the sanctity of family mandate the need for reform of immigrants’ status in this country. Just working conditions and maintaining the unity of the immigrant family are matters which must touch the conscience of all people of good will.

“ . . . the Church not only is in favor of the individual migrant, but also of his family, which is a place and resource of the culture of life and a factor for the integration of values. . . . If the immigrant family is not ensured of a real possibility of inclusion and participation, it is difficult to expect its harmonious development.” (Pope Benedict XVI)

Suggested actions:

Mobilize our constituencies to call or write representatives to get a bill introduced NOW on a just and comprehensive immigration reform. Such a bill must incorporate the following fundamental needs::

- an earned path to legalization so as to be able to live and work in the US with dignity,
- the unity of immigrants’ families,
- an expansion of the present program of temporary visas
- a guaranteed protection of laborers’ basic rights.
- a change in the current militarized border enforcement plan
- a restoration of due process in the system

Call and/or write to our Congressional Representatives until the appeal makes an impact.