

Talking Points on Executive Action on Immigration Reform

- **The administration’s decision will improve the lives of nearly 5 million people who are already here, building communities and supporting families.** The changes in immigration policy are wide-reaching, but also fairly complex. There is still a lot that is left to be determined but we do know that over 6 million people will be left out. As people of faith we know that each person matters and is sacred. We cannot have an underclass of people in our midst. We must work for a comprehensive reform of our immigration system.
- **Administrative relief is no substitute for legislative reform.** We need a permanent fix to the immigration system that can only be achieved through bi-partisan Congressional action. Only Congress possesses the power to expand the President’s short-term solutions into a long-term immigration policy that is just and humane. We need laws that respect the dignity of the person, protect families, and adequately balance the right of the state to regulate migration against the natural right of an individual to migrate to provide for their family and seek better opportunities. Immigration reform should prioritize due process, offer a path to legalization for those already in the country, and promote humane enforcement that respects the dignity of the person.
- **The U.S. immigration system is broken, does not serve the needs of the nation, and demands significant reform.** Current immigration laws do not provide an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants access to legal status and a means to fully contribute to the American society.
- **We have been waiting for common-sense immigration reform for far too long.** As members of faith communities and service providers concerned with the welfare of our neighbors, we can longer wait to end the human suffering caused by our current immigration system, including the separation of families.
- **In the last six years, the US government has deported over 2 million of our neighbors.** That’s more than 1,000 deportations per day. These deportations have torn apart families and hurt communities.
- **This is a matter of faith.** The Catholic Church is rooted in a history of migration. We are an immigrant church that embraces our call to ‘welcome the stranger among us. We are encouraged by Biblical teachings that remind us every human being is made in God’s image and that our treatment of our neighbor is a reflection of God in us.
- **President Obama has the legal authority – and moral obligation – to stop separating families and protect undocumented families, within the limits of his authority.** Every Democratic and Republican president since Dwight Eisenhower has taken executive action on immigration. This is an example of what the American people want from their elected officials — courage and action to solve tough problems. The President has exercised his broad constitutional and legal authority to prioritize the resources allocated by Congress for immigration enforcement. This was a moral decision that all people of faith and good will should support – including our members of Congress.
- **We welcome the end of the so-called “Secure Communities” program.** This was a failed strategy that made people afraid to report crimes and increased racial profiling. We hope that the new Prioritized Enforcement Program will be a model that follows due process and that states and localities will be able to choose whether or not to participate, in order to ensure trust between local police and communities.



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