

September 2013



Message from:

Attleboro District St. Vincent de Paul Society's Voice of the Poor Committee for Social Justice

As Congress returns to session in September, the Attleboro District St. Vincent de Paul Society's Voice of the Poor Committee for Social Justice urges parishioners to contact the U.S. House of Representatives in support of comprehensive immigration reform. The U.S. Senate has already passed an immigration reform bill.

Contact Representative Joseph Kennedy, whose District covers all parishes in the Greater Attleboro area, and also contact House Speaker John Boehner to urge him to allow a vote on this important bill.

More information about immigration reform, Catholic social teaching about immigration policy and how to contact Representative Kennedy and Speaker Boehner can be found on the Social Justice page of the Attleboro District SVDP Society. Google "SVDP Social Justice Attleboro".

This is the best opportunity our nation has had in years to pass comprehensive immigration reform generally in line with Catholic social teaching.

Below is an Immigration Reform Fact Sheet produced by Network, a national Catholic Social Justice Lobby.



Immigration Reform Fact Sheet

Needed: commonsense 21st century immigration policies that reflect our true American values.

Laws should reflect our values, not our fears.

Americans value our nation's heritage.

- We celebrate our shared history as a nation of immigrants – people from around the globe who have come together to create a strong, diverse nation filled with energy and promise.

Americans value fairness and community-building.

- Many immigrants come at Americans' invitation to work in agriculture and meet other needs of U.S. employers. They help employers remain in business and help keep many Americans employed.
- Most undocumented immigrants are here for more than 10 years – working, paying taxes, and contributing to our communities.
- Many came as children, and they grew up with us. They are our neighbors and our children's friends.
- Eleven million contributing members of our communities will not and should not be forced to leave.

Americans value family.

- When families are together, individuals are happier, healthier and more productive. Present and future immigrant families must be allowed to be together.
- Establishing legal status will help keep immigrant families together.
- More than 5,100 children whose parents are undocumented immigrants are in the U.S. foster care system because their parents have either been detained or deported.

- If undocumented immigrants without a path to citizenship continue to be deported, up to 15,000 children could be in the foster care system by 2016. Our nation's child welfare departments do not have the resources to handle this increase.

Americans value diversity because it benefits all of us - the 100%.

- We welcome people with diverse skills, backgrounds and talents because they strengthen our entire nation.
- Without a visa diversity program, we deprive our society of a rich, multihued tapestry of gifts.

Americans value opportunity and prosperity.

- Immigrants are entrepreneurs. They create one-fourth of new businesses, providing many new jobs. Immigrants and their children founded 40% of Fortune 500 companies.
- Immigrants complement and increase our workforce. Different cultures contribute a variety of skills that enrich our economy.
- Pathways to citizenship will raise our standard of living. Granting citizenship will boost wages for both immigrants and their U.S.-born coworkers because documented immigrants will work under U.S. wage laws. They are now frequently hired at extremely low wages, thereby depressing wages for everyone else.
- Higher wages mean more buying power, which supports businesses everywhere.

Americans value fiscal responsibility.

- Immigration reform will put our nation's workers on a level playing field, meaning fairer wages and better jobs for immigrants. This translates into more income tax revenue that will help address our nation's debt.
- Citizenship will benefit all levels of government, with increased revenue at local and state levels as well.
- Immigrants with higher wages will have more purchasing power, which translates into more tax revenue from the businesses they frequent.

Americans value faith and fairness.

- Our faith teaches that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Each person, therefore, deserves to be treated with dignity and to be valued by everyone.
- Our nation's founding vision tells us that "We the People" are called to establish justice and fairness for all.
- Together we seek a fair immigration system that reflects the values of our faith and nation.

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, calls for commonsense immigration reform that:

- ***Ensures family unity***
- ***Enhances the present diversity visa program***
- ***Protects the rights of immigrant workers***
- ***Acknowledges that our borders are already basically secure, with only minor changes needed***
- ***Speeds up processing of already-approved immigrants***
- ***Provides a clear and direct pathway to citizenship for the 11 million people who are undocumented in the U.S.***

The time to pass commonsense immigration reform is NOW!

