

September 6, 2006

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
U.S. Senate
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McConnell,

We appreciate your May 25, 2006 vote for S. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006 (CIRA). It is a step in the right direction. It encompasses many of the elements necessary for comprehensive reform. We appreciate your efforts to have a comprehensive bill enacted. On behalf of Kentucky's Bishops, I urge you to continue to support comprehensive immigration reform now.

Beyond your May 25th vote, we urge you, as Senate Majority Whip, to bring about a Conference Committee so the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives work together to produce a just, humane, and fair comprehensive immigration reform bill before the end of the year.

The Bishops support enforcement of our immigration laws, as long as they respect the basic human rights of migrants. However, as a matter of justice, any bill which comes out of a House-Senate conference committee must include:

- 1) a viable path to citizenship for the 11-12 million undocumented in the country;
- 2) a temporary worker program which protects the rights of workers and includes a path to citizenship for those who choose it;
- 3) family-based immigration reform to reduce waiting times for family reunification;
- 4) restoration of due process protections, and
- 5) policies which address the root causes of economic flight.

The Bishops of Kentucky have issued a Statement, *Every Man and Woman is the Image of God*, calling for such reform now. A copy is enclosed. "For Christians, the migrant is not merely an individual to be respected in accordance with the norms established by law, but a person whose presence challenges them and whose needs become an obligation for their responsibility. 'What have you done to your brother?' (cf. Gn 4:9). The answer should not be limited to what is imposed by law, but should be made in the manner of solidarity." ("Undocumented Migrants," Message of Pope John Paul II for the World Migration Day, 1996) Nos. 3, 5.

We ask that you continue to work for the just treatment in our laws of the children of God who are immigrants. Only a comprehensive immigration bill will fix a flawed immigration system.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Monahan
Executive Director

September 6, 2006

The Honorable Jim Bunning
U.S. Senate
316 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bunning,

On behalf of Kentucky's Bishops, I urge you to support comprehensive immigration reform as this matter goes to a Conference Committee, despite your previous vote against S. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006 (CIRA).

The Bishops support enforcement of our immigration laws, as long as these laws respect the basic human rights of migrants. Current immigration laws and H.R. 4437, in their judgement, fail in this regard. Therefore, as a matter of justice, any bill which comes out of a House-Senate Conference Committee must include:

- 1) a viable path to citizenship for the 11-12 million undocumented in the country;
- 2) a temporary worker program which protects the rights of workers and includes a path to citizenship for those who choose it;
- 3) family-based immigration reform to reduce waiting times for family reunification;
- 4) restoration of due process protections, and
- 5) policies which address the root causes of economic flight.

The Bishops of Kentucky have issued a Statement, *Every Man and Woman is the Image of God*, calling for such reform now. A copy is enclosed.

Many look at this issue only through the lens of the law. Pope John Paul II spoke directly to the issue of law and migration. He said, "For Christians, the migrant is not merely an individual to be respected in accordance with the norms established by law, but a person whose presence challenges them and whose needs become an obligation for their responsibility. 'What have you done to your brother?' (cf. Gn 4:9). The answer should not be limited to what is imposed by law, but should be made in the manner of solidarity." ("Undocumented Migrants," Message of Pope John Paul II for the World Migration Day, 1996) Nos. 3, 5.

We ask that you work for the just treatment in our laws of the children of God who are immigrants. Only a comprehensive immigration bill will fix this flawed immigration system. We urge that you support a comprehensive immigration bill consistent with the above principles.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Monahan
Executive Director