

African American Ministers in Action

AJC (American Jewish Committee)

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Bread for the World Institute

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Church World Service (CWS)

Disciples Justice Action Network

The Episcopal Church

Franciscan Action Network

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)

Islamic Information Center

The Immigration Issues Offices of the Presbyterian Church USA

Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ)

Irish Apostolate USA

Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)

Jesuit Refugee Service

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office

Muslim Public Affairs Committee

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

NETWORK

Pax Christi USA

RAC (The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism)

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Sojourners

3D Security

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA)

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society

UNITED SIKHS

World Relief

May 10, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500



Dear Mr. President,

As people of faith, we heed the admonitions in our holy scriptures not to wrong or oppress the “stranger” among us. Unfortunately, we see evidence of such wrongdoing and oppression of immigrants across the country today. While we are pleased that you continue to speak about the need for Congressional action to reform our broken immigration system, in its absence, policy changes are urgently needed to uphold family unity and promote community safety.

We urge you to use your executive power to protect families from separation and to grant deferred action to students who would be eligible for cancellation of removal or a stay of removal under the DREAM Act.

In the past 10 years, over 100,000 parents of U.S.-citizen children have been deported. An estimated 4 million U.S.-born children currently live in mixed-status families where at least one parent is an undocumented immigrant. Every year, approximately 65,000 immigrant children who graduate from high school are unable to attend college because they lack legal immigration status. No significant national or law enforcement interest is furthered by detaining and removing immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents who have good moral character and are eligible for family-based visas. The same may be said of college students of good moral character who were brought here as young children by their parents.

Furthermore, when considering approaches to addressing our broken immigration policies, we must hold in front of us the recognition that, regardless of legal status, socio-economic situation and/or skin color, every person is created equal. The recent Arizona law, SB 1070, is part of a larger federal trend enacted in many towns and counties across our nation to criminalize whole communities by enlisting our local police to enforce federal immigration laws. While we appreciate the Administration’s legal challenge of SB 1070, we are deeply concerned about state and local law enforcement collaboration with Immigration and Customs Enforcement which can target immigrant communities, separate families, foster profiling, and undermine community safety by focusing on immigration status rather than criminal activity.

As you said in El Paso this afternoon, “I don’t believe the United States of America should be in the business of separating families. That’s not right. That’s not who we are.” President Obama, we call on you to immediately cease policies that tear families apart and undermine community safety. You have the power and the moral responsibility to stand up to anti-immigrant hostility. Please take action now to stop the human rights abuses and make our communities whole once again.

Sincerely,

Members of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition