

Christians for Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Combined Immigration Statement

Christians for Comprehensive Immigration Reform represents a coalition of Christian organizations, churches, and leaders from across the theological and political spectrum united in support of comprehensive immigration reform. Despite our differences on other issues, we are working together to see comprehensive immigration reform enacted this year because we share a set of common moral and theological principles that compel us to love and care for the stranger among us, including the following:

- We believe that all people, regardless of national origin, are made in the “image of God” and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect (Genesis 1:26-27, 9:6).
- We believe there is an undeniable biblical responsibility to love and show compassion for the stranger among us (Deuteronomy 10:18-19, Leviticus 19:33-34, Matthew 25:31-46).
- We believe that immigrants are our neighbors, both literally and figuratively, and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and show mercy to neighbors in need (Leviticus 19:18, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:25-37).
- We believe in the rule of law, but we also believe that we are to oppose unjust laws and systems that harm and oppress people made in God’s image, especially the vulnerable (Isaiah 10:1-4, Jeremiah 7:1-7, Acts 5:29, Romans 13:1-7).

The current U.S. immigration system is broken and now is the time for a fair and compassionate solution. We think it is entirely possible to protect our borders while establishing a viable, humane, and realistic immigration system, one that is consistent with our American values and increases national security while protecting the livelihood of Americans. The biblical principles above call us to support comprehensive immigration reform legislation that includes the following elements:

- Border enforcement and protection initiatives that are consistent with humanitarian values while allowing the authorities to enforce the law and implement American immigration policy;
- Reforms in our family-based immigration system that reduce the waiting time for separated families to be safely reunited and maintain the constitutionally guaranteed rights of birthright citizenship and the ability of immigrants to earn naturalization;
- An opportunity for all immigrant workers and their families already in the U.S. to come out of the shadows and pursue the option of an earned path towards permanent legal status and citizenship upon satisfaction of specific criteria;
- A viable guest worker program that creates legal avenues for workers and their families to enter our country and work in a safe, legal, and orderly manner with their rights and due process fully protected and provides an option for workers to gain permanent status independent of an employer sponsor; and
- A framework to examine and ascertain solutions to the root causes of migration, such as economic disparities between sending and receiving nations.

Immigration reform that incorporates these elements, rejects anti-immigrant and nativist measures, and strengthens our American values will enrich the vitality of America and advance the common good. We stand together in calling upon President Bush and Congress to seek humane and holistic immigration reform within this legislative year.

Sincerely,

America’s Leading Organizations, Churches and Individuals in Support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform