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Contact: Jenny Hwang, 443-527-8363

The National Association of Evangelicals Approves Resolution Supporting Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Washington, D.C. – The Board of Directors of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), representing 40 denominations, scores of evangelical organizations and millions of American evangelicals, today approved a resolution calling for action on immigration reform. The resolution can be found here: <http://www.nae.net/government-affairs/policy-resolutions/348-immigration-2009>

“Our current immigration system is broken,” said Leith Anderson, NAE President. “Efforts to maintain secure and efficient borders have been ineffective and, too often, inhumane. Our visa system for legal immigration is antiquated, bureaucratic and insufficient to meet both labor force and family reunification needs. Those who want to play by the rules, both employers and employees, often have no realistic options.”

Leith Anderson will also testify at a hearing in the afternoon held by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Citizenship on faith-based perspectives on comprehensive immigration reform.

“Our churches and communities have been blessed by immigrants, many of whom bring strong faith, entrepreneurial energy and traditional family values that strengthen our future,” said Galen Carey, NAE Director of Government Affairs. “At the same time, some of our communities have struggled to cope with the impact of unregulated immigration.”

The NAE resolution recommends that immigration reform respect several fundamental principles, including:

- Immigrants should be treated with respect and mercy.
- National borders must be safeguarded with efficiency and respect for human dignity.
- Immigration laws should recognize the central importance of the family and provide for reduction in backlogs for family reunification.
- There should be a clear and workable system for legally admitting an adequate number of immigrants to meet both workforce and family reunification needs.
- There must be a sound, equitable process for currently undocumented immigrants who wish to assume the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship to earn legal status.
- There should be fair labor and civil laws for all who reside in the United States, reflecting the best of our nation’s heritage.
- Immigration enforcement must recognize due process of law, the sanctity of the human person and the incomparable value of family.

“This resolution will be an important step forward in evangelical advocacy on behalf of immigrants, many of whom are members of evangelical churches across the United States,” Carey said.

The NAE further calls on its members, elected officials and all Americans to participate in the immigration reform debate in a spirit of civility and respect, both for immigrants and for those with whom we may disagree on policy prescriptions.

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