



Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) RESPONDS TO BI-PARTISAN FRAMEWORK FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

On Monday, 18 year old Veronica Saravia (see above) stood before an array of media representatives at a Press Conference of faith and immigrant groups in DC and shared her story as a member of a Salvadoran family of immigrants. "My family has mixed status. My mother is a citizen. My father is awaiting approval of status adjustment. And my 10 year old sister and I are "DREAMers"--who arrived into the U.S. as children and have been working hard in schools to have a future and be good Americans." Veronica spends her free time helping others get their citizenship and educating about the challenges of immigrants. "Please help keep my family together, and remember the time to do it is NOW—not in 30 years" she pleaded.

Veronica's request followed the release of the Bipartisan Framework for Comprehensive Immigration Reform presented early Monday by Senators Schumer (D-NY), McCain (R-AZ), Durbin (D-IL), Graham (R-SC), Menendez (D-NJ), Rubio (R-FL), Bennet (D-CO) and Flake (R-AZ). Their plan proposes a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants that aims to improve America's legal immigration system, admit and verify workers, and protect workers' rights. The Senators' plan comes just before President Obama's release of his own blueprint for Comprehensive Immigration Reform on Tuesday in Las Vegas.

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) leaders and churches have long been engaged in support for our nation's immigrants. Our 2005 General Assembly called for the church to "develop initiatives to better serve undocumented workers" and to "contact their political representatives asking them to address the plight of undocumented workers in the United States." Our 2007 Assembly further affirmed the need "to recognize the United States as a nation of immigrants whose strength emerges from that diversity".

"I work with a lot of Disciples families who are suffering on account of our broken immigration system. We now have a chance to create a system that keeps these families together instead of tearing them apart," says Tana Liu-Beers, immigration legal counsel for Refugee & Immigration Ministries. Rev. Dr. Ron Degges, President of Disciples Home Missions for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) invited the church to recognize the importance of this time. "With the release of the Senators' principles, we celebrate this moment of hope and partnership. We welcome the progress their statement conveys--even as we continue to pray for policies to be refined that will bring the deepest healing, protection, and possibilities to all generations of newcomers. To work hard for compassionate policies is an expression of our faith in our hospitable God who called us to never forget the sojourners among us."

For additional questions and suggestions of how your congregation can support the refugees and immigrants in your area, contact: Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley, Refugee & Immigration Ministries Director, sstanley@dhm.disciples.org, or call [202-957-7826](tel:202-957-7826).