



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

ONE PETER YORKE WAY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109-6602 (415) 614-5500

**Statement of Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone
Archbishop of San Francisco
Senate Judiciary Committee
July 21, 2015**

The recent senseless killing of Kathryn Steinle was a tragedy beyond description not only for her loved ones, but for all San Franciscans and, indeed, all Americans. I offer my deepest condolences to Kathryn's family and friends, and invite everyone in our community to join me in offering prayers for them at this difficult time, and to pray as well for Francisco Sanchez, who has been charged with her death.

This horrible tragedy has ignited a national conversation about our nation's immigration enforcement policies. While it is important that we learn from this incident and work to prevent it from happening again, it is also important that we recognize that the vast majority of immigrants—both those with and without papers—are not a violent threat to society and so should not be subject to guilt by association. In fact, statistics show that immigrant communities are by and large safe and that a cooperative relationship between law enforcement and those communities enhances public safety and reduces crime.

In this regard, I ask our local, state, and federal elected officials to work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure that all persons—U.S citizens and newcomers alike—are protected from individuals who pose a threat to national security or public safety. However, they should avoid the implementation of policies that punish all immigrants for the transgressions of a small minority. I also ask that our elected officials and others refrain from using this tragedy for political expediency or political gain. This is a disservice to Kathryn's memory and to any effort to find a just solution that prevents a reoccurrence of this type of event.

I applaud the commitment to public safety of the City of San Francisco and other local jurisdictions and support their right to exercise reasonable and appropriate discretion in the handling of immigrant detainees, consistent with their need to maintain public safety. At the same time, greater cooperation is needed between local and federal authorities in identifying those who represent a violent threat to our communities. A just and humanitarian policy should not be abandoned because of flaws in the system. Rather, proper authorities should make prudent adjustments in the application of the law in order to protect the public safety of *all* those living in our country.

Over the long-term, and in conjunction with my fellow bishops, I call upon Congress and the Administration to work together to comprehensively repair our nation's flawed immigration system, a system that divides families and undermines human dignity. Such reform, long overdue, should preserve family unity, ensure the due process of law, protect those fleeing persecution, and ensure the integrity of our nation's borders.