

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.
Hebrews 13:2

Our faith communities include people from many countries and many economic backgrounds, and we value our friends' and neighbors' contributions regardless of their wealth, ethnicity, religion, or where they were born. Any meaningful reform of our immigration system must include a fair process that allows existing undocumented immigrants and their families the opportunity to pursue lawful permanent residency and citizenship. The opportunity for attainable citizenship will serve to stabilize families, communities, and local economies, and will reaffirm our national values.

Core values

- Respect for the dignity and contributions of all
- Attainable citizenship for immigrants
- Solutions for DREAMers
- Expanded access to integration services

Proposals that would create a path to temporary lawful status but deny individuals a timely and realistic opportunity to obtain a green card and apply for citizenship would cement an underclass of people who contribute to our society but are ripe for exploitation. Such proposals are inconsistent with our faith values to foster inclusive and engaged communities where immigrants find welcome and all can thrive.

Similarly, legislation must provide solutions for more than a select few. Prioritizing some members of our community while leaving others behind violates the values of our faiths. We expect Congress to work for the common good, keep families together, and grant immigrants of diverse education and skill levels citizenship.

The face of immigration: Widian



My father was raised in a tiny village in Galilee, by loving parents who made a meager living as farmers. My mother, who was raised in an orphanage, married my father at seventeen. During my childhood, my father worked as a mechanic and my mother as a teacher. While our home was filled with love, my parents recognized that their children would have better opportunities for education and advancement in the United States. We came as visitors and overstayed our visa. My parents made many attempts to become "legal," spending money on lawyers who gave us false hope and left us wondering if we were ever going to have the chance to stop living in fear. As a child, I did not quite understand our immigration status; I only knew it was a secret we were never to mention to anyone.

My experience as an undocumented immigrant has informed my commitment to support those most in need. Throughout my years as a social worker, I have had the honor to meet God in at-risk youth, homeless men and women, the elderly, my faith community, friends, family, and strangers. Three months shy of my thirty-first birthday, with no criminal record, having lived in the U.S. at least five consecutive years, having arrived before age 16, and holding an advanced degree, I completed my application for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). But my status is bittersweet as I continue to pray in hopeful expectation that undocumented immigrants all over the country will have the opportunity to live freely in our home.

How do our faith principles inform our policy recommendations?

Meaningful reform that allows existing undocumented immigrants to access a timely, affordable, and reasonable pathway to citizenship. We seek adjustment and naturalization procedures that are affordable, accessible, expedient, and respect due process. Expanding visa availability, increasing the number of ports of entry, allocating resources for more immigration attorneys, and eliminating application backlogs will reduce undue burden on immigrants navigating the immigration system.

Increased access to integration and public benefit services. Financial support to state and local governments and community organizations that offer language and civics education, outreach, and immigration legal assistance help empower immigrants to effectively navigate the system and contribute quickly to their new neighborhoods. Congress should invest in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office of Citizenship, specifically Immigrant Integration and Citizenship grant programs that help immigrants integrate and pursue citizenship. Extending access to quality, affordable health care, affordable housing, food and nutrition programs, disability assistance, job training, ESL programs, mental health and trauma recovery support, and disaster assistance to everyone, regardless of immigration status, is a core way to live up to the faithful call to love our neighbors.

Solutions for Dreamers. We expect that immigration reform legislation will grant permanent lawful status, including a pathway to citizenship, for those who are undocumented in the United States. In the meantime, we support administrative initiatives that ensure these individuals are not deported to countries unknown to them or away from their families. DACA recipients and all undocumented individuals who have been longtime contributors to American communities should have equitable access to opportunities as their resident and U.S. citizen peers. They should be free to continue their education, pursue vocational aspirations, and contribute to their families and communities free of fear of deportation, while lasting congressional reform is pursued. Congressional legislation must include an expeditious and workable pathway to citizenship.

The guest is a representative of God.

Hindu Taitiriya Upanishad 1.11.2

INTERFAITH IMMIGRATION COALITION

African American Ministers in Action ◦ American Baptist Home Mission Societies of the American Baptist Churches, USA ◦ American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) ◦ American Jewish Committee (AJC) ◦ Bread for the World ◦ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee and Immigration Ministries ◦ Christian Community Development Association ◦ Christian Reformed Church ◦ Church of the Brethren ◦ Church World Service (CWS) ◦ CLINIC | Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. ◦ Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach ◦ Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) ◦ Daughters of Charity ◦ The Episcopal Church ◦ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) ◦ Franciscan Action Network ◦ Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) ◦ HIAS ◦ Ignatian Solidarity Network (ISN) ◦ Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ) ◦ Irish Apostolate USA ◦ Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States ◦ Jesuit Refugee Service ◦ Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) ◦ Leadership Conference of Women Religious ◦ Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) ◦ Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns ◦ Mennonite Central Committee U.S. ◦ Muslim Public Affairs Council ◦ National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd ◦ National Council of Churches ◦ National Council of Jewish Women ◦ National Justice for Our Neighbors ◦ NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice ◦ Pax Christi USA ◦ PICO National Network ◦ Presbyterian Church USA, Immigration Issues Offices ◦ Scalabrinian International Migration Network (SIMN)/Center for Migration Studies (CMS) ◦ Sisters of Mercy of the Americas ◦ Sojourners ◦ T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights ◦ Union for Reform Judaism ◦ Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) ◦ Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) ◦ United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries ◦ United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society ◦ UNITED SIKHS ◦ World Relief ◦ interfaithimmigration.org 2017

OVER 750,000

Number people enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program

80% OF AMERICANS

Support a pathway to citizenship for immigrants meeting certain requirements

McClatchy-Marist poll, March 2017

\$2 TRILLION

The approximate total immigrants added to the U.S. GDP in 2016

2:1 RATIO

Immigrants start businesses at twice the rate of native-born citizens