

March 23, 2017

Dear President Trump and Secretary Kelly,

As religious denominations and faith-based organizations committed to the wellbeing of all, we write to express our strong opposition to your executive orders on immigration enforcement and border security, their implementation memos, and current enforcement actions impacting our communities.

These actions are inhumane and unjust, needlessly tear apart families and communities, and aggravate an already broken immigration system. As people of faith we stand in solidarity with those targeted, many of whom are our family members, our neighbors, our congregation members, our teachers, and our friends. In the current climate of fear and uncertainty, faith communities have reaffirmed our commitment to our immigrant neighbors, including more than 800 congregations that have pledged support for the Sanctuary Movement and more than 1,000 faith leaders who have gone on record opposing policies that force local police to serve as immigration agents.

Contrary to claims that enforcement actions only target individuals who have committed serious crimes, those who have been apprehended include a mother in Arizona, a Methodist lay leader in Kansas, a domestic violence survivor in Texas, and a woman with a brain tumor seeking asylum. It is clear that your administration has broadened the definition of "criminal" to include minor traffic offenses and individuals who have returned to the United States after being deported. Also, past mistakes should not tear away a father or mother from their children, or a congregant, neighbor or volunteer from their community. We all have made mistakes and we all have the capacity to take responsibility for our actions, learn from those mistakes, and live anew. We believe in redemption and the power of grace.

We also strongly condemn enforcement actions that have violated Immigration and Custom Enforcement's own policy to not conduct enforcement actions at or near "sensitive locations" such as schools, hospitals and houses of worship, including apprehensions of individuals exiting a hypothermia shelter at Rising Hope Mission Church in Alexandria, VA.

Provisions in the executive orders to deny asylum seekers the ability to have their cases heard before an immigration judge, to detain and deport children and families, and to punish parents for helping their children flee violence are contrary to who we are as a nation and will put lives in jeopardy. Attempts to make vulnerable migrants fear raids, detention, and deportation more than the gangs and traffickers in their home countries are immoral and ineffective. Instead of deporting vulnerable people in need of protection, your Administration should make certain that all children can access legal orientation and post-release programs to ensure their safety while awaiting a court date.

We urge you to immediately rescind these executive orders, end these reckless enforcement actions and stop the damage that they are inflicting on our immigrant brothers and sisters. The protection of people from harm and the unity of families are divine responsibilities that must not be cast aside. Walling off America, raiding communities, and failing to protect those in need are contrary to the values of family unity, fairness, and equality that we strive to achieve as a nation.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations**

Church World Service

National Justice for Our Neighbors  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
HIAS  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
Irish Apostolate USA  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee and Immigration Ministries  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
National Council of Jewish Women  
African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)  
Central Pastoral Office for Hispanic Ministries-Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Interfaith Community Church  
Disciples Justice Network  
Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America (BPFNA)  
Disciples Women  
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Leadership Team  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Conference of Major Superiors of Men  
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach  
Dominican Sisters of Sparkill  
Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission, Priests of the Sacred Heart, US Province  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA - JPIC  
National Council of Churches  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
JPIC Office, Comboni Missionaries, North American Province  
Leadership Team of the Felician Sisters of North America  
Franciscans for Justice  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia Justice, Peace and Integrity for Creation Committee  
GP RRT  
Franciscan Action Network  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
Faith in Public Life  
Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio  
Dominicans of Sinsinawa  
American Friends Service Committee  
Justice and Peace Committee, Western Province Congregation of the Mission

### **Regional and Local Organizations**

#### Arizona

Kino Border Initiative  
The Green Valley/Sahuarita Samaritans  
The Good Shepherd United Church of Christ

California

Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay  
Jewish Family Services of Silicon Valley  
IKAR  
Justice For Our Neighbors, Imperial Valley

Florida

Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice

Iowa

La Luz Hispana  
Crossing Borders - Dubuque  
Franciscan Peace Center

Illinois

JPIC Committee, Chicago Province, Society of the Divine Word  
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America  
Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, Inc.

Kansas

Immigrant Justice Advocacy Movement  
Mennonite Central Committee, Central States Region

Massachusetts

Old Cambridge Baptist Church  
JALSA - the Jewish Alliance for Law & Social Action

Michigan

Justice for Our Neighbors Southeastern Michigan  
Justice for Our Neighbors

Minnesota

Jewish Community Action

Missouri

Gospel Justice Committee

Montana

Billings First Congregational Church (UCC)  
Sanctuary Rising

North Carolina

North Carolina Council of Churches

New Hampshire

Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette

New Mexico

NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe (CAFé)  
Holy Rosary Catholic Community

New York

Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition  
Fr. Nelson A. Belizario, Order of the Carmelites  
New York Justice For Our Neighbors

Ohio

Us Together, Inc.

Oregon

Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Jewish Family & Children's Service  
HIAS Pennsylvania  
Sisters of the Humility of Mary  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia Justice, Peace and Integrity for Creation Committee  
Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN)

South Carolina

Lowcountry Immigration Coalition

Tennessee

Nashville Jewish Social Justice Roundtable  
Coalition for Education About Immigration  
Clergy for Tolerance

Texas

Dominican Sisters of Houston  
San Antonio Region Justice For Our Neighbors  
Justice For Our Neighbors Houston

Washington

National Council of Jewish Women Seattle Section  
Olympia, Washington, Jewish Community  
Faith Action Network  
Church Council of Greater Seattle

Wisconsin

Jewish Social Services of Madison