

Statement of the Episcopal Church:

(http://www.episcopalchurch.org/79425_121894_ENG_HTM.htm)

Office of Government Relations calls for comprehensive immigration reform

The Episcopal Church, in its commitment to render hospitality to those who are most vulnerable, calls on the United States Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform. The passage in Arizona of the toughest anti-immigrant law in the country demonstrates the need for action at the federal level. In an open letter last Friday the Bishop of Arizona, the Rt. Rev. Kirk Smith, expressed that "today is a sad day in the struggle to see all God's people treated in a humane and compassionate manner (...) With the Governor's signing of SB 1070, it seems that for now the advocates of fear and hatred have won over those of charity and love. Arizona claims to be a Golden Rule State. We have not lived up to that claim."

The lack of fair and humane immigration reform opens the door to misguided and divisive state and local attempts to address immigration enforcement. We urge Congress to provide a solution to a broken immigration system that separates families, spreads fear and keeps millions living in the shadows. Every day, members of our congregations see the unacceptable consequences of our broken immigration system. We urge the Senate and House to enact bipartisan immigration reform that reunites families, protects the rights of all workers, and provides an opportunity for undocumented immigrants to earn legal status.

As Christians, we are called to embrace the stranger and to find Christ in all who come to us in need. The Episcopal Church is committed to working to reform our immigration system. As Bishop Smith reminded us, "We will continue to work as hard as we can to defeat this law and to work toward just and fair laws that protect the rights of all human beings. We all know that our immigration system is broken, but it cannot be fixed by scape-goating the most vulnerable of those among us."

With strong leadership in Congress, we are confident we can solve the broken immigration system. We encourage members of Congress to join faith leaders to stand up for immigration policies that renew the dignity and human rights of everyone.