



IMMIGRATION REFORM & OHIO ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION



“ The Gospel mandate to “welcome the stranger” requires Catholics to care for and stand with immigrants, both documented and undocumented, including immigrant children. Comprehensive reform is urgently necessary to fix a broken immigration system and should include a temporary work program with worker protections and a path to permanent residency; family reunification policies; a broad and fair legalization program; access to legal protections, including due process and essential public programs; refuge for those fleeing persecution and exploitation; and policies to address the root causes of migration. The right and responsibility of nations to control their borders and to maintain the rule of law should be recognized.”

#83 Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, USCCB 2007.

In the last legislative session two bills were passed in the Ohio Senate enhancing the state’s ability to help federal officers enforce immigration laws. The Catholic Conference of Ohio acknowledges the right of the state to pursue such partnerships. We continue, however, to have questions and concerns over whether such legislation is needed and helpful.

Judicious Restraint

Since the federal government is currently implementing enhanced enforcement measures throughout Ohio and the country, Ohio should show judicious restraint in pursuing additional state enforcement legislation.

Proportional & Respectful: Avoid Profiling

Increased state enforcement of immigration laws by local law enforcement officers should be proportional to the need, avoid profiling, and respect the human rights and dignity of all persons. Special care should be given to preserving families and providing humane treatment throughout the process.

State Study Commission

An Ohio study commission should be established prior to pursuing state enforcement legislation. The study commission should be comprised of interested parties including federal and state officials, business and religious leaders, and worker representatives.

Civility & Prayerful Reflection

There is a need in Ohio for greater civility, thoughtful discussion and prayerful reflection regarding societal attitudes and approaches toward immigrant workers. Immigrant workers provide important and necessary contributions to the common good of our state through the work they perform and the taxes they pay.

Pending Legislation

[SB 42](#): Specifies that it is an unlawful discriminatory practice for any law enforcement agency or officer in Ohio to engage in racial profiling and to require the Ohio Civil Rights Commission to compile and analyze data regarding this issue.

[SB 98](#): Directs the Attorney General to pursue a memorandum of agreement with federal officials permitting the enforcement in this state of federal immigration laws, both criminal and civil, including the apprehension, detention, and investigation of illegal aliens located in this state.

[HB 252](#): Specifies that a prosecutor pursue the legal status of a felony offender and if the offender is determined to be an illegal alien to notify the offender’s employer (job), Jobs and Family Services (public benefits), the registrar of Motor Vehicles (drivers license), and the Secretary of state (voting).

[HCR 11](#): Expresses support of the efforts in Arizona to control illegal immigration.

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