Current Efforts to Fight Anti-Immigrant and Anti-Refugee Policies

June 9, 2017
Migration and Refugee Services

- Serves unaccompanied children, refugees and human trafficking victims
- Implements migration policy and advocacy initiatives of the U.S. Catholic Bishops
- Derives policy goals from:
  - Catholic Social Teaching on Migration
  - Bishops’ Priorities on Migration
  - MRS Programs that Serve Populations of Concern
- Works with federal government (1) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); (2) Department of Homeland Security (DHS); (3) Department of Justice; (4) Department of State
- Oversees Justice for Immigrants (JFI)
  - National Coalition of Catholic Organizations
  - 170 dioceses throughout the country; 675 points of contact in Dioceses and Parishes
Current State of Migration Policy in the U.S.

• EXECUTIVE
  – Migration-Related Executive Orders

• LEGISLATIVE
  – Looming Funding Issues
  – Legislative Fight on Unaccompanied Children, Border Security, Sanctuary Cities

• COMMUNITY
  – Fear in Communities
  – Raids and Enforcement Operations
EXECUTIVE: 3 Migration-Related Executive Orders

– Executive Order on Border Security
  • Building of Another Wall on U.S./Mexico Border
  • Increase Border Patrol
  • Increase in Immigrant Detention

– Executive Order on Interior Enforcement
  • Dramatically Expands Who Is A Priority for Removal
  • Attempts to Defund “Sanctuary Jurisdictions”

– Executive Order on Refugee Resettlement and Arrivals from Certain Countries
  • Attempts to Pause Resettlement, Lower Refugee Arrivals and Ban Certain Individuals from Arriving from Certain Countries
MRS and JFI Response to 3 Migration-Related Executive Orders

– 10 statements issued on Executive Orders; 48 Individual Bishop Statements

– Engagement of JFI- grassroots
  • 65,000 electronic postcards sent on Executive Orders
  • 52,000+ on BRIDGE ACT and protection of DREAMER youth generally

– Engagement of Administrative Leadership
LEGISLATIVE: TAKING CUES FROM EXECUTIVE

—Congress has been less active since January but is showing signs of resurgence

—Future Issues:

• Funding for Fiscal Year 2018
• Enforcement Efforts- Sanctuary Cities, Enforcement-Only Bills
• Designation of Unaccompanied Children
LEGISLATIVE: RESPONSE

– Fighting Enforcement-Only Legislative Efforts
  • HR 2431
  • Upcoming Cornyn/McCaul
– Defending Protections for Unaccompanied Children
  • TVPA Reauthorization Efforts
  • Protection of Children Act
– Shoring up Funding for Fiscal Year 2018
  • Affirmatively for UAC, Refugee Programs
  • Denying Funding for Detention and Wall
COMMUNITY: FEAR and APPREHENSION

• Families are concerned about living daily lives—attendance to school and Church have been down in some communities

• Cities, states evaluating whether to adopt “sanctuary city” measures

• Local service providers assisting with KYRs, screenings and family emergency custody plans
CHURCH RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY FEAR

• Education and Self-Help and Protection
  – USCCB Videos
  – Larger Catholic Service Network

• Accompaniment
  – Church Leaders in El Paso, Las Cruces, Austin, Newark, Los Angeles, Cincinnati, Northern California taking public stands on individual cases and local issues

• Engagement
  – Meeting with ICE Field Offices and local communities

• Solidarity
  – Support through public witness and acknowledgement
  – National Day of Prayer- Our Lady of Guadalupe
  – Vatican Campaign for Migration
What is Next?

– Fight Over Funding
– Pending Litigation
– TPS Battles in the Fall
– Addressing Family Separation Due to Deportation
How to Prepare

(1) Funding: Eyes on the Prize-Stay Focused
(2) Connect the Dots-Show the Damage
(3) Include New Allies
(4) Recognize and Appreciate the Different Elements of the Effort
What Can You Do?

• INDIVIDUAL:
  – Oppose Executive Orders and Support Humane Migration Initiatives – www.justiceforimmigrants.org
  – Set Up & Participate in In-District Meetings on Migration Issues
  – Support Local Service Providers and Welcoming Parish Activities
  – PRAY and WELCOME NEWCOMERS

• COMMUNITY:
  – Read JFI’s “10 Things You Can Do to Accompany Immigrants” www.justiceforimmigrants.org
  – Assist and Promote Welcoming Activities in Your Parish
  – PRAY and WELCOME NEWCOMERS
Questions?

• [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org)
• Ashley Feasley- [afeasley@usccb.org](mailto:afeasley@usccb.org)