



Sowers of Justice
Catholic Legislative Network

**Action
Alert**

Urge MN. Senators to Vote for Fair Immigration Reform

February 28, 2006

Background:

There are many bills in the U.S. Congress to address the issue of immigration. One of these bills is the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act (S. 1033). This bill provides a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently in the United States, aids in reunifying families by reducing immigration backlogs, creates a temporary worker program that responds to the future need for workers in the United States, and requires a plan for better enforcement of the border. The U.S. Bishops have endorsed this bill.

On December 16, 2005, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Anti-terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act. This bill criminalizes organizations and individuals assisting undocumented immigrants, gives state and local police the authority to enforce immigration law and creates a new federal crime of "unlawful presence" making undocumented status a criminal offense, not a civil violation as is the current law. With the passage of this bill, the House made it clear that they were more interested in attacking immigrants than tackling the bigger and more complicated problem of fixing an out-of-date immigration system.

With so many different proposals for immigration reform, the Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to attempt to reconcile the different bills into a single bill. It is expected that a final Senate bill will be brought to the floor by March 27.

Talking Points:

- 1.) Our immigration system is broken and needs comprehensive reform to make it work.
- 2.) Comprehensive reform:
 - deals effectively with the undocumented immigrants living in the US;
 - provides a path to legal permanent residency and aids in the reunification of families;
 - supports the successful integration of newcomers in the communities where they settle;
 - creates tailored, targeted, effective enforcement and more realistic enforcement policies.
- 3.) Support whatever legislation contains the above elements of comprehensive reform, like the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act, and not enforcement-only measures like those passed by the House in HR. 4437.

Recommended Action:

Call Senators Coleman and Dayton and ask them to only support immigration reform that is comprehensive, like the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act (S. 1033) and reject restrictionist, enforcement-only measures like H.R. 4437.

Senator Norm Coleman: Washington Office: 202-224-5641 MN Office: 651-645-0323

Senator Mark Dayton: Washington Office: 202-224-3244 MN Office: 612-727-5220
[See www.justiceforimmigrants.org for more information.]