

Senate Version

Pass Legislation to nullify or block implementation of the Immigration and Refugee-Related Executive Orders.

- Executive Order (EO) 13767, “[Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements](#),” concerning border enforcement and EO 13768, “[Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States](#),” concerning interior enforcement call for an increase in immigrant detention and deportation, an expansion in fast-track removal proceedings, and a narrowing of protections of vulnerable migrants such as asylum seekers and unaccompanied children.
- EO 13780, “[Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States](#),” concerning admission of people from six Muslim-majority countries and admission of refugees for resettlement, if implemented, will virtually shut down the refugee admissions program for 120 days, drastically reduce the number of refugees to be admitted to the United States this fiscal year, and potentially greatly reduce access to visas and to resettlement for people from certain nations and religions.
 - o Our faith calls on us to welcome the stranger and respect the human dignity of all individuals.
 - o While we respect the right of our federal government to control our borders and ensure the security of Americans, we believe these orders do not accomplish these goals.
 - o The three EOs do not reflect the tenants of our faith or our country’s values and the ideals of freedom, fairness, or compassion.

Key Ask: We urge you to support S. 668, S. 415, and S. 608. These bills would repeal President Trump’s executive orders

on border security, interior immigration enforcement, and refugee admissions.

Support and Co-Sponsor the BRIDGE Act.

- The BRIDGE (Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy) Act, S. 128, was introduced as a bipartisan effort to sustain the temporary employment eligibility and relief from deportation offered to youth through the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.
- Under the BRIDGE Act, young people who came to the United States as children would maintain their eligibility to work and live in the U.S. so long as they meet certain requirements, such as showing a commitment to education or honorable service in our military and having no history of serious crime.
 - o As Catholics, we have long supported DACA youth as we believe in protecting the dignity of every human being, especially the dignity of children.
 - o There are more than 750,000 young people who have received and benefitted from DACA. For these young people America is home.

Key Ask: We urge you to support and co-sponsor the BRIDGE Act (S.128) and continue to work towards larger

legislative reform of our immigration laws.

Call on the Administration to Refrain from Family Separation.

- We are concerned that family separation will increase at the U.S./Mexico border as DHS begins implementing its new policies and increasing supposed migration deterrence strategies
 - We believe that detaining families and separating families are both extremely detrimental for the children involved and are contrary to basic child welfare principles and Catholic values.
 - Moreover, separating families will not deter those who are fleeing their homes as it does not address the pervasive root causes of migration from Central America.

Key Ask: Urge Secretary Kelly to reject this proposal and refrain from separating children from their parents.

In his [2016 Easter Message](#), Pope Francis invited us “not to forget those men and women seeking a better future, an ever more numerous throng of migrants and refugees – including many children – fleeing from war, hunger, poverty and social injustice.” Despite the sufferings of innocent men, women, and children who are forced from their homes, the Resurrection offers us “the comforting assurance that the abyss of death has been bridged and, with it, all mourning, lamentation and pain.”

The Easter season provides the opportunity to reflect on God’s victory over darkness, sin, and death. The Paschal Candle, which is lit during the celebration of the Easter Vigil, represents Christ as the light of the world and his ultimate victory over evil. It is, as the Catholic Bishops of the United States [remind](#) us, “the symbol of the light of Christ, rising in glory, scattering the darkness of our hearts and minds” and acts as a continual reminder of the glory of Christ’s victory over the cross.

Imitating Jesus, we as the Church are called to be a beacon of light unto the world and in the process, dispel the darkness, wherever we find it. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving the baptized are provided with an opportunity to recommit their life to Christ and to turn away from sin and evil.

How this plays out in our daily lives can take many forms. With respect to migration, we are called to live in solidarity with the migrant– to provide her material and spiritual support as she moves along their journey – and welcome when he arrives at his new home. We are called to help create the economic, political, and social conditions such that people will not feel forced to migrate in their first place.

In a recently released [reflection](#), the Catholic bishops of the United States offered advice as to how Catholics might “bring our words of solidarity for migrants and refugees to life.” They suggested that each one of us:

1. **Pray** for an end to the root causes of violent hatred that force mothers and fathers to flee the only home they may have known in search of economic and physical security for their children.
2. **Reflect** on Church teaching related to migration and become familiar with the rationale that informs the bishops’ engagement on this issue in the public square.

3. Meet with members of your parish who are newcomers, listen to their story and share your own. Hundreds of Catholic parishes across the country have programs for immigrants and refugees both to comfort them and to help them **know their rights**. It is also important to reach out in loving dialogue to those who may disagree with us. The more we come to understand each other's concerns the better we can serve one another. Together, we are one body in Christ.