

Core values

- **Treat all individuals and border communities with dignity**
- **Increase accountability and transparency**
- **End unsafe deportation practices**
- **Choose border security strategies that respect the environment, land owners and human rights**

Current enforcement policies have torn families and communities apart, devastated our congregations, contributed to the deaths of thousands of migrants traveling in remote desert regions, and violated the rights of U.S. citizens and immigrants alike. In 2012 alone, the United States spent more than \$18 billion of taxpayers' money on the machinery of immigration enforcement, more than is spent on all other federal law enforcement agencies combined. Above all else, enforcement policies must treat all individuals with respect and dignity, as they are created in the image of God.

Over the past twenty years, the federal government has dramatically increased border fencing and militaristic infrastructure, stifling the economic viability of U.S. border communities. Accountability and transparency has remained elusive, with agents poorly advised about the use of lethal force and with misconduct allegations increasing by 62 percent from 2006 to 2011.

Border enforcement policies threaten fragile eco-systems and already endangered species, desecrate sacred sites, violate religious freedom, damage public lands, and interfere with land owners who operate businesses and

live along the border. Immigration enforcement has negatively impacted the civil and human rights of border residents, encouraging racial profiling and sowing distrust and fear between communities and law enforcement entities.

“Migrants present a particular challenge for me, since I am the pastor of a Church without frontiers, a Church which considers herself mother to all. For this reason, I exhort all countries to a generous openness... rather than fearing the loss of local identity.”

Pope Francis
Evangelii Gaudium.

The face of immigration

Humberto

Humberto, a 16-year-old Zapotec indigenous child from the southern state of Oaxaca, Mexico, attempted to cross into the U.S. through the Arizona desert with his uncle. Humberto's goal was to reunite with his mother, who had left when he was three years old.

Humberto was raised by his grandmother and supported by the remittances his mother sent home from her agricultural work in California's Central Valley. When his grandmother died, Humberto decided to make the perilous journey with his uncle. After walking through the desert for three days, they were apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol, and Humberto was separated from his uncle without explanation. Humberto was deported and placed into a shelter for unaccompanied youth in Nogales, Mexico.

Only after arriving at the shelter was Humberto allowed to contact his mother to let her know what had happened. At that time he learned that his uncle had been separated from him because he had been charged with “illegal re-entry,” and was required to spend six months in a U.S. prison.



A need to end dangerous deportation practices

Many of the nearly 2 million deportations carried out under the Obama Administration have been implemented in a way that imperils the lives of migrants, violating a bilateral agreement to carry out “safe, dignified, orderly and humane” repatriations. Congressional action should provide robust oversight and codify standards for humane treatment of migrants apprehended, incarcerated, or deported by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including the following:

1. End all night-time deportations
2. End family separation during the deportation process
3. Do not deport individuals to particularly dangerous locations
4. Return all belongings prior to deportation, including money, cell phones and medication
5. Provide prior notification to Mexican authorities of persons with special needs
6. Provide opportunities for regular community and NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) input into border policies and implementation

How do current immigration bills compare to our faith principles?

Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744): As passed, this bill would create an inflexible, militarized approach to border security. It would add 20,000 Border Patrol agents and military equipment (including helicopters, motion sensors, and drones) and expand Operation Streamline – at a cost of more than \$30 billion.

Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (H.R. 15): Similar to the Senate bill in most respects, this House bill leaves out the additional \$30 billion for border militarization.

Border Security Results Act (H.R. 1417): Without the dramatic increase in militarization (and cost) of the Senate bill, this bill would nevertheless expand the use of military equipment such as drones and cameras for constant surveillance in border areas. The bill does little to build back trust between border agents and border residents and fails to address the transparency and accountability needed to truly keep our border “safe.”

Protect Family Values at the Border Act (H.R. 3130): This legislation would create protections for individuals held in CBP custody and would reduce family separation. It would require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish basic humane treatment standards for CBP custody regarding food provision, emergency medical care, translated legal documents, timely transfers and facility access for non-governmental organizations. The bill gives DHS flexibility to prevent practices that threaten the safety of women and children, and ensures that migrants are not deported unsafely or needlessly separated from family members.

Border Enforcement, Accountability, Oversight, and Community Engagement Act, (H.R. 4303): This bipartisan legislation would respond to the needs of border communities by increasing transparency, opportunities for community input, and training for CBP officials. H.R. 4303 is an important step in remedying the devastating effects that our broken immigration system has had on border communities and human rights.



\$18 billion

U.S. federal government spending on immigration enforcement in FY 2012

\$46 billion

Additional enforcement spending in Senate immigration bill

4000+

Number of persons who have died trying to cross the U.S.-Mexico border since 1998

Root causes

Successful immigration policy must address the root causes of migration to the U.S.

- **“Push” factors:** violent conflict, natural disasters, economic distress, persecution, trade policies
- **“Pull” factors:** family, safety, employment, opportunity



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