



DACA/DAPA ACTION UPDATES

In summer of 2013, the Senate introduced S. 744 to urge for comprehensive immigration reform. Since that time, however, the House has been unable to pass its own comprehensive reform bill—so therefore Congress has been unable to reach agreement on any immigration reform bill. In the absence of a legislative fix, many DISCIPLES worked hard (and some even engaged in civil disobedience) to encourage the President to take Executive action to offer relief to many families being separated, detained, and deported.

On November 20th of 2014, President Obama did announce Administrative Relief for immigrants. Subsequently, key elements of this relief were blocked in the courts by 26 states. Provisions to expand Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and to offer relief to parents who have been in the U.S. for many years and have children born here through a program called “DAPA”—or Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents—have been held up from rollout by the U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit, in Brownsville, Texas.

To support the rollout of the President’s announced relief, our Disciples RIM office supported the filing of an “Amicus Brief” with other faith partners. The brief shares contributions of immigrants and stories from our Disciples families who are affected by the holdup. Read it here:

https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/RIM-Amicus-Brief-Curiae-Texas-v.-U.S.-CLW-4_2FINAL.pdf. **However, it seems that the courts may well be “slow walking” action on the case—and unless the court issues a ruling by October 22, the administration will miss the final deadline for the Supreme Court to consider taking up this case this term.** This would mean that the next window of opportunity for this case to go before the Supreme Court would not occur until October 2016; thus after Obama’s time would be ending.

Therefore, the next three weeks are critical for our movement. It’s been nearly three months since the 5th circuit held the oral argument regarding administrative relief. The Obama administration had appealed the Texas federal judge’s decision to issue a preliminary injunction blocking the immigration executive orders until the issue is resolved in court. There are no deadlines by which the Fifth Circuit needs to rule though their stated policy is to try to issue rulings 60 days after oral argument. The only way to get to the Supreme Court to take up the case absent a Fifth Circuit ruling is if the Department of Justice were to file what is called “Cert. Before Judgement,” which is a petition asking the Supreme Court to consider a case before an appeal has been decided by the Court of Appeals. This is rarely granted. It is time for the movement to step up, fight back and demand that the court issues a ruling. We must make sure the court hears the voices and demands of the millions of people who because of them, continue to live with fear and anxiety. Many advocates have launched **a powerful 9 Day Fast and Vigil outside the federal court house in New Orleans, where the appeal is being heard.** The fast will be led by directly impacted immigrant families and national leaders representing faith, labor, civil rights and the community – all of whom will be calling on the 5th Circuit to issue a decision on this case and allow the process to move forward.

Please hold them in prayer, and continue to pray for the rollout of Administrative Action. Also, please check often at: <https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/dhm/dhm-ministries/refugee-immigration-ministries/rim-resources/administrative-action-information-reponses/> for updates on how you can help your communities get ready for the possibility of DACA & DAPA, and to understand more about this effort.

