April 24, 2012

United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator/Representative:

We, the undersigned faith leaders, write to urge you to address the issue of immigration reform as soon as possible.

Because of inaction by the federal government on this issue for the past several years, state and local governments have been taking steps to fill the void. As a result, we are witnessing an unprecedented transfer of authority for immigration policy from the federal government to state and local governments, to the detriment of our nation and our local communities.

Instead of one federal immigration system applicable to all, we now have many states and an untold number of localities attempting to create their own immigration policies. This only will lead to a patchwork of laws which would cause family separation, economic disruption, and divided communities.

Any immigration reform measure should, at a minimum:

- 1. Reaffirm federal authority and responsibility to enact and implement the nation's immigration laws;
- 2. Protect and recognize the central importance of family unity as the cornerstone of our immigration system;
- 3. Establish more functional legal mechanisms for the entry of immigrant workers;
- 4. Create a sound, equitable process toward citizenship for currently undocumented immigrants who desire to embrace the responsibilities and privileges of becoming a U.S. citizen; and
- 5. Ensure that our laws are enforced in ways that recognize the importance of due process of the law, the sanctity of the human person, the incomparable value of family, and the integrity of our borders.

As the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the case of *Arizona v. United States*, we urge you to reassert your authority and move to enact immigration reform legislation.

Sincerely,

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan Archbishop of New York President, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops His Excellency José H. Gomez Archbishop of Los Angeles Chairman, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration

Leith Anderson President National Association of Evangelicals The Rev. Geoffrey Black President United Church of Christ

Reverend Dr. David H. Benke Bishop/President Atlantic District Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Bishop Minerva Carcaño Resident Bishop Phoenix Area of The United Methodist Church Chair, United Methodist Task Force on Immigration

Reverend Luis Cortés, Jr. President Esperanza Rabbi Steve Gutow, President, Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Mark S. Hanson Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Rabbi Naom E. Marans
Director
Interreligious and Intergroup Relations
American Jewish Committee

Reverend Gradye Parsons The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Reverend Sam Rodriguez President National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori Presiding Bishop and Primate The Episcopal Church Jim Wallis President and Chief Executive Office Sojourners

Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)