



USCCB Committee on Migration

C/O MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3227 • FAX 202-541-8755

WEBSITE: www.usccb.org/mrs

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Passed by the U.S. Senate

Statement by

Most Reverend Gerald Barnes
Bishop of San Bernardino
Chairman, USCCB Committee on Migration

May 25, 2006

The passage of S. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, in the U.S. Senate is a historic moment for our nation. While the U.S. bishops' Conference does not agree with each and every provision in the Senate-passed bill, we applaud its comprehensive approach and believe it contains many of the elements necessary to help solve the problems associated with our country's current immigration system.

As the Congressional process continues, we urge the Senate and House of Representatives to work together to either eliminate or ameliorate the harsh enforcement provisions found in both the House- and Senate-passed versions of the legislation. In addition, we encourage House Members and Senators to simplify and streamline the path to citizenship for the undocumented in this country that is found in the Senate bill. We also urge Congress to maintain a viable and just temporary worker program, which includes an option to petition for permanent residency, as well as to make changes to our family-based immigration system to reduce the waiting time for families to be reunited.

Ultimately, the U.S. bishops' continued support for immigration reform legislation requires a workable and viable path to citizenship for the undocumented, significant backlog reductions for family-based visas, and a viable temporary workers program that protects both U.S. and foreign-born workers.

MEMBERS

Most Reverend Gerald Barnes, Chairman
Most Reverend Sean O'Malley
Most Reverend Kevin Farrell
Most Reverend Curtis John Guillery
Most Reverend Gerald Kicanas
Most Reverend Dominic Luong
Most Reverend Armando Ochoa

CONSULTANTS

His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
His Eminence Adam Cardinal Maida
His Eminence Theodore Cardinal McCarrick
Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland
Most Reverend Edgar da Cunha, SDV
Most Reverend Nicholas DiMarzio
Most Reverend John Kinney

Most Reverend John Manz
Most Reverend Joseph Perry
Most Reverend Thomas Wenski
Most Reverend John Wester
Reverend Jerry Brown
Sister RayMonda Du Vall
Mr. Robert Gilligan

Mr. Ken Hackett
Mr. Don Kerwin