



USCCB Committee on Migration

c/o Migration and Refugee Services, USCCB

3211 4th Street NE, Washington, D.C. 20017-1194

Tel. (202) 541- 3352 • Fax: (202) 722-8805

Email: mrs@usccb.org • Website: www.usccb.org/mrs

**Statement of Most Reverend Gerald R. Barnes
Bishop of San Bernardino, California
Chairman, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration
on**

Senate Compromise Immigration Proposal

May 17, 2007

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has consistently advocated for a just and comprehensive immigration reform bill. We have significant reservations about the compromise immigration proposal announced in the U.S. Senate. We believe it is important, however, that the legislative process move forward, so that improvements can be made to the legislation.

Specifically, Congress should ensure that any final legislation contains a legalization program which is workable and includes family unity and a fair and realistic path to citizenship, a new worker program which provides participants a meaningful opportunity to obtain permanent residency, and the preservation of family unity as an integral part of the U.S. immigration system. We intend to pursue changes in these important areas.

We urge the congressional leadership to ensure that the regular legislative process is honored, and that amendments to improve the legislation are permitted and given due consideration.

Immigration is an important domestic issue facing this country. Congress can no longer wait to repair our seriously flawed immigration system. We look forward to working with our elected officials in Congress to enact a law which both protects the basic human rights and dignity of persons and serves our national interest.