



For Immediate Release  
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### **Catholic Bishops of Kentucky Ask US Senators to Support Immigration Reform that is Just**

(Frankfort March 10, 2006) In a March 9, 2006 letter to United States Senators McConnell and Bunning, the four Catholic Bishops of Kentucky expressed their “deep concern for those who will be affected by proposed changes in our immigration laws being debated now in Congress. Many of those affected currently live in Kentucky and are served by Catholic social service agencies and in parishes throughout the state.”

The Bishops recognize that our immigration system is in serious need of repair and that this has created a climate fostering an unwelcome response to immigrants.

The Bishops’ interest in the welfare of immigrants “is rooted in Scripture, where, in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus calls upon us to ‘welcome the stranger,’ for ‘what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me’ (Mt: 25-35, 40).”

As a matter of justice, the Bishops asked Senators McConnell and Bunning to work to have the legislation currently being debated in the Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by Senator Arlen Specter include provisions that accomplish the following:

- 1) a broad-based legalization of the undocumented;
- 2) a temporary worker program with appropriate protections for both U.S. and foreign workers;
- 3) changes to the family-based immigration system to reduce waiting times for family reunification; and
- 4) restoration of due process for immigrants.

Further, the Bishops called for the root causes of migration, such as global poverty, to be addressed.

Archbishop Thomas C. Kelly O.P., Chair of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky Board of Directors, said, “We know that each of us will be judged by how we treat the poor, the vulnerable, and the stranger (Mt.25:35). Jesus, Himself, was a refugee. We see Him in the face of migrants. As we decide this vital public policy for our country, let our discourse be civil and our solution reflect that each person is made in the image and likeness of God.”

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*The Catholic Conference of Kentucky (CCK) is an agency of the Catholic Bishops, established in 1968. It speaks for the Church in matters of public policy, serves as liaison to government and the legislature, and coordinates communications and activities between the church and secular agencies. There are 388,000 Catholics in the Commonwealth. The Bishops of the four dioceses of KY constitute CCK's Board of Directors.*