

***New York State
Interfaith Network for
Immigration Reform***
(Network Membership in Formation)

Statement in Support of Passage of CIR in 2009
April 27, 2009

American Jewish Committee, Long Island Chapter

American Jewish Committee, New York Chapter

Cabrini Immigrant Services

Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of New York

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens

Council of Churches of the City of New York

Council of Peoples Organization

Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

Hindu Temple Society of North America, Flushing, New York

Interfaith Alliance of Rochester

Interfaith Center of New York

Judson Memorial Church

Latino Leadership Circle

Latino Pastoral Action Center

Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood

Muslim Consultative Network

New York Faith & Justice

New York State Council of Churches

New York New Sanctuary Coalition

New York Theological Seminary

Presbytery of New York City

Reformed Church in America

Riverside Church

Rockland Jews for Justice

Rural & Migrant Ministry

The Sikh Coalition

UJA Federation of New York

United Methodist Church, NY Conference

Union Theological Seminary, NYC

**In partnership with*

The New York Immigration Coalition

&

The Hudson Valley Community Coalition

As organizations and religious leaders representing diverse faith communities in New York State, we have been morally troubled by the humanitarian cost of America's broken immigration system. Together, we comprise the New York State Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform, which we established in January 2009 in order to advocate for passage of comprehensive, just and humane immigration reform legislation before the end of 2009.

Network members believe that such legislation is required by the values of our faith communities and our nation. It is the only solution to the immigration crisis that will promote fair and humane treatment for all immigrants to our country, including refugees and asylum seekers, while also meeting America's security, economic and political needs..

Specifically, the Network joins the National Interfaith Immigration Coalition in calling on the Obama Administration and the 111th Congress to pass legislation that:

- upholds family unity as a priority;
- creates a process for undocumented immigrants to earn their legal status and eventual citizenship;
- protects workers and provides efficient channels of entry for new migrant workers;
- restores due process protections, protects families and children, and reforms detention policies;
- protects the human rights of immigrants, and aligns the enforcement of immigration laws with humanitarian values.

Although America's diverse religious traditions differ in many respects, our traditions have a shared vision about immigrants and immigration policy.

The *Hebrew Bible* tells us: "The strangers who sojourn with you shall be to you as the natives among you, and you shall love them as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Leviticus 19:33-34). In the *New Testament*, Jesus tell us to welcome the stranger, for "what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me." (Matthew 25:40) The *Qur'an* tells us that we should "do good to...those in need, neighbors who are near,m neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer that you meet." (4:36). The Hindu *Taitiriya Upanishad* tells us: "The guest is a representative of God." (1.11.2)

Our broken immigration system betrays this shared vision. Together, we call on our lawmakers to provide a remedy that is comprehensive, just and humane.