

USCCB Chairman Expresses Support for Finding a Legislative Solution for Dreamers; Ready to Work with Congress and White House

January 10, 2018

WASHINGTON—On Jan 9th, congressional members met at the White House with President Trump to discuss immigration reform. In response to this important bipartisan meeting, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, Chairman of the Committee on Migration (USCCB/COM), issued the following statement:

“We are encouraged by the consensus that emerged from yesterday’s White House meeting that Congress and the President should move expeditiously to craft and enact legislation that would provide urgently needed relief for Dreamers. For years, these young people have been living in and enriching the United States in many ways. They are contributors to our economy, veterans of our military, academic standouts in our universities, and leaders in our parishes and communities. They and their families deserve certainty, compassion, generosity, and justice.

We also are pleased to see the mutual understanding that ensuring protection for these young people should be the first step in the systematic reform of our outdated immigration laws. We believe in measures that improve the security of our nation. Our teaching acknowledges and respects the right of sovereign nations to control their borders. Such measures should be financially sound, effective, and should not harm the vulnerable. However, we caution against introducing unrelated, unnecessary, or controversial elements of immigration policy—especially those that jeopardize the sanctity of families or unaccompanied children—into the bipartisan search for a just and humane solution for the Dreamers.

As a nation, we have a moral and humanitarian obligation to Dreamers. These young people have steadfastly worked to improve themselves and our country and attempted in good faith to comply with the law as it stood. Their futures hang in the balance. We stand ready to work with the President and with Congress in the coming days to help fashion a just solution that meets their needs, ensures our nation’s safety and security, and sets the stage for the larger debate on immigration reform that is so urgently and desperately needed.”

Keywords: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; USCCB; United States Congress; Homeland Security; Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo; Bishop Joe S. Vasquez; Committee on Migration; Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals; DACA; Dreamers; legal status; youth; deportation; immigration; border security; legislative solution.

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