

U.S. Bishops' Migration Chairman Urges Lawmakers to Recognize Contributions of Immigrant and Refugee Essential Workers and Support Workers and Their Families

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WASHINGTON— Today, Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington, and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, submitted testimony to the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship during a hearing titled "Immigrants as Essential Workers During COVID-19." From the written testimony, Bishop Dorsonville states:

"Immigrants and refugees are a blessing to our country. The Church teaches that every human being is created in God's image and deserves dignity and respect and that human labor has an inherent dignity, allowing all to share in the ongoing work of creation, while providing the resources to build and sustain families.

"The contributions of essential workers have become undoubtedly more important during COVID-19. While many essential workers are U.S. citizens, many are also immigrants and refugees. Immigrants comprise 31% of U.S. agricultural employees... [and] they risk their own safety to support their families and to ensure continuity in the nation's food supply chains.

"In addition to being highly vulnerable to COVID-19, immigrant and refugee essential workers are less likely to have access to medical care and thus far have been completely left out of any federal COVID-19 relief or assistance. We urge Congress to include immigrant and refugee families in any future COVID-19 relief as well as be made eligible for past relief efforts. Additionally, we continue to advocate Congress for a path to citizenship for undocumented workers who have been living, working, and contributing to our country. As Pope Francis states: No one must be left behind."

To read Bishop Dorsonville's written testimony, visit [*Justice for Immigrants*](#).

To watch the hearing, please visit the [Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship's website](#).