



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
Secretariat for Administration and Community Affairs

Read below a letter dated April 16, 2010 from Bishop McCormack to Senator Jeanne Shaheen, Senator Judd Gregg, Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter and Congressman Paul Hodes regarding comprehensive immigration reform:

As the Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester, I am writing to urge you to support comprehensive immigration reform that takes into consideration the current realities of undocumented immigrants, the resources of our country, and the just application of civil law. The current system is badly in need of reform. Our nation's laws and policies need to be refined in order to bring about a more humane and just immigration system.

The teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on immigration flows from its profound respect for human rights, families, and the dignity of the human person. We believe that all people have the right to have their basic needs met in their homelands. When the means to fulfill those needs do not exist at home, people have the right to seek them abroad. At the same time, sovereign nations have the right to control their borders, provided the regulations promote the common good of our universal human family. When these two rights conflict, receiving nations with the ability to accommodate migrants are urged to respond with generosity so individuals have the opportunity to meet their basic needs and so that families remain united.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops calls for reform that includes the following elements:

- **Expanded opportunities to reunify families:** US citizens and legal permanent residents often endure years of separation from close family members who want to join them in the United States. We call for a reduction in the pending backlog and more visas available for family reunification purposes.
- **Temporary Worker Program:** We need a system whereby laborers from other countries may enter the country legally to fill positions in the labor force (including on a temporary basis), which includes a path to permanent residency which is achievable and verifiable; labor protections that apply to US workers; enforcement mechanisms and resources to enforce worker's rights; wages and benefits that do not undercut domestic workers; mobility between the United States and the migrant's homeland; and a labor-market test to ensure that US workers are not harmed.

- **Broad-based Legalization:** Opportunities should be provided for those in this country without proper immigration documentation to obtain legalization if they can demonstrate good moral character and have built up equities in this country.
- **Steps to Address the Root Causes of Migration:** Many migrants are compelled to leave their homelands out of economic necessity in order to provide the most basic of needs for themselves and their families. We advocate for international efforts (including trade, international economic aid, debt relief, and other types of economic policies) that are designed to create conditions in which people do not have to leave their homes out of necessity.

I ask that you work to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill this year that includes the foregoing elements. If you have any questions about these recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ever grateful for your public service to the people of New Hampshire, I remain

Sincerely,

/s/ +John

Bishop of Manchester