



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up AND Act for Justice

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Mr. President – Be Not Afraid
Refugees & Immigrants are Gifts not Burdens

“God said to Isaiah, ‘Do not fear.’ In America, we sing ‘Be not afraid.’”

These are the opening words in one of many letters, joint letters and statements that the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd has sent to President Donald Trump responding to his executive orders and policy pronouncements on refugees, immigrants and those who want to come to the United States.

Those words seem even more necessary now. Mr. President, be not afraid.

You want to expand the economy, bring in more tax revenue, and add jobs at all levels? Walling off America, closing our doors, and blocking those who are most hungry in drive and ambition because of their poor prospects at home is not the way.

“These past seven months have seen migrants, refugees and immigrants take hit after hit after hit. The state of affairs with regard to our immigration policy is abysmal. Here and abroad, it has unnecessarily put communities at risk and people’s lives in danger, and it has put America’s future in question,” said Larry Couch, Director of the National Advocacy Center.

“Our country has traditionally offered a safe haven for immigrants seeking a better life for themselves and their families. This tradition has helped to make America economically powerful. Immigrants have become citizens, worked to provide for their families, and created thriving communities.

“Unfortunately now we have criminalized these hard working immigrants, forced them into an underground economy, made them an easy prey for unscrupulous employers, and destroyed untold numbers of families through deportation,” said Couch.

Under the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, we had promised young people who had been brought here as children an opportunity to work and to continue their education. Now we are turning our backs on these young people, threatening to deport them back to a country they may never have known.

Under the latest immigration proposal, the RAISE Act, we would encourage a “brain drain” by siphoning off the highly educated people from poor countries. Meanwhile we would not give priority to family reunification. All of this is being done in the name of jobs but it is a policy of no growth and no win. Aside from the immorality of these policies, they are also economically disastrous.

"Immigrants have not only provided brain power in the Silicon Valley, they also harvest our crops, construct our buildings, prepare our food, and provide hospitality services. When we deny entry to immigrants at all skill levels, we are limiting our potential as a nation.

Somehow we have forgotten that immigrants are people who may have needs but they also have gifts to offer. When we think of immigrants as commodities we lose sight of their humanity and run the risk of losing our own humanity," said Couch.

There are those in Washington who are ready to help. We welcome and support the BRIDGES and DREAM Acts.

NAC, the Good Shepherd Sisters and others stand ready to act, to build bridges and to dream.

[The National Advocacy Center](#) educates and advocates on social justice issues for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people. The center reflects the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, working in solidarity with the disenfranchised - particularly families, women, and children.

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd has had a presence in the United States for over 175 years. The Sisters and their Mission Partners have dedicated themselves to serving girls, women and families who experience poverty, exploitation, vulnerability and marginalization. Our programs address the social, psychological and economic needs of thousands of persons/families on low-income in 22 states and 1 U.S. Territory.