



NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Working in partnership with other organizations and with various coalitions, we have fought for legislation to welcome the immigrant, shelter refugees, promote economic justice, fight racism and Islamophobia, and to protect the environment. With the current Administration, it's been a rough year. Each day a different part of the sky falls.

Yet we know much good is being accomplished in the midst of these challenges. Some 85 percent of Americans support full citizenship for young people illegally brought here as children; local communities open their hearts and homes to refugees; minimum wage laws are being passed across the country; interfaith conversations with Muslims, Jews, and Christians are held on a regular basis; and the public's commitment to clean energy technology continues.

We enter 2018 with great confidence because we know despite momentary setbacks that the central message of Christianity and the core beliefs of Americans in the essential dignity of every person remain unchanged.

When the National Advocacy Center advocates on Capitol Hill, we know we are not speaking only for ourselves but for all the Good Shepherd sisters and lay mission partners and their clients. Also, we know we are speaking for Him who makes all things possible.

Thank you!

► **Help People Free Themselves from Poverty and Achieve Economic Equality**

Working with other coalitions, both religious and secular, we advocated to protect the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, TANF (the food stamp program) and other economic safety net programs. Through legislative visits, rallies, and prayer vigils, we worked to stop passage of the recent tax "reform" bill because ultimately it will only benefit wealthy people and corporations. We will continue to press for the passage of paid family and medical leave at the federal level and to soften the new tax laws to better support the other 99%. Through our coalition partners, we were able to prevent the Johnson Amendment from being attached to the tax bill, which would have opened the doors to direct endorsement of candidates from the church pulpit.

► **Prevent Human Trafficking and End Domestic Violence**

We joined with the Catholic Coalition of Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOAH) in the Labeling for Lent Campaign: seafood producers, distributors, and retailers make public, through packaged product labeling, their efforts to fight human trafficking in their product supply chains. We participated in the publication of the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month & Day of Prayer Toolkit; hosted and provided a tour of D.C. to victims of human trafficking; and urged passage of the Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act. For the 2018 Ecumenical Advocacy Days Gathering, we are helping to coordinate a workshop on Gender Based Violence/Violence Against Women. We also have begun initial preparation for a NAC-sponsored Conference on Human Trafficking to be held here in Washington D.C. Also in 2017, we visited with Good Shepherd domestic abuse shelters in Los Angeles and El Paso.

► **Protect the Environment**

Through Action Alerts, blast emails to all members of Congress, legislative visits, rallies and vigils, with other organizations NAC lobbied hard to defeat the tax “reform” bill recently passed by Congress. Sadly, in a maneuver to turn one of our last wild, intact landscapes into an industrial oil field, the tax bill contained a provision to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling.

► **Combat Racial Injustice & Islamophobia**

NAC has strongly opposed the Administration’s decision to issue discriminatory travel bans against Muslims coming to the U.S., many of whom are fleeing with their families for their lives. We joined in an amicus brief that addressed two issues: first, opposition to religious discrimination; and second, opposition to the refugee ban as a violation of amici’s faith-based commitment to support refugees.

In addition, NAC participated in the 1000 Minister March calling for racial justice and tolerance. Held on the anniversary of the March on Washington in 1963 and the 1955 lynching of Emmet Till in Mississippi, marchers represented Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh religions.

To avoid institutional racism, NAC has intentionally recruited several people of color to serve on our Advisory Board. In addition, we have highlighted our commitment to fight racism and Islamophobia by creating on our website sections on racism and Muslim relations.

In organizing the Ecumenical Advocacy Days for 2018, we will be coordinating the development of workshops on White Supremacy/Racial Justice; Criminalization of People Groups (Black/Brown Bodies); and Islamophobia.

► **Reduce Gun Violence**

After the Las Vegas massacre, NAC issued a statement calling for prayers on behalf of the victims and their families. At the time, we also urged policy makers and legislators to take steps immediately to pass gun control measures.

In conjunction with Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, of which NAC is a founding member, we urged Congress to oppose the Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017, H.R. 38, and the Constitutional Concealed Carry Act of 2017, S. 446. We highlighted that these pieces of legislation undermine the safety and wellbeing of our communities at a time when Americans face an epidemic level of gun violence.

► **Secure a Safe Haven for Immigrants and Refugees**

NAC participated and spoke at rallies, prayer vigils, attended legislative visits, issued numerous Action Alerts, sent blast emails to all members of Congress, and signed onto coalition letters in support of the passage of a DREAM Act. The DREAM Act would provide legal status and a pathway to citizenship for over 700,000 young people who were brought here illegally as children through no fault of their own.

As it did in 2016, NAC traveled to Nogales AZ to participate in a gathering organized by the School of the Americas Watch where we marched and demonstrated in support of immigration reform, an end to family detention, and to provide refuge for those fleeing the violence in their home countries. In addition, we demonstrated in front of a detention center to show our solidarity with those immigrants who have been imprisoned.

We opposed the limiting of the refugee resettlement program and called for an increase of in the refugee admission cap to 85,000 at a minimum.