

Immigration

Theological/Ethical Background

- “The strangers who sojourn with you shall be to you as the natives among you, and you shall love them as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Leviticus 19:33-34)
- Jesus tells us to welcome the stranger, for "what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.”(Matthew 25)

Background

In recent years there have been strong calls for immigration reform. Much stress has been put on border security. All the discussions are about the US southern land border, and seem to be aimed at keeping Latinos from entering the US.

Current Proposal

The SAVE Act (HR4088), currently in committee, is inhumane and ineffective. Republicans are trying to force it onto the floor and are pressuring Democratic cosponsors to go along. New Yorkers are Arcuri, Gillibrand and Higgins. A discharge petition was introduced on March 11 but failed. Continued efforts to discharge are expected.

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The SAVE Act

- Broadens the definition of "alien smuggler" to include anyone who provides assistance to an undocumented immigrant, including churches, humanitarian groups, bus drivers, and others who simply do not examine immigration status prior to helping people in need. **The SAVE Act criminalizes the sanctuary movement which has always been part of the mission of the church.**
- Forces employers to rely on an inaccurate verification system for all employees, without any safeguards against racial profiling, misuse, privacy or error.
- Increases imprisonment of asylum seekers and other immigrants, including children, while ignoring the lack of humanitarian standards in detention centers.
- Diverts local police resources from community safety and force them to act as immigration officers.
- Squanders billions on unrealistic deportation of families and productive members of society.

What Would Help

- Oppose the Save Act.
- Don't co-sponsor. Oppose discharge.
(4/08)

Member Denominations in New York:

American Baptist Churches, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Religious Society of Friends, United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Church

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