

Petition to Welcome Immigrants

North Carolina Council of Churches



Did you know

Currently, for the vast majority of people who want to come work and live in the United States, there is no opportunity to do so legally. For most people, the “line” to enter the country does not exist.

Today’s immigrants learn English faster than many of our ancestors and nearly all second generation immigrants speak English.

Recent studies show that crime rates among immigrants are significantly lower than those among US citizens.

Most undocumented workers pay taxes, including sales tax and property taxes in addition to about \$9 billion in Social Security and \$1.5 billion in Medicare taxes each year.

Under NAFTA, the US increased corn exports to Mexico by 240%, and during certain years was able to sell corn 30% below its cost of production. Unable to compete with subsidized imports, over two million Mexican farmers have lost their jobs since 1994. Many have sought employment in the US as a means of survival.

Faith & Immigration

Jesus once said,
“I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt. 25:35).

God commanded the Israelites: “Do not mistreat foreigners living in your land, but treat them just as you treat your own citizens. Love foreigners as you love yourselves, because you were foreigners one time in Egypt” (Lev. 19:33-34)

To date, almost 300 North Carolina faith leaders from across the state have signed onto a public statement agreeing “that **all immigrants are made in God’s image** and that our religious traditions demand that we care especially for the stranger. We call on all people of faith to stand with immigrants as a matter of religious responsibility, to advocate for their well-being and protection, and to educate our local communities about issues affecting immigrant peoples.”

State and local officials who take immigration enforcement into their own hands are separating families, targeting the vulnerable, and forcing immigrants further into the shadows.

For example, analysis of the 287(g) program shows that a majority of those who have been processed for deportation have been detained for misdemeanors and minor (non-DUI) traffic violations. Many of those affected are hardworking people providing for their families, not “gang members” and “criminals.”

When it comes to allowing qualified immigrants access to the community college system, policymakers tend to confuse two separate issues—open admission and federal immigration issues. In reality, allowing access will strengthen our future tax base, develop our work force, and provide a future to some of our brightest students.