



Catholic Committee of Appalachia STATEMENT ON THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S CANCELLATION OF DACA

September 6, 2017

The Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) stands in solidarity with those who will be affected by the Trump administration's decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. We stand too with those people of faith, including the U.S. Catholic Bishops¹ and various religious orders,² who rightly denounce this cruel action as wholly contrary to the divine command to "welcome the stranger,"³ and indeed, with Pope John Paul II who named deportation an intrinsically evil act.⁴

CCA repudiates this and other racist policies of this current administration which target and terrorize communities of immigrants who pose no threat but have come to our nation in search of a peaceful life. We believe that no human is illegal. CCA will continue to oppose racist policies and to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. We urge Congress to make progress in constructing a humane immigration policy by passing the Dream Act of 2017 which would provide vulnerable persons a path to citizenship. We encourage people of faith to contact their elected officials and encourage them to take this important step.

In the meantime, we recommend that all Catholic parishes, dioceses, schools, and other institutions take prophetic action that welcomes, accompanies, assists, and protects all immigrants from the threats they face, regardless of whether such compassionate actions are sanctioned or approved by our government. In this regard, our institutions should follow the lead of religious sisters in their brave work in solidarity with the vulnerable, such as raising funds to pay fines and fees, assistance with navigating complicated forms and procedures, accessing legal counsel, accompanying people to court, teaching English, and so on. Contact your local diocesan resettlement office for more information.⁵

Here in Appalachia and elsewhere, we pledge to live into "God's grand story" where "everyone must find a place," and where "everyone's story [is] welcomed and honored in its telling."⁶

¹ See the USCCB statement at <http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-157.cfm>; the statement of Archbishop Wilton Gregory at <https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2017/09/archbishop-wilton-d-gregorys-statement-ending-daca-program>; the statement of Cardinal Blaise Cupich at <https://www.archchicago.org/statement/-/article/2017/09/05/statement-of-cardinal-cupich-on-the-rescission-of-daca>; and the statement of Bishop Robert McElroy at https://www.sdcatholic.org/en-us/en-us/diocese/newsandcalendar.aspx#ICG_ETH_475.

² See, e.g., the statement of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious at <https://lcwr.org/media/lcwr-urges-action-protect-dreamers>; the statement of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) at <http://jesuits.org/news-detail?TN=NEWS-20170905104805>; the statement of the Sisters of Mercy at <https://www.sistersofmercy.org/about-us/news-and-events/sisters-of-mercy-condemn-trump-administrations-immoral-and-unjust-ending-of-daca-for-young-immigrants>; and the statement of the Franciscans at <http://www.escofm.org/news/us-franciscans-speak-out-against-president-trumps-daca-action>.

³ See, e.g., Exodus 22:21; Deuteronomy 1:16; 10:19; 24:17-18; 27:19; Leviticus 19:34; Matthew 25:35; Colossians 3:11.

⁴ See John Paul II's encyclical letter *Veritatis Splendor* (no. 80), available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor.html. The Pope cites the previous teaching of the Second Vatican Council from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 27, available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html.

⁵ Contact information can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/about/resettlement-services/diocesan-resettlement-offices.cfm>.

⁶ Catholic Committee of Appalachia, *The Telling Takes Us Home: Taking Our Place in the Stories that Shape Us* (Spencer, WV: Catholic Committee of Appalachia, 2015), p. 59, available at <http://ccappal.org/peoplespastoral>.