April 24, 2012

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator/Representative:

We, the undersigned faith leaders, write to urge you to address the issue of immigration reform as soon as possible.

Because of inaction by the federal government on this issue for the past several years, state and local governments have been taking steps to fill the void. As a result, we are witnessing an unprecedented transfer of authority for immigration policy from the federal government to state and local governments, to the detriment of our nation and our local communities.

Instead of one federal immigration system applicable to all, we now have many states and an untold number of localities attempting to create their own immigration policies. This only will lead to a patchwork of laws which would cause family separation, economic disruption, and divided communities.

Any immigration reform measure should, at a minimum:

1. Reaffirm federal authority and responsibility to enact and implement the nation’s immigration laws;

2. Protect and recognize the central importance of family unity as the cornerstone of our immigration system;

3. Establish more functional legal mechanisms for the entry of immigrant workers;

4. Create a sound, equitable process toward citizenship for currently undocumented immigrants who desire to embrace the responsibilities and privileges of becoming a U.S. citizen; and

5. Ensure that our laws are enforced in ways that recognize the importance of due process of the law, the sanctity of the human person, the incomparable value of family, and the integrity of our borders.

As the U.S. Supreme Court takes up the case of Arizona v. United States, we urge you to reassert your authority and move to enact immigration reform legislation.
Sincerely,

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan  
Archbishop of New York  
President, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

His Excellency José H. Gomez  
Archbishop of Los Angeles  
Chairman, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration

Leith Anderson  
President  
National Association of Evangelicals

The Rev. Geoffrey Black  
President  
United Church of Christ

Reverend Dr. David H. Benke  
Bishop/President  
Atlantic District  
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

Bishop Minerva Carcaño  
Resident Bishop Phoenix Area of The  
United Methodist Church  
Chair, United Methodist Task Force on Immigration

Reverend Luis Cortés, Jr.  
President  
Esperanza

Rabbi Steve Gutow,  
President, Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Mark S. Hanson  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rabbi Naom E. Marans  
Director  
Interreligious and Intergroup Relations  
American Jewish Committee

Reverend Gradye Parsons  
The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Reverend Sam Rodriguez  
President  
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
The Episcopal Church

Jim Wallis  
President and Chief Executive Office  
Sojourners

Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)