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Church of God in Christ

Church of the Brethren

Council for Islamic Organizations of Greater
Chicago

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Greek Orthodox Church

International Council of Community
Churches

Jain Society of Metropolitan Chicago

Orthodox Church in America

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Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Roman Catholic Church

Salvation Army

Serbian Orthodox Church

Sikh Religious Society of Chicago

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Chicago Center for Cultural Connections

Community Renewal Society



May 21, 2013

A RE-STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

Three years ago, in mid-May of 2010, the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago urged both political leaders and members of religious communities to take action on behalf of just and compassionate immigration reform.

The Council asked members of our own diverse religious communities “to examine how the teachings of their traditions inform the debate about immigration policy and to bring the social and moral values from their religious heritages to the public discussion and decision making.”

We proposed to our political leaders that legislation be adopted that:

- Protects the human rights of all persons, irrespective of citizenship.
- Does not criminalize immigrants or those who provide humanitarian aid to immigrants.
- Establishes provisions for essential border security.
- Creates minimum wage provisions for all workers.
- Requires the documenting of immigrant employment and compensation.
- Provides pathways to citizenship based on a record of employment, payment of all reasonably due taxes, and good behavior.
- Encourages family unification.
- Promotes U.S. foreign policies that reduce incentives for illegal immigration.

Even though we believed then that reforms were urgent – testing the political and moral integrity of our nation – no legislative action was taken. In fact, even more regressive policies were adopted in several states and similar measures were proposed nationally.

We are heartened that the political climate of the nation has changed and that the prospects for comprehensive immigration reform on a bi-partisan basis are now, in 2013, promising.

We again call on the members of our own religious communities and our political leaders not to let this opportunity for just and compassionate immigration reform pass, but to use this opportune moment to adopt policies that are richly informed by the central teachings of our diverse religious and cultural heritages and that embody the defining principles of our democratic tradition, as ourselves a nation largely constituted, enriched, and made strong by immigrants throughout our history.

May this present time be one that will be remembered by our posterity as advancing the cause of human dignity, social justice, and *e pluribus unum*.