



Committee on Migration
c/o Migration and Refugee Services, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
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February 12, 2020

Dear Honorable Representatives,

As the House Judiciary Committee prepares to mark-up H.R. 2214, the National Origin Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants (NO BAN) Act, I write on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration (USCCB/COM) to urge your support of the bill.

The NO BAN Act would end the ongoing harms caused by a series of executive actions negatively impacting refugees and immigrants and their families and would put into place vital protections to prevent future discriminatory bans. On January 27, 2017, the President signed Executive Order (EO) 13769, which temporarily banned the entry of all refugees and the entry of foreign nationals from several Muslim-majority countries. He subsequently implemented related EO 13780, EO 13815, and Presidential Proclamation (PP) 9645. He also later signed PP 9822 that limited access to asylum protection in a manner contrary to the Refugee Act of 1980. Most recently, on January 31, 2020, he issued Presidential Proclamation 9983 that restricts access to U.S. immigrant visas for citizens of six more countries.

While Catholic social teaching recognizes the duty and responsibility of governments to protect their citizens by properly controlling borders, it also recognizes the government's obligation to protect vulnerable groups and individuals, particularly refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable children and families. The above actions did not strengthen protection for U.S. citizens, and they undermined U.S. protection of vulnerable groups.

USCCB/COM has opposed all six of the executive actions described above. These actions undermine our longstanding commitment to and implementation of refugee and asylum protection. We are deeply concerned about the current and future harmful impacts on refugees and immigrants caused by these and future actions and with the direction that these actions seem to show for new policies and programs. Moreover, we are deeply troubled over the Administration implementing immigration and refugee policies that are based on religious discrimination. We joined two amicus briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court during the last two years raising concerns about how the Administration's policies threaten religious liberty.

The NO BAN Act is a clear and unequivocal legislative response to the Administration's recent actions. The bill would rescind the above-mentioned executive actions and help prevent such harmful actions in the future. It would help to strengthen U.S. refugee and asylum protection, family reunification, and religious liberty. We urge you to support the bill. Thank you for your attention to this urgent issue.

Sincerely,

Most Rev. Mario E. Dorsonville
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington
Chairman, Committee on Migration