



LONG ISLAND JOBS WITH JUSTICE



Long Island Council of Churches

We Will Provide Compassion and Care for Immigrant Children
A Statement from Long Island's Faith Leaders

Today, children fleeing horrific violence and poverty in Central America are seeking shelter and safety in the United States and on Long Island. These children have traveled thousands of miles, have suffered abuse along the way, and have surrendered themselves to U.S. border patrol agents, asking for our help.

As Long Island faith leaders, we call on our neighbors and colleagues to respond with compassion and concern for the welfare of the 2,000 children who have sought shelter and resettlement here on Long Island, so that we can live our spiritual values as a just and welcoming people. In that spirit, we are deeply disturbed at the Long Island incidents of fear and hatred directed at these children and those who have sheltered them.

Fortunately, the majority of these 2,000 children have family living here on Long Island who long to care for their loved ones. Local school districts, community organizations, congregations and volunteers across Long Island are working together to assist these families and provide shelter and care for the few who do not have it. As faith communities we must lead the call to help children in need.

We will listen to these children and treat them fairly. The children should have a chance to tell their story and the law should be applied fairly and in accordance with our justice system. The children are also young, scared, and need a trusted adult looking out for their interests.

In keeping with our shared faith values calling us to treat children and families in need with compassion, as well as with our nation's proud tradition of welcoming immigrants, I therefore pledge to:

- Preach about our faith call to welcome newcomers and treat immigrant children with compassion.
➤ Incorporate prayers for immigrants into our services.
➤ Use our congregational resources to provide material support and comfort to immigrant families.
➤ Encourage education and civil dialogue in my congregation about immigration reform.
➤ Speak out against hateful speech and actions directed at immigrants.
➤ Call on federal officials to provide additional funding for school districts that receive immigrant children.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

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