



**Catholic
Social
Ministry
Gathering
2020**

“Bearing Witness: Life and Justice for All”

A Catholic Message to Congress



A Sandy Hook parent. A young person brought to the United States as a child. A mother desperately searching for medicine for her sick children. A survivor of the bombings of Hiroshima. All are witnesses to the need for life and justice for all.

Hundreds of Catholic leaders from throughout our country are in the nation’s capital for the 2020 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering. Our faith calls us all to “bear witness,” to work for justice, promote healing and restoration, defend human life and dignity, and work for the common good of civil society. These are the issues that we, as one Catholic voice, bring to Congress at the start of 2020.

Respond to Gun Violence: Extreme Risk Protection Orders and Background Checks

Support reasonable regulations of firearms to minimize gun-related homicides and suicides, especially bipartisan legislative proposals such as extreme risk protection orders and universal background checks.

Extend New START. Less Funding for Arms Race

Urge Congress to support H.R. 2529 and S. 2394 that extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia as a prudent step towards nuclear disarmament and to avoid a nuclear arms race.

Make Poor and Vulnerable People and Care for Creation a Funding Priority

Support funding programs and resist budget cuts by prioritizing programs that help people living in poverty, both at home and abroad, especially **development and humanitarian programs** that save lives, address the root causes of conflicts, aid those displaced by violence or natural disaster, and encourage policies that protect the environment.

We urge Congress to ensure any policy realignment prioritizes assistance to the people and communities most in need; maintains U.S. global leadership; and encourages pro-poor economic growth. Congress should work for a bipartisan solution that will avoid severe and unnecessary cuts to domestic and international programs that assist the poor and vulnerable, and care for creation.

Protect Dreamers and Provide a Path to Permanency & Citizenship

Support legislation in the Senate, such as S.874, the Dream Act of 2019, which will protect young undocumented people known as Dreamers, who were brought to this country as children by their parents, by providing them a path to citizenship. Positive action on this legislation is vital since the Supreme Court is likely to review and decide on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program by June 2020.