



# “Justice at the Margins”

## *A Catholic Message to Congress*



For the second year in a row, hundreds of Catholic leaders are meeting virtually in the 2022 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering to advocate for justice at the margins. Across the spectrum of competing needs and perspectives, our message to Congress is clear: bring justice to the margins by supporting people who are vulnerable. Today, we seek protections for: pregnant workers in the U.S., undocumented immigrants, as well as support for struggling communities around the world.

During this trying time as COVID-19 and its variants are still causing hospitalizations and deaths around the United States and the world, we must remember that we belong to one human family. As Catholics we are called to care for our local and global communities. We must go to those who are overlooked and on the edges of society. Let us take the words of Pope Francis to heart and work to bring justice to the margins. “May we be profoundly shaken by what is happening all around us: the time has come to eliminate inequalities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family!”<sup>1</sup> Support for vulnerable people at home and abroad will ensure everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

### **Support pregnant workers**

Pass the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (S. 1486). This legislation will make the workplace safer and more supportive for nursing mothers, pregnant women, and their unborn children. Too often, pregnant workers are denied employment opportunities and reasonable accommodations. Some are forced to take leave or are retaliated against for requesting accommodations. The current legal landscape does not adequately protect pregnant workers. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act takes steps to rectify this, illustrating a respect for life, family, and the dignity of workers.

### **Support the poor and vulnerable in need of international assistance**

Urge congressional leadership to pass Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations now and to ensure the highest funding levels possible for international poverty-reducing development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding assistance (see chart of accounts supported by USCCB and CRS).<sup>2</sup>

### **Support integration of our undocumented neighbors**

Support legislation that provides legalization with a pathway to citizenship to undocumented immigrants and other long-term residents. While a broad legalization program is needed, specific populations of concern include Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status/Deferred Enforced Departure holders, undocumented agricultural workers, and other undocumented essential workers. It is unjust to have a “double society” in which millions of undocumented persons make significant contributions to American life but are unable to integrate and participate fully in it. Families and communities alike depend on those who lack legal status. Integration of these individuals is a necessary element of immigration reform.

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<sup>1</sup> [Homily at Mass for Divine Mercy Sunday](#), 19 April 2020.

<sup>2</sup> For additional information on the USCCB and CRS’s policy position on international assistance, including their request for Congress to retain longstanding, bipartisan pro-life funding protections such as the Helms Amendment, please see: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/2021-06-01-CRS-USCCB%20SFOPs%20Letter%20Congress.pdf>