



ERLC Calls on Congress to Provide a Permanent Solution for Dreamers

ERLC is deeply concerned that 800,000 Dreamers are in a new stage of uncertainty and insecurity. The termination of the President's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), has proved that a durable solution for this special category of immigrants—those who were brought here by their parents—will require congressional action. As a country, we must provide a fair and just solution for these young men and women, not just because it is the “right thing to do,” but because it accords with biblical principles.

This is a justice issue because the Bible is clear that we do not hold children responsible for the actions of their parents. It is inappropriate to hold Dreamers accountable for violating the law because they were minors when their parents crossed the border and brought them to the United States. Many Dreamers are unaware of their undocumented status. Subjecting Dreamers to deportation, or lives of perpetual insecurity in the shadows of our communities, is an offense to the rule of law and to the purpose of government, which is for the good of people.

Immigration reform is a human dignity issue because every person, regardless of ethnicity or national origin, is an image-bearer of God. In 2011, the Southern Baptist Convention issued a resolution on immigration stating, “The Scriptures call us, in imitation of God Himself, to show compassion and justice for the sojourner and alien among us.” (Ex. 22:21; Deut. 10:18-19.) How we treat this category of immigrants – and all immigrants – reveals what we believe about them as divine image-bearers.

This is also a family policy matter because we believe American policy should promote the flourishing of families. God ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society, and children are a blessing from the Lord. Broken families, wherever they are found, put women and children at risk and increase likelihood of poverty and crime—as well as the likelihood of dependence on government programs. As one priority among others, we believe policymakers should uphold the role of the family when addressing immigration policy.

This unresolved area of immigration policy breeds religious liberty concerns because churches are uncertain of how they can lawfully care for their immigrant neighbor. If a church offers transportation to a Sunday worship service and a Dreamer steps into that church vehicle, is the church liable for transporting illegal aliens? Federal law and policy should clarify that churches may lawfully carry out their task of loving their neighbors.
