

TO: The Executive Council

FROM: National Concerns Committee  
International Concerns Committee

DATE: March 8, 2006

SUBJECT: Opposing legislation making humanitarian acts unlawful

Resolved, that the Executive Council, meeting in Philadelphia, PA, March 6-9, 2006, declares its strong opposition to any legislation that would make it unlawful for faith based or humanitarian organizations to act to relieve the suffering of undocumented immigrants in response to the Gospel mandate to serve the least among us and our Baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons and calls upon the people of the Episcopal Church to act on their baptismal covenant without regard to such unjust legislation.

Explanation: The Episcopal Church has a long tradition of advocating for the just and humane treatment of immigrants and refugees. In the current immigration debate, there is concern that attempts to change the US immigration system could infringe upon the rights and obligations of religious and humanitarian organizations to extend support and assistance to those who come to them for help. The Gospel mandate to serve the least among us and the Baptismal covenant of the Church to seek and serve Christ in all persons are imperatives that call us to resist legislation that would make unlawful deeds of compassion done in the name of our faith. The Episcopal Church, therefore, identifies with expressions of other faith based bodies who have expressed opposition to proposed legislation that would inhibit the ability of churches, their members and agencies to relieve the suffering of those whom they are called to serve.