

The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, PC, MP
Prime Minister of Canada

Re: U.S. Faith Community Calls on Canada to Uphold Fundamental Protections and Offer Safe Haven to Asylum Seekers

CC: The leaders of Canada's Federal Political Parties and People of Faith in Canada

Dear Prime Minister Carney,
Dear friends across Canada,

The undersigned U.S. faith-based organizations and U.S. faith leaders write in solidarity with people of faith in Canada, joining the call to urge you to uphold and strengthen protections for immigrants and asylum seekers and abandon harmful efforts like the proposed Strong Borders Act (Bill C-2/C-12) and the ongoing Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA) that aim to close the door on those seeking safety at the U.S.-Canada border.

In the U.S., harsh immigration policies have shattered lives and denied human dignity. These policies are at the root of the migration challenges at our shared border. We cannot ask Canada to solve these challenges, and we continue to fight every day in our communities and in the halls of power for just and compassionate immigration reform and to ensure all immigrants are treated with dignity.

But we have heard the call of alarm from faith leaders that Canada's government is preparing to retreat from its long legacy of welcome and intends to follow in the Trump administration's footsteps in increasingly draconian immigration, deportation, and border enforcement efforts. We write in solidarity with our neighbors to the North and to urge you to reverse course.

The Strong Borders Act (Bill C-2/C-12) represents a fundamental threat to the rights of refugees and migrants. The bill includes provisions that would restrict the right of some in need of protection to make any claim for asylum at all, and would severely limit due process for others. The bill goes beyond the current Safe Third Country Agreement to shut the door entirely to arrivals from the U.S. unless they meet limited exceptions; and creates new time-bars for refugee claims. The bill also provides broad powers to initiate mass pauses or cancellations of immigration documents.

It is with growing concern that we note disturbing parallels with an increasingly restrictive immigration regime in the United States. Our diverse faith traditions compel us to love our neighbor, accompany the vulnerable, and welcome the sojourner. We are called by our sacred texts to approach one another with love – not fear – and to affirm the value and dignity of all.

For the sake of people in need of international protections, we urge you to:

- **Withdraw Bill C-2 and C-12, the Strong Borders Act.** We have seen the repercussions of harsh refugee and asylum restrictions and urge you to abandon efforts to undermine international refugee protections and scapegoat migrants.
- **Abandon the Safe Third Country Agreement** and ensure Canada remains open to asylum seekers and other uprooted people who are in need of protection and support.

The values of our faith, both in Canada and the US, call for the implementation and allowance of a vision that welcomes the sojourner not with violence and animosity, but with concern, welcome, and protection. Borders should not stop the compassion and inclusion we are to have as nations and as people.

We implore our friends in Canada and its governing leaders, to meet this moment by allowing Canada's doors to remain open to people who need protection.

Thank you for Canada's leadership and support for refugee rights in the world community, and thank you for considering this urgent appeal.

Sincerely,

Faith-based Organizations

American Friends Service Committee
 Church World Service
 Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
 Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
 Downtown United Presbyterian Church Justice Ministry
 Franciscan Action Network
 Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition
 Haitian Bridge Alliance
 Hobe Border Institute
 JAMAAT (Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together)
 Jesuit Refugee Services USA
 Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
 National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
 New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
 United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society

Faith Leaders and Persons of Faith:

Dawn Albanese, Elk Grove Village, Il.
 JL Angell, Rescue, Ca.
 Kristine Bartanen, New Journey Lutheran Church, Fountain Hills, Az.
 Mary Bowler, Pax Christi, Lakewood, Ca.

Rev. Dr. Christian Collins Winn, Calvary Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Mn.
Thomas Conrad, Religious Society of Friends, Philadelphia, Pa.
Sister Liane Delsuc, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Phoenix, Az.
Pavityr Deol, Round Rock, Tx.
Diane Dicranian, Midcoast Monthly Meeting Friends, Bath, Me.
Reverend Carla Dietz, United Church of Christ, Sacramento, Ca.
Theresa Flynn, Secular Franciscan Order, Raleigh, Nc.
Joyce Frohn, First Congregation Oshkosh, Oshkosh, Wi.
Professor Denise Gilman, Austin, Tx.
Sister Kathleen Hebbeler, Dominican Sister of Hope, Cincinnati, Oh.
Sister Lillian Long, Sisters of St Joseph, Berlin, Nd.
Sister Marie Lucey, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Greenbelt, Md.
Sylvia Manning, Northeast Kingdom Quaker Meeting, Barton, Vt.
Nancy Markowitz, Washington, Dc.
Jason Miller, St Martin's Catholic Church, Saint Augustine, Fl.
Nancy Obyrne, Sisters of St. Joseph Associates,
Christine Payden-Travers, Winston-Salem, Nc.
Erma Perkins, Rush United Methodist Church, Rush, Ny.
Reverend Christine Reesor, Community House Church, Takoma Park, Md.
Kelly Ryan, Jesuit Refugee Services/USA (President), Washington, Dc.
Brother Mark Schroeder, San Damiano Retreat, Danville, Ca.
Andrea Sechrist, Red Lion, Pa.
David Sulewski, Boston, Ma.
Suzanne Susany, Pittsburgh, Pa.