

ADVOCACY WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT—AID TO CUBA

Social Policy Resolution
CA95.07.63



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Adopted by the 1995 Churchwide Assembly.

Whereas

Whereas, Our faith calls us to love our neighbor and to work for justice, peace, and reconciliation among all peoples; and

Whereas, The economic embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba is causing great suffering, especially for children and the elderly; and

Whereas, The ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" states as goals: (1) to oppose the politicalization of humanitarian assistance in the region and advocate its unrestricted delivery [1.4.]; (2) to advocate the normalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and other nations in the region where this is not the case [1.6.]; (3) to listen and respond to the voices from the churches in the region [2.1.]; and (4) to promote and develop mutually supportive relationships between the Lutheran churches in the region and those in the U.S., and promote, between churches in the region and other partners in the region, self-sufficient, interdependent efforts and relationships among the churches and peoples [2.4.]; and

Whereas, The representatives of the Council of Churches of Canada, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the Caribbean Council of Churches, the Latin American Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the Ecumenical Council of Cuba in their meeting in Havana in December 1991 called for the lifting of the U.S. blockade against Cuba, the provision of humanitarian help (especially food and medicine), and promotion of dialogue and exchanges of people and information between the churches in Cuba and in our country; and

Whereas, The ELCA Church Council, in response to a motion from the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, voted at its April 1994 meeting to encourage support and aid to entities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America "petition the U.S. government to seek further reconciliation and normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba"; and

Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, together with its brothers and sisters of the Cuban Ecumenical Council, is urgently calling for a lifting of the U.S. embargo, which continues to cause much pain among the people; therefore, be it

Resolved

RESOLVED, that the 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request:

1. that ELCA congregations be urged to recognize and support the Lutheran congregations in Cuba through prayer, information sharing, and material support in cooperation with the ELCA Division for Global Mission;
2. that ELCA congregations be urged to participate in current humanitarian appeals to send shipments of medical and food supplies to Cuba by Church World Service of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Pastors for Peace, and other similar efforts;
3. that ELCA congregations be urged to become familiar with the ELCA's "A Churchwide Blueprint for Action on Central America and Caribbean Concerns" and the goals stated therein; and
4. that the members of this church be urged to work through their congressional representatives to encourage the lifting of the embargo and to seek to achieve steps towards the normalization of relations with Cuba;

and be it further

RESOLVED, that 1995 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America request:

1. that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America work actively toward the goal of ending the U.S. embargo against Cuba as part of its ongoing efforts to seek further reconciliation and the establishment of normal relations between the United States and Cuba through all appropriate channels; and
2. that in any follow-up required as a result of the action taken by this Churchwide Assembly, the Church Council or other designated persons confer with the appropriate staff representatives of the Division for Global Mission, Lutheran Office for World Community, and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs who deal with Cuba regularly and, most especially with the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Cuba, when appropriate action regarding Cuba is being considered.