

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

Social Policy Resolution

CA01.07.61



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

Adopted by the 2001 Churchwide Assembly.

Resolved

To express thanks to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod for raising this critical concern for asylum seekers and refugees;

To support the 2001 Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod in its resolution to:

- request our leaders, including bishops, pastors, and lay leaders, to speak out for compassion and justice for asylum seekers so that they need not suffer expedited removal and prolonged detention;
- request that congregations respond in love, spiritual care, and support for those who are detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Services through visits, letters, prayer, and assistance upon their release from detention; and
- exhort members to call upon the United States Congress and the administration to end expedited removal and prolonged detention, to require an independent review of the Immigration and Naturalization Services custody decisions; and to avoid prison conditions and any demeaning treatment of asylum-seekers and others when detention cannot be avoided;

To direct the Division for Church in Society, through the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, and in partnership with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, to advocate for compassion and justice for asylum seekers and refugees, including the following precepts in such advocacy:

- Expedited removal should be repealed or sharply curtailed;
- Forcible removal decisions should be made only by an immigration judge, after a fair hearing with a right of appeal;
- No one should be deprived of liberty without recourse to judicial review, whether a citizen or not;
- Congressional appropriators for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State should provide adequate funding for legal orientations and for community-based alternatives to detention; and
- Unaccompanied children in immigration proceedings should not have to face an adversarial federal bureaucracy alone.