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OFFICE OF JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION



Date: February 11, 2025

To: Kansas House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Ashley Hernandez, Organizing and Policy Coordinator for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth - Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation

RE: Opposition to SCR1602 – Encouraging the Governor to Fully Cooperate with Federal Immigration Enforcement

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Dear Chairman Kessler and Members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. The Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCL) is writing to oppose SCR 1602, which encourages the governor to fully cooperate with federal enforcement of immigration laws. This resolution, if implemented, would have **devastating consequences for immigrant communities**, people of color, and the most marginalized members of our society. It promotes policies that increase racial profiling, erode trust in local law enforcement, tear families apart, and undermine the fundamental dignity of human beings, values that stand in direct opposition to Catholic Social Teaching and our shared moral responsibility.

**Key Concerns with SCR1602:**

- **Undermines Human Dignity:** Catholic Social Teaching upholds the inherent dignity of every person (Genesis 1:27; Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1930). Policies that encourage mass deportation and aggressive enforcement criminalize individuals seeking a better life, violating the principle of respecting human dignity.
- **Harms Family Unity:** The Catholic Church emphasizes the sanctity of the family as the foundational unit of society (Familiaris Consortio, 1981). Overly aggressive immigration enforcement leads to the separation of families, causing psychological and economic harm to children and communities.
- **Disproportionate Impact on People of Color:** Policies like the current federal immigration plans overwhelmingly target people of color, exacerbating racial injustice. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has repeatedly spoken out against racial discrimination in immigration enforcement (Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, 2003).

- **Economic and Social Harm:** Immigrants are integral to our communities and economies. Policies that target them result in labor shortages, economic downturns, and increased social tensions. Studies have shown that inclusive immigration policies result in stronger economic growth and community well-being (American Immigration Council, 2023).

Rather than promoting policies that marginalize immigrants, we should **advocate for just and humane immigration reform** that aligns with the Church's call for welcoming the stranger (Matthew 25:35-40). As Pope Francis stated, "Migrants are not a threat; they are an opportunity for solidarity and growth." We must seek solutions that uphold justice, family unity, and human dignity.

I strongly urge you to **vote against SCR 1602** and instead promote policies that reflect our shared values of compassion, dignity, and justice for all. Thank you for the opportunity to present you with this testimony. Should you have any questions please contact me at [ahernandez@scls.org](mailto:ahernandez@scls.org).

Sincerely,

**Ashley Hernandez, MPA**

Organizing and Policy Coordinator

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## Works Cited

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