

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Media Release

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Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon issues statement calling for immigration law reform

The Board of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) joins its voice with churches and religious leaders across the country in the call for comprehensive and just reform of the immigration laws.

Joining with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, National Association of Evangelicals, National Council of Churches, National Hispanic Leadership Conference and Church World Service, all of whom have called for similar reform, the EMO Board states, “Without such action at the federal level the recent passage of immigration legislation S.B. 1070 by the Arizona Legislature will act as a catalyst for other legislative bodies throughout the country to consider similar anti-immigrant laws. This will create a patchwork of immigration laws and regulations resulting in the further marginalization of immigrants throughout the country. It will also create a climate of fear and intolerance affecting citizens and non-citizens alike.

“Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is also concerned that laws such as S.B. 1070 will adversely impact not only immigrants but all people of the state. S.B. 1070 expands the powers of local law enforcement agencies to enforce federal immigration law and gives individual citizens the right to sue law enforcement agencies if they are perceived as not fully enforcing federal or state immigration law. These elements of the law further erode civil liberties and will not ‘fix the broken immigration system’ nor foster trust between law enforcement and the community. As such, SB 1070 will negatively impact all people in Arizona—immigrant and non-immigrant alike. We support efforts to repeal the law on both constitutional and humanitarian grounds.”

“Our prayers and thoughts are with the people of Arizona,” said EMO Executive Director David Leslie. “Oregon’s churches and people of faith call for rational, humane and realistic laws to address immigration in the 21st century.”

EMO Board President the Rev. Lynne Smouse Lopez spoke for the board when she said, “How we treat the marginalized in our society speaks volumes as to our commitment to the Great Commandment ‘to love your neighbor as yourself.’ The need for humane, just and effective comprehensive immigration reform is now.”

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations—including Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox bodies—congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, environmental ministry and public policy advocacy.

MEMBER DENOMINATIONS

African Methodist Episcopal Church ■ African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church ■ American Baptist Churches ■ Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ■ Christian Methodist Episcopal Church ■ Church of the Brethren
Community of Christ ■ Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon ■ Episcopal Diocese of Oregon ■ Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ■ Greek Orthodox Church ■ Presbyterian Church (USA)
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) ■ Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland ■ United Church of Christ ■ United Methodist Church ■ Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches