

Michigan Catholic Conference



8 February 2008

Senate Majority Leader Michael Bishop
Michigan Senate
S-106 Capitol Bldg.
Lansing, MI 48909

VIA FAX 517.373.2694

Dear Majority Leader Bishop:

The Michigan Catholic Conference applauds the Senate for acting quickly to pass legislation that guarantees a driver's license to those individuals who while not citizens, are nonetheless legally present in Michigan. These are individuals who we want, and have invited, to live and work in our communities. In addition to the many types of legally present individuals whose inability to obtain driver's licenses have been highlighted during the debate on this issue, we are also concerned with the situation of seminary students, foreign born priests serving in parishes across the state, and the thousands of refugees seeking freedom whom our Catholic Charities organizations resettle in Michigan.

The House of Representatives has also acted regarding this matter, yet without attaching provisions that would make Michigan driver's licenses compliant with the Federal Real ID Act.

While the MCC certainly understands the need to secure our nations borders, the plight of legal immigrants should not be bogged down in the debate over the merits of Real ID. In that the State of Michigan has been granted a waiver from implementation of Real ID until December of 2009, at the request of our Secretary of State, we strongly recommend that the urgent issue of licenses for legal immigrants be dealt with immediately.

I trust you will consider our concern and expedite this matter with all deliberate speed. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to further discuss this matter.

Very Truly Yours,

Paul Stankewitz
Associate for Public Policy

cc. Sen. Alan Cropsey
Sen. Jud Gilbert