

31 August 2007

Dear LRRCR Subscribers:

I am contacting you to share the following information from the Division of Religious Immigration Services (DRIS) at CLINIC:

Letter Campaign to the White House: In a recent e-mail, DRIS encouraged its clients to inform the White House of concerns regarding future changes to the nonimmigrant and immigrant religious worker program. Our office expects these changes to occur based on proposed regulations that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued for public comment on April 25, 2007.

While USCCB/CLINIC have sent comments to USCIS on the proposed regulations, we continue to be concerned about: 1) continuing delays in USCIS adjudications of applications and petitions, 2) mandatory USCIS site visits of sponsoring organizations before applications and petitions will be approved, and 3) the tremendous adverse impact these practices are beginning to have on the ability of religious workers to continue their ministries in the U.S.

Most Reverend Gerald R. Barnes, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, recently sent a memorandum asking the bishops to contact the White House to express their concern. Today I am e-mailing you to ask whether you would be willing to make this information available to your members in the hope that they also will participate in the campaign, even if they signed on to the CLINIC/USCCB comments in June.

Attached please find my August 31 letter which offers a more complete discussion of the areas of concern. I am also sending several attachments with this letter. Among them is a sample letter to the White House that can be easily tailored to reflect a religious community's concerns. We are asking that religious consider sending a letter via fax or e-mail expressing their concerns and the reasons for those concerns to the White House.

Please let me know if you would be able to assist us in disseminating this information as widely as possible to your members whose communities may have foreign-born religious ministering in the U.S. or who are interested in immigration issues.

Thank you!

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