

the Common Path

in this issue >>>

- ◆ *States of Immigration*
- ◆ *Metro Cincinnati Interfaith Youth Update*
- ◆ *Family Homelessness & Stability Task Force*
- ◆ *Community Resources List*

News Briefs >>>

CMHA Opens Wait List for Subsidized Rental Units

Housing Choice Vouchers – In the last three years the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority Waiting List for subsidized rental units went from just under 10,000 people down to several hundred. The waiting list was open for one week from April 4th at 12:01 am through April 8th until 11:59 pm. For the first time pre-applications for rental units were accepted online by CMHA at Cincinnati Public Library and its 41 branches plus an additional 21 sites at various human service agencies located throughout the county. Those who pass eligibility requirements will be awarded CMHA wait list slots through a lottery.

Out of the Crossfire Wins Victims Awareness Award

As part of National Crime Victims Awareness Week, the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio will recognize on April 13th Out of the Crossfire Executive Director Dr. Jennifer Williams, founders Dr. Jay Johannigman and Dr. Kenneth Davis, Jr., and Board Chairperson Margaret A. Fox from the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati, for their commitment and dedication to the Out of the Crossfire program.

immigration >>>

States of Immigration

How Arizona and The Utah Compact are Shaping the Immigration Debate Everywhere

The issue of immigration reform galvanized the country when the State of Arizona passed immigration legislation on April 23, 2010, Senate Bill 1070 "Support Our Law and Safe Neighborhoods Act," later signed into law by Governor Jan Brewer. Current U.S. federal law requires "aliens 14 years old or older who are in the country for longer than 30 days to register with the U.S. government and have registration documents in their possession at all times." No alien without papers is charged with a crime.

Photo: Creative Commons licensed photo by rprathap—Prathap Ramamurthy on Flickr.com



"The Act makes it a state misdemeanor crime for an alien to be in Arizona without carrying the required documents, and obligates police to make an attempt, when practicable during a "lawful stop, detention or arrest", to determine a person's immigration status if there is reasonable suspicion that the person is an illegal alien." (SB 1070) Meaning now in Arizona, state, county and local law enforcement are obligated to penalize to the full extent of federal law. Federal law reads "Any person arrested cannot be released without confirmation of the person's legal immigration status by the federal government pursuant to § 1373(c) of Title 8 of the United States Code."

Within months of it being signed into law, SB 1070 faced legal chal-

lenges which somewhat limited its scope. A recent decision by a federal court ruled parts of the law unconstitutional, but the full legal ramifications have yet to be determined. Other states are watching closely as the court case and application of the law in Arizona unfolds.

Local Law Enforcement Discretion Limited and Policy Costly

Prior to SB 1070 in Arizona and most other states, law enforcement was not obligated to ask about immigration status. In fact, law enforcement agen-

States, cont.

cies often avoided questioning a person's immigration status to encourage immigrants to cooperate with law enforcement and report crimes, such as domestic violence, drug trafficking, or homicides. With the new legislation come additional costs. Processing misdemeanor crimes, court costs, jail stays and deportation processes increase the expenditures of local governments, which bear the costs of local implementation of immigration reform without federal assistance.

Freedom of discretion on the part of local law enforcement regarding immigration status changed once Arizona passed SB 1070. Soon other state legislators began to introduce copy cat legislation punishing immigrants; the states of Utah, Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio to name a few (refer to p.3 sidebar "State by State").

Utah Challenges Its State Initiatives

Utah was the first state to push back on the punitive reforms pursued by its state legislators. In April 2010 The National Immigration Forum, whose mission is to advocate for the value of immigrants and immigration to the United States, was asked to work with lawmakers and the leaders and constituencies that make up Utah's faith and business communities to create a vision, consensus and strategy for constructive immigration reform. The catalyzing leaders of the initial group were the Roman Catholic Bishop of Utah and the former Attorney General of Utah.

Small group presentations and discussions were organized around the theme of fair immigration reform. The leaders felt by educating the participants it would build a common language and eventually a consensus for a unifying statement. Members from the faith and business communities, institutions, community organizations and political parties participated in the discussions.

When a consensus was reached on what was most important for fair immigration reform, the group looked to the Mayflower Compact as a source of inspiration for drafting a unifying statement. Crafted in 1620 at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts by the Pilgrims, some of the first immigrants to the United States, the Compact sought to lay out a frame-



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THE UTAH COMPACT

A declaration of five principles to guide Utah's immigration discussion

FEDERAL SOLUTIONS Immigration is a federal policy issue between the U.S. government and other countries—not Utah and other countries. We urge Utah's congressional delegation, and others, to lead efforts to strengthen federal laws and protect our national borders. We urge state leaders to adopt reasonable policies addressing immigrants in Utah.

LAW ENFORCEMENT We respect the rule of law and support law enforcement's professional judgment and discretion. Local law enforcement resources should focus on criminal activities, not civil violations of federal code.

FAMILIES Strong families are the foundation of successful communities. We oppose policies that unnecessarily separate families. We champion policies that support families and improve the health, education and well-being of all Utah children.

ECONOMY Utah is best served by a free-market philosophy that maximizes individual freedom and opportunity. We acknowledge the economic role immigrants play as workers and taxpayers. Utah's immigration policies must reaffirm our global reputation as a welcoming and business-friendly state.

A FREE SOCIETY Immigrants are integrated into communities across Utah. We must adopt a humane approach to this reality, reflecting our unique culture, history and spirit of inclusion. The way we treat immigrants will say more about us as a free society and less about our immigrant neighbors. Utah should always be a place that welcomes people of goodwill.

work for making "just and equal laws. . .for the general good of the colony" despite religious differences. With the Mayflower Compact as their influence, the Utah coalition engaged in many conversations among a variety of groups, such as Faith Groups, Chamber of Commerce, United Way and Democratic and Republican elected officials. Over six months, The Utah Compact was crafted based on five principles to guide Utah's immigration discussion. The final statement was signed on November 15, 2010.

Most organizations approved and signed the agreement, such as The United Way, Chamber of Commerce, faith communities and the political parties, as well as other organizations and individuals. The major exception was The Church of the Latter Day Saints. Although the Mormon Church felt they could not sign the Compact, they agreed to support it due to the amount of time it would take to get approval through their hierarchical body.

The Utah Compact influenced its state legislature almost instantly because it had the support of many constituencies throughout the state. But more importantly, the conversation and movement began at the local level, led by the faith community and law enforcement officials, who influenced the tone, level of support and momentum of consensus for the final document. Since this time Utah passed a Guest Worker program to begin implementation in 2013 with the hope that before that time the Federal Government will reach consensus in Congress for a fair and comprehensive immigration bill which the President would expediently sign into law.

For more information check our at website <http://www.marcconline.com>

Interfaith Youth Find Fellowship through Service

It's only April and the Metro Cincinnati Interfaith Youth (MCIY) have been very busy this year! MCIY meets once a month to participate in a variety of community service and educational projects across the tri-state. Here's a rundown of what we've been up to:

- * In January, MCIY youth created 15 handmade blankets that were donated to the local chapter of Project Linus, a national organization that provides local police and firefighters with blankets to give to children in need.
- * In February, MCIY met at the Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati in West Chester, Ohio. Over 50 youth attended from a wide variety of faith backgrounds. The youth were treated to a tour of the mosque, learned about the Islamic Faith and discussed common misconceptions. Afterwards the youth enjoyed a Mediterranean dinner and engaged in diversity games led by two MCIY Islamic Youth.
- * On April 16th, MCIY will host our annual Global Youth Service Day at Tender Mercies in Over-the-Rhine. The day will begin with service opportunities to garden, clean, and organize. Later, they will have opportunities to learn more about the mission of Tender Mercies in the community. The day will conclude at Venice on Vine with pizza and reflection. The event is from 10am to 3:30pm.
- * On May 15th MCIY will visit the Hebrew Union College, where they'll take a tour and engage in a panel discussion with current rabbinical students. Also in May, MCIY will go on the road to the 5th annual Teenage Interfaith Diversity Education (T.I.D.E.) Conference at Northwestern University in Boston. T.I.D.E. is a national conference that is planned and organized by Interfaith Action, Inc., a diverse group of teenage leaders from Sharon, MA. This is the second year MCIY is attending and it promises to be an outstanding and rewarding experience for everyone!
- * On June 9th, the youth will kick off the summer with the MCIY End-of-the-Year Picnic at Woodland Mound Park.

If you know high-school-aged youth who would be interested in MCIY, let us know about it at 513.721.4843 or marce@fuse.net. For more information check us out online at marconline.com/youth or find us on Facebook!

Homelessness/Affordable Housing>>>

Notes from the Family Homelessness & Stability Task Force

“Since the large meeting, the Steering Committee has received support from the General Body of the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless on March 17, 2010. The Coalition is the host agency for the work of the Task Force. Support for the work of the Task Force has been received from Affordable Housing Advocates (AHA) and the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati (MARCC). Participation has been issued from many organizations including: Hamilton County, Hamilton County Jobs and Family Services, Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), the local office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and understanding from the City that data and information will be accessible, although the City will not be a participant.

The Steering Committee will be reviewing and refining the proposed work plans for the committees, and will be identifying data and information needs pertaining to the several areas that have been identified, including but not limited to: housing, homelessness prevention, children's needs (e.g., school when homeless, risks of foster care,) emergency service needs (e.g., food, clothing, heat, health care), employment/unemployment/TANF, and availability of affordable housing. (e.g., CMHA waiting list, subsidized units, levels of rent).

Phase one of this effort will be Data Collection and Study.”

(April 7, 2011 Letter - Important Update)

State by State



Ohio—S.B. 98

Proposed law would require the OH Attorney General to pursue a memorandum of agreement with the federal government to enforce immigration law or assist with immigrant detentions. Officers would be required to go through training to participate, but the briefly-worded bill is silent on what the terms of the agreement would be or what the training would include. Introduced by Sen. Stewart on 2/23, the bill has been assigned to the State & Local Government & Veterans Affairs committee.

Ohio—S.B. 42

Proposed law calling for protections against racial-profiling would potentially help to challenge abuses under Secure Communities and 287(g). Introduced by Sen. Kearney on 2/1, it is being reviewed by the Judiciary Civil Justice Committee.

Kentucky—S.B. 6

This failed bill would have made it a state crime for an undocumented immigrant to enter Kentucky, to harbor or transport an undocumented immigrant or to otherwise encourage their residency in the state. It drew hundreds of protestors to the capital and harsh criticism from a variety of groups. The bill was voted down late last month.



Indiana—S.B. 590

Indiana's anti-immigration bill passed the Senate on 2/22 and was sent on to the House, where it remains in committee. In contrast to Ohio's succinct bill, Indiana's S.B. 590 goes on for 32 pages, extensively detailing restrictions and penalties for undocumented immigrants and anyone who hires, transports or houses them. It also restricts public benefits and establishes a statewide English-only policy. Most troubling is the section that would allow police to arrest anyone if there is "probable cause" they are undocumented. Many groups have hotly contested the bill. Presbyterian leaders have threatened to pull their planned biannual conference from Indianapolis if it passes. Other vocal opponents include the national Mennonite Church USA, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and Purdue University.



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Judicatories represented:

Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Association of Unity Churches

Baptist Ministers Conference
of Cincinnati and Vicinity

Cincinnati Conference
(Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America)

Cincinnati Islamic Center

Disciples of Christ – SW Ohio

Episcopal Diocese of
Southern Ohio

Greek Orthodox Church of
Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas

Interdenominational
Ministerial Alliance

JCRC of The Jewish Federation

Miami Association
(American Baptists)

Ohio River Valley District
(United Methodist Church)

Presbytery of Cincinnati

Religious Society of Friends

Southwest Ohio-Northeast
Kentucky Division
(The Salvation Army)

Unitarian Universalist Council
of Greater Cincinnati

United Church of Christ

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Vice-President

Rabbi Margaret Meyer
Secretary

Mary Jean Pierson
Assistant Secretary

Terynso El-Amin
Treasurer

Margaret A. Fox
Executive Director
Sarah G. Geiger

MARCC Community Resources List

HUD:

513. 684.3451

CMHA:

513.421.2642

United Way:

Emergency assistance 2-1-1 or 513.721.7900

Community Action: HEAP (Home Emergency Assistance Program)

513.569.1840 ext. 1115

513.569.1850

Heat & electric assistance

Duke Energy: PIPP Plus (Gas + Electric assistance)

513.544.6900

Super Jobs:

513.731.9800

Free Store Food Bank:

513.241.1064

Salvation Army and Family Assistance: (Emergency Financial and seasonal assistance)

513.762.5660

Hamilton County Jobs and Family Services (Food vouchers, childcare, cash assistance, Medicaid)

513.946.1000

Central Access Point: CAP (Intake for emergency shelter for homeless families)

513.381.7233

Greater Cincinnati Coalition for Homeless

513.421.7803

Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health

513.354.7200

Jimmy Heath House

513.473.4759, Program Coordinator David Elkins

Emergency Numbers:

Domestic Violence

1.800.799.7233(SAFE)

CAP

513.381.7233(SAFE)

Child Abuse Hotline

513-241-5437(KIDS)

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