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**FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

COMMISSION ON JUSTICE, PEACE & THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION  
125 Thompson Street • New York, New York 10012 • 844.328.9967

December 1, 2014

President Barack Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

It is with a tempered gratitude that we write to thank you for your recent Executive Action providing relief for our unregularized immigrant brothers and sisters. Many of them have lived for years under the fear and shadow of deportation and family separation. We have the privilege of ministering to many of these persons in the hundreds of Franciscan parishes, schools and service ministries where we serve in the U.S. Regularly we hear our immigrant brothers and sisters tragic stories of flight from violence and economic oppression. It is a just and good thing that as many as 5 million persons may take advantage of the Executive Relief you have signed. Our caution stems from the fact that this action is temporary and incomplete.

We persist in our concern for the more than 6 million persons who will remain in the shadows – those who are not able to take advantage of the Administrative Relief. They and their families endure under the danger of separation through deportation and detention. As you know, and as we have asked you and Congress before, the best solution is comprehensive and just immigration reform. Until that day arrives justice will elude our immigrant sisters and brothers. Please do not feel you have done all you can with the Executive Relief. Though we appreciate the temporary respite for some of our immigrant brothers and sisters, comprehensive immigration reform must be our goal.

In addition to the need for comprehensive immigration reform, the situation with the unaccompanied minors and minors accompanied by a single parent remains a crisis on our border. Though it does not receive the same level of news coverage of this past summer, it does remain an on-going issue that many of our ministries on the U.S.-Mexico Border are addressing with other partners of good will. These individuals continue to be innocent victims of violence fleeing for their lives from Central America. We urge you and the Congress to provide a safe haven for these refugees and take action that can remove the factors of violence and economic misery that drive people from their homes.

We realize there will be a backlash against the Executive Action; we find this unfortunate but indicative of the complexity and need for a permanent resolution to the immigration crisis through comprehensive immigration reform. For our part, we are encouraging our ministries that serve immigrant populations

to distribute and promote the information about how to take advantage of the temporary relief made possible through this Executive Action. We continue to pray for you, for Congress and for our nation that together we can work towards a justice that will enable all of us to fully recognize and welcome the gifts brought to us by our immigrant brothers and sisters.

Sincerely,

Leadership of Franciscan (O.F.M.) Provinces of the United States

Very Rev. John Puodziunas, OFM  
Assumption BVM Province  
Franklin, WI

Very Rev. William Spencer, OFM  
Sacred Heart Province  
St. Louis, MO

Very Rev. Kevin Mullen, OFM  
Holy Name Province  
New York, NY

Very Rev. John Hardin, OFM  
Saint Barbara Province  
Oakland, CA

Very Rev. Primo Piscitello, OFM  
Immaculate Conception Province  
New York, NY

Very Rev. Jeff Scheeler, OFM  
Saint John the Baptist Province  
Cincinnati, OH

Very Rev. Jack Clark Robinson, OFM  
Our Lady of Guadalupe Province  
Albuquerque, NM

CC:

Speaker of the House John Boehner  
House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi  
Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid  
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell