

Recommended by Domestic Policy Task Force
Nov. 14, 2013: Approved by Steering Committee
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**Jewish Community
Relations Council**

MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

Position Statement on Immigration

Jewish religious and ethical tradition calls on us to “welcome the stranger.” Leviticus commands: “When strangers sojourn with you in your land, you shall not do them wrong. The strangers who sojourn with you shall be to you as the natives among you, and you shall love them as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” [19:33-34]. This principle permeates Jewish tradition, and is reinforced through the American Jewish community’s long history of support for generous and rational immigration laws and policies. That support is rooted in large measure by the experiences of Jews seeking asylum, refuge, and immigration over the course of centuries in an America that has at times closed its doors with tragic results due to anti-immigrant sentiments. Our history – and the story of every community that makes up the patchwork of ethnicities in our diverse nation – calls on us to provide an effective legal immigration system characterized by rule of law, national interest, and compassionate treatment.

The Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation supports compassionate immigration policies, including a systematic, fair path to citizenship for immigrants. The JCRC shall take advocacy positions on immigration policy with the goal of fashioning an immigration system that facilitates legal status and family unity in the interest of protecting the dignity and civil liberties of all people. The JCRC:

1. Supports comprehensive immigration reform that:
 - a) Provides a systematic, fair path to citizenship for undocumented residents.
 - b) Develops greatly improved guest worker programs.
 - c) Ensures swift family reunification.
 - d) Prevents the exploitation of undocumented immigrant workers and protects the labor and human rights of all immigrants.
 - e) Ensures that humanitarian workers and others who provided basic support and services to undocumented immigrants are not subject to criminal prosecution
2. Supports the advancement of firm, reasoned policies that protect homeland security and opposes measures that stigmatize immigrants or undermine civil liberties.
3. Opposes policy measures that, without appropriate safeguards, seek to expand the authority of state and local officials to enforce immigration law violations.
4. Supports asylum policies that protect those fleeing from persecution in their countries.