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**STATEMENT REGARDING THE FAILURE OF
THE SENATE'S COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM BILL**

**Cardinal Roger Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles**

June 29, 2007

My brothers and sisters, although I am profoundly disappointed with the moral failure on the part of our legislators for not passing comprehensive immigration reform, I, your archbishop, your auxiliary bishops, your priests and our entire Catholic Church are not giving up. We are here today to ask you not to become discouraged and not to lose hope. We have to keep fighting and, we will continue fighting.

This is not the end of immigration reform. Our immigration laws are unjust and immoral. The present system causes much suffering, including even the death of many immigrants. I and our Catholic Church will continue fighting for immigration reform that is comprehensive, just and that respects and protects the human rights and the dignity of each person.

Immigrants are an essential part of the continued economic and social well being of our city, California, and our country. Immigrants have always contributed and will always contribute something special and noble to our identity as Americans. Our country was founded by immigrants. We are all one people. We shouldn't be divided by fear or by the anti-immigrant rhetoric, which sadly has been perpetuated during this debate.

I assure you that I and all our Church will always be in solidarity with our immigrant community. We will always support you. Yesterday's vote only served to strengthen and renew my personal commitment and the commitment of the Catholic Church to fight even harder to achieve immigration reform.

Immigration reform is a moral issue. It will not go away. We will not let it go away. The Catholic Church will work together with our elected leaders, urging them not to abandon this issue, and to return to it as soon as possible. The Catholic Church shall continue to work toward just and humane immigration reform until it is achieved.

I also want to assure all of you that you are always welcome in our Catholic parishes, our Catholic schools, our Catholic hospitals and our Catholic social services. You all are welcomed in the Catholic Church -- this is your house.

Let me say again: I promise you that I and the Catholic Church will continue this fight for comprehensive immigration reform. Our Church stands in solidarity with you, and with all of our immigrants. Let us replace fear and uncertainty with courage and determination. We must, we can, and we will win this fight.

With faith in Jesus, our Lord, in whose image we are all created, without having papers or legal status, we will stay united until we have just and humane immigration reform.

Today, we don't have a law on the part of our House of Representatives and the Senate. We don't have a civil law, but we are following a better law, the law of God. We are following the teachings of God in the Old Testament. Also, we are following the teaching and example of Jesus in the Gospel. This law for me is a higher law, and we will keep following it.

Always my brothers and sisters, always moving forward!

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