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**CARDINAL ROGER MAHONY ISSUES STATEMENT ON
SENATE'S DEFEAT of IMMIGRATION REFORM**

I am deeply disappointed that the U.S. Senate failed today to vote favorably for a much-needed immigration reform bill.

The reason we have some 11 million undocumented peoples living and working in this country is precisely the lack of a thorough humane and just immigration policy. The Senate was so close to taking clear and bold leadership on a pressing national issue. We must not let partisan differences keep us from enacting legislation which affects the lives of millions and which would repair a clearly broken immigration system.

I urge the Senate leadership, as well as President George W. Bush, to reach an agreement which will allow the compromise agreement to go forward in the process. Now is a historic moment in our nation's history—we must not let it pass without doing everything possible to resolve our differences.

During this Easter break, I encourage all advocates of immigration reform to work together on positive steps which will help produce the much-needed immigration legislation:

- Continue your prayers and sacrifices to help change the minds and hearts of all peoples, but especially our elected leaders;
- Visit with your House Representatives and Senators while they are in their home districts, urging them to take a leadership role on this vital issue;
- Collaborate closely with all pro-immigration reform groups using positive strategies to enlighten the general public and to sway elected leaders.

I personally stand ready to work with all parties to forge an agreement which will allow Congress to finish this important bill before the end of the year.

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