



The 228th

Diocesan Convention

Of the Episcopal Diocese of RI

RESOLUTION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS

- Resolutions may only be submitted by delegates to convention and canonically resident clergy.
- Each resolution must have two signatures of members of convention.
- Following the practice of the General Convention and Robert's Rules of Order, 1970 ed., please omit the use of preambles ("whereas" clauses) in the composition of proposed resolutions.
- Reasons and justifications may be included in an explanation following the resolution, to clarify that a vote is being taken only on the substance of the resolution.
- The original, signed Resolution Form or a scanned version thereof must be received in the Diocesan House no later than **September 18, 2018**.

Please mail to:

Committee on Resolutions

The Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island

**275 North Main Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1298 or scan
and email to convention@episcopalri.org**

- The text of your resolution must also be emailed to convention@episcopalri.org and be within the body of the email or attached as a WORD document.

RESOLUTION TITLE: Immigration, Refugees, and Christian Conscience

RESOLVED, That

- Please see attached resolution
and explanation -

EXPLANATION

Signed Mercedes Julian Print Mercedes Julian Email revmjulian@yahoo.com

Signed Michael Coburn Print Michael Coburn Email MikeCoburn1077@gmail.com

Resolutions must be submitted no later than September 18, 2018 (45 days prior to Convention).

A Resolution for Presentation at the 228th Convention of the Diocese of Rhode Island
Title: Immigration, Refugees, and Christian Conscience

Resolved, that this Convention reaffirms its commitment to be a voice on behalf of the vital place of immigrants and refugees in our country and State and calls upon our Governor, Senators, Representatives and elected officials to do all in their power to continue to make Rhode Island a place of welcome for immigrants and refugees; and

Furthermore, this Convention urges those officials to work vigorously for immigration reform in our nation, the affirmation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program to insure the safety and future of all those young people whose residency in our country continues to be threatened, and the revitalization of the Temporary Protected Status program which provides temporary protections for people from dangerous situations; and

Furthermore, this Convention urges those officials to work vigorously to restore a robust flow of refugees into our country by encouraging restoration of a goal of at least 75,000 refugees in the coming year and supporting with full funding, at the Federal level, all programs which facilitate that commitment; and

Furthermore, this Convention commends the work of Dorcas International Institute, the Refugee Resettlement Program of the Diocese of Providence, the Dream Center, Episcopal Migration Ministries, and all of the programs and parishes which welcome and support the resettlement of refugees in this country and State, and encourages all parishes, by prayer and action, to embrace this ministry; and

Furthermore, this Convention calls upon all Episcopalians to build bridges of understanding across all the divisions of our day, personally reaching out to people of different color and ethnicity and belief so that we may continue to work together to create communities where all are welcomed and where the rich diversity of God's peoples is celebrated.

Furthermore, this Convention asks the Secretary of Convention to convey the content of this resolution to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and elected Senators and Representatives of our State.

Explanation

At last year's Convention a resolution somewhat similar to this one was passed almost unanimously. In this past year there have been some positive developments in the areas addressed by that resolution and many troubling ones:

"Immigration reform" as an issue has been buried in the public discourse by the draconian measures enacted by this Administration, measures which have included the separation of children from their parents at the border, a surge in the number of ICE raids around the country, and the increasingly aggressive tactics employed by ICE officials. The daily pain and suffering and uncertainty which immigrant communities are subjected to is very real. Reform, in whatever form it takes, would at least bring clarity to those communities and remove the uncertainty while insuring consistency and due process in the enforcing of immigration law. On the positive side, at the local level, this year has seen the implementation of a "photo ID" program by the City of Providence whereby every person, regardless of legal status, will be able to have a photo ID.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA, begun in 2012, allows two-year stays for certain undocumented immigrants who entered the country before their 16th birthday who have attended school or joined the military and have not committed any serious crimes. Almost 800,000 young adults registered for this program. The President terminated this program and Congress has failed to enact any legislation to save it. All that stands between these young adults and their deportation is a series of lawsuits

which have prohibited the Administration from enacting the programs termination. No other constructive resolution is on the horizon. On the positive side, on the local level, DACA recipients have now been allowed to receive drivers licenses in Rhode Island.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a program which extends temporary protections, work authorization, and a shield from deportation to thousands of vulnerable people from extremely unsafe situations where their lives, otherwise, would be at risk. The Administration seems intent on ending this program entirely. In the past year it has terminated the program for people from these countries (with the numbers of persons affected in parentheses): El Salvador (262,500), Haiti (58,600), Honduras (86,000), Nepal (14,800), Nicaragua (5,300), and Sudan (1,050). The full effect of these terminations will be felt in the coming year as the termination date is reached for each. In addition, in the next 12 months the Administration will be rendering decisions on people from Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

Refugees. The President has recently announced that the number of refugees who will be allowed into the United States in the coming year will be 30,000. This resolution calls for a number of at least 75,000. Under President Obama the number reached 80,000. Under President Reagan it was 200,000. Last year the present Administration announced a limit of 45,000 but, in fact, has so slowed the process that the actual number of refugees admitted will be about 22,000. The number of refugees in the world is, of course, increasing daily. Persecution and war displace 20 people every 60 seconds. Officially there are now 68.5 million displaced people in the world including over 25 million refugees, over half of whom are children. Daily people die, daily people wait in overcrowded refugee camps, while here, in our country there is an enormous pool of good will and a well-organized system of welcome, a system which includes Episcopal Migration Ministries at the national level, Dorcas International Institute at the local level, and countless individuals involved in direct ministries of resettlement.

The resolution is an opportunity for our Diocese to speak with specificity and clarity about these important issues which affect thousands in our State and millions in this world.

Submitted by:

The Reverend Michael Coburn, Church of the Ascension, Cranston
The Reverend Mercedes Julián, Church of the Ascension, Cranston
The Reverend Anne Burke, Christ Church, Westerly
The Reverend Leroy Close, Saint John the Evangelist, Newport
The Reverend Edward Dean, Saint David's Church, Cranston
Eduardo Espinal, Lay Delegate, Church of the Ascension, Cranston
The Reverend Patrick Greene, Saints Matthew and Mark Church, Barrington
The Reverend Marsue Harris, Holy Cross Church, Middletown
The Reverend John Higginbotham, Holy Trinity Church, Tiverton
The Reverend William Locke, Saint Matthew's Church, Jamestown
The Reverend Michelle Matott, Church of the Transfiguration, Cranston
The Reverend Jennifer Pedrick, Saint Mary's Church, Portsmouth
The Reverend Santiago Rodriguez, Church of the Ascension, Cranston
The Reverend Anita Schell, Emmanuel Church, Newport
The Reverend Grace Swinski, Saint Thomas Church, Greenville