

Samuel Rodriguez Praises Chance for 'God-Fearing Immigrant Families' to Enter US

National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference President Samuel Rodriguez sees the most recent immigration legislation as a hopeful step that would “spur Congress to act with urgency to pass comprehensive” reform on the issue.

On Wednesday, President Trump endorsed a proposal that would cut legal immigration to the United States in half within a decade. According to *The New York Times*, the legislation would sharply curtail the ability of American citizens and legal residents to bring family members into the country.

In a statement, Rodriguez said, “As the NHCLC has long advocated, any legislation that has a realistic chance of garnering bipartisan support must not only address future legal immigrants and guest workers, but must also provide permanent legal protection for DREAMers and other hardworking, God-fearing immigrant families whose lives are already inextricably linked to America. ... “Any proposal that does one without the other falls well short of the goal.”

“DREAMers” are those undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as small children. President Trump said in June that he would not immediately eliminate protections for this group.

In his statement this week, Rodriguez specifically pointed to the case of California Pastor Noe Carias, who was arrested last month during his scheduled immigration check-in at the U.S. Citizenship Immigration Services office while discussing his status. The arrest of Carias, who married an American

citizen and founded and pastored Assemblies of God Church Iglesia Pentecostes Cristo la Roca de Poder, sparked outrage among the Christian community.

“By all accounts, Pastor Carias is a law-abiding and productive member of his local Los Angeles community,” Rodriguez wrote for Charisma News. ... “We have worked tirelessly with the White house and the Trump administration precisely in order to avoid this kind of result. To deport any immigrant whose life is so deeply connected to the United States and whose family is comprised of U.S. citizens is an assault on the sanctity of life and the sacredness of the family. We cannot and must not allow families to be ripped apart by an immigration system that is attempting to make up for any real or perceived inadequacies of our past enforcement policies.”

Rodriguez has called upon Congress and the Trump administration to act with grace, empathy and humanity upon such individuals.

“As the debate moves forward—and it must—we should never limit ourselves to an ‘either/or’ mentality,” Rodriguez said. “We must instead always balance security with compassion, the rule of law with a spirit of generosity. This is who we are, and always have been, as Americans.” {eoa}