



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Monday, August 14, 2006

For more information, contact  
Pat Chivers, Director of Communications  
404-885-7420 (office), 678-480-6865 (cell)

**STATEMENT ON CONGRESSIONAL IMMIGRATION HEARINGS  
AUGUST 14 AND 15, 2006  
BY ARCHBISHOP WILTON D. GREGORY**

I am pleased that the U.S. House of Representatives has chosen to host field hearings on immigration in Gainesville and Dalton. Immigration impacts all of us and there are strong feelings involved. It is vital that the many voices be heard and that the public be educated about these complex issues. We must overcome the misunderstanding, ignorance, competition, and fear still standing in the way of policy solutions that are just and humane.

The current house bill containing primarily enforcement measures does not solve the problems facing our society. The Archdiocese of Atlanta, along with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), supports a comprehensive approach to immigration reform which includes the following elements: 1) policies to address the economic root causes of migration; 2) reform of our legal immigration system, including a viable and workable path to citizenship; 3) a temporary worker program which protects the rights of all workers; 4) family-based immigration reform which reduces waiting times for family reunification; and 5) the restoration of due process protections for immigrants.

I and my brother bishops support these reforms because every day we witness the human consequences of an immigration system which is severely flawed. Families are separated; migrant workers are abused and exploited by human smugglers; and, tragically, human beings die in the desert. We must reform the system and restore to it respect for basic human rights and human life.

As our community continues to engage this important issue, I ask that the debate be conducted through civil dialogue, in the spirit of cooperation and love. It is my hope that participants on both sides of the issue will refrain from harsh rhetoric and address the substantive issues at hand.

I and the Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta continue to reach out to the people who are most vulnerable through Catholic Charities and the ninety-five parishes and missions in North Georgia. We are working with members of the community and with our elected officials toward a comprehensive and humane solution to the immigration crisis in our nation.

###

For more information, contact Pat Chivers, Director of Communications  
678-480-6865 (Cell), 404-885-7420 (Office) or [pchivers@archatl.com](mailto:pchivers@archatl.com)