



SCIC STATEMENT ON SANCTUARY

As an organization representing and supporting believers of all faiths, the South Coast Interfaith Council encourages any efforts to protect segments of the United States population that may be subject to unfair or discriminatory action or legislation. We affirm that it is our responsibility as a council of believers to protect the “least among us” from prejudice, violence, and unwarranted prosecution and deportation.

We also affirm our commitment to work with agencies, movements, churches, synagogues, mosques and other organizations that provide or support sanctuary for threatened persons based on their race, religion, sexual orientation, or citizenship. We continue the centuries-old concept of Sanctuary, which provides safety, care and protection within houses of worship.

SCIC is committed to coordinating legal, financial, and spiritual support on behalf of religious communities and individuals threatened with deportation, prosecution, violence or persecution of any kind. The Council also seeks to influence local, state and federal lawmakers to establish laws and protections for threatened residents and commit to work with all governments to create policies that provide hope and opportunities for those, sometimes referred to as “Dreamers,” who grew up in the United States from a young age and for whom this country is their home. These individuals have demonstrated a capacity to serve and contribute positively in our society, and we believe they should be granted the opportunity to continue to do so.

As has been the tradition in many faiths, we recognize houses of worship to have always been a refuge for the runaway slave, the conscientious objector, and the Central American refugee fleeing the civil wars of the 1980s. And as the need for Sanctuary is growing, we stand in solidarity with Central American immigrants, AMEMSA (Arab/Middle Eastern/Muslim/South Asian) and other communities facing immoral and unjust deportation and discrimination policies.

We pledge to support civil initiatives undertaken by SCIC member organizations out of their sense of moral obligation to embody principles of human rights and dignity, and to oppose any harmful, unjust policies that undermine due process and injure communities.

We support those willing to provide sanctuary not only in houses of worship, but also at schools, hospitals, college campuses, community centers and family homes. We will work with partner organizations to create sanctuary wherever it is needed.

We affirm that the concept of Sanctuary requires action. Sanctuary is a deliberate undertaking, of people acting on behalf of others and communities.



SCIC STATEMENT ON GUN VIOLENCE

The South Coast Interfaith Council is committed to removing gun violence from our communities. While we support the second Amendment of the Constitution, we also recognize the need for common-sense legislation and a change in the national mindset surrounding gun ownership and the acceptance of a healthier public perception of the responsibilities and issues associated with gun ownership.

We acknowledge that a majority (67%) of gun owners do so for their own protection, and of that the majority of all gun owners keep a handgun. But, we also acknowledge that the pervasive “gun culture” seems to have a greater influence over society’s approach to conflict resolution than does non-violent or non-threatening means.

We therefore proclaim that if America is to lower the acts of violence involving guns, we must change the “gun culture” mindset while restricting the availability of guns for those who have previously committed violent crimes or have a history of mental illness that involves violence toward others.

We affirm that violence in all forms is anathema to religious doctrine and thought. And, that guns of all types in the hands of violent persons can only increase the chances of a gun-related death or injury. We therefore support the Brady Campaign (bradycampaign.org) and its mission “to create a safer America by cutting gun deaths in half by 2025.”

The Brady Campaign seeks to reduce gun deaths by “keeping guns out of the wrong hands through three impact-driven, broadly engaging campaigns: (1) a policy focus to "Finish the Job" so that life-saving Brady background checks are applied to all gun sales; (2) to "Stop 'Bad Apple' Gun Dealers" – the 5 percent of gun dealers that supply 90 percent of all crime guns; and (3) to lead a new national conversation and change social norms around the real dangers of guns in the home, to prevent the homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings that happen every day as a result.”



SCIC STATEMENT ON RACISM AND BIGOTRY

The South Coast Interfaith Council asserts that the expression of bigotry in any form is not in harmony with the teachings of any honorable religious theology or humanist philosophy. We affirm that a just society must embrace the foundational values of love, respect, and acceptance in protecting the rights of all regardless of race, religion, physical and mental ableness, sexual orientation and identity.

We denounce the use of violence, hate speech, physical or emotional intimidation that restricts or denies fundamental human rights. We support common-sense legislation to restrict the availability of guns to those with a history of violent crimes, hate crimes, or mental illness. We reject institutional practices that encourage racism or bigotry by restricting access to equal justice, limiting legal representation, or restricting the voting rights of minorities.

We pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer because of intolerance and hatred. We work for peace and understanding. Above all, we encourage all to treat one another with greater kindness, compassion, and goodness. The South Coast Interfaith Council is committed to honoring and assisting all who suffer from bigotry and commit to using all legal, honorable means to promote and establish communities of compassion among all people.



SCIC STATEMENT ON THE ATTACKS ON MOSQUES IN CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

The South Coast Interfaith Council stands with our Muslim brothers and sisters in New Zealand as they recover from these despicable acts of hatred and violence against local mosques. We affirm that if all the world's societies are to be free of hatred that citizens and governments must provide sweeping protections for believers, adopt and enforce sensible gun control, and block the spread of hate speech in all forms of media.

We admonish all believers, humanists, atheists, and those of no declared or affiliated belief system to acknowledge the need for love for our fellow man. We state that no society can progress or succeed when any members are considered inferior, or unworthy of care or protection. We call on all governments to look beyond the influence of special interests, examine the lives of all people living within their borders, and realize that no society can truly prosper when so many are permitted to suffer at the hands their fellow human beings.

We affirm that only through the acceptance of our universal kinship can we create and sustain a society of peace and prosperity. We ask all citizens of the world to demand action and protections from their governments for those of all faiths, races, sexual orientations, classes or castes, the homeless and historically repressed peoples. We ask all citizens of the world to stop the spread of hate and violence and seek to bring peace and acceptance to the world's inhabitants.