

Statement by the Executive Board of the Western District Conference

Regarding the Texas Law - Senate Bill 4

Presented at WDC Delegate Assembly - August 5, 2017 - Arlington, TX

Believing that one of the messages of the Gospel is a call for social justice, the Executive Board of the Western District Conference of the Mennonite Church USA expresses grave concern regarding the passing of Texas law known as SB4. As reference, see below links to a *Texas Tribune* article about Texas Law SB4 and immigration statements from Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Central Committee.

Our concerns and beliefs about the Texas SB4 law are as follows:

- it fails to respect that all are made in the image and likeness of God
- it rejects the word of the God throughout scripture to act justly for the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the alien (e.g. Zechariah 7:10, Malachi 3:5)
- it is a message of rejection to all of our Hispanic-Latino/a brothers and sisters, citizen or immigrant
- it stigmatizes our immigrant sisters and brothers
- it has a disproportionate impact on Hispanic-Latinos/as in Texas and Hispanic-Latinos/as traveling through Texas
- it makes Texas a “show-me-your-papers” state, creating fear in members of our Texas communities
- it forces immigrants, both documented or undocumented, into the shadows
- it creates anxiety for our Hispanic-Latino/a brothers and sisters simply traveling to worship
- it creates anxiety for our Hispanic-Latino/a brothers and sisters traveling to Annual Assembly
- it is a racist law that will lead to further discrimination against people of color, encouraging profiling and likely increasing racial tension
- it will likely sow greater racism, fear, and suffering
- it is an indication that our country is losing sight of the values upon which it was founded which is damaging to its soul
- it is among the most extreme anti-immigrant state-level legislation of its kind

The Executive Board of the Western District Conference of the Mennonite Church USA laments the passage of this law characterized by rejection, discrimination, and racial profiling and urges that this law be rescinded. Furthermore, we urge the Western District Conference, the Mennonite Church USA, and all faith communities to stand in solidarity with our Hispanic-Latino/a brothers and sisters and with other people of color in the rejection of this law and the mindset which has created it.

From The Texas Tribune:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2017/05/08/5-things-know-about-sanctuary-cities-law/>

From Mennonite Central Committee: https://mcc.org/sites/mcc.org/files/media/common/documents/mccstatement-welcomingimmigrantsandrefugeesasneighbors_0.pdf

From Mennonite Church USA: http://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Immigration_Statement_2014Feb151.pdf

Approved by WDC Executive Board July 11, 2017