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**World Relief Applauds Bipartisan Introduction of the Dignity Act**

**(Baltimore, MD) May 23, 2023** – Today, a bipartisan group of congressional leaders led by Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar (R-FL) and Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX) introduced the Dignity Act – a broad immigration reform bill that would include an earned path to legal status for qualifying undocumented immigrants with the option to pursue naturalization, an expedited path to citizenship for Dreamers, and reforms to border security and asylum processing.

World Relief celebrates the introduction of this bipartisan bill. As will be the case in any carefully-negotiated consensus legislation, we may have concerns with some elements of the bill, but we are encouraged by this good-faith, bipartisan process that includes many of World Relief’s longstanding immigration policy priorities.

“Legislative reforms to the entire U.S. immigration system are long overdue, but the only path toward broad, durable reforms is through bipartisan cooperation. I’m thankful to Rep. Salazar, Rep. Escobar and the other original cosponsors of this bill for doing the hard work of forging consensus across the partisan lines that for decades have stymied real reforms from passing into law,” said **Myal Greene, president and CEO of World Relief**. “Consistent with the biblical conviction that all human beings are made in the image of God with inherent dignity and potential, the Dignity Act would allow undocumented immigrants to earn permanent legal status and eventual citizenship if they pay a fine and meet other requirements. I pray that both Republicans and Democrats in Congress will come to the negotiation table to finally realize reforms that both secure our borders and show compassion to immigrants.”

The bill stands in contrast to a partisan bill that narrowly passed the U.S. House of Representatives earlier this month, H.R. 2, which would dramatically roll back existing legal protections for asylum seekers and for unaccompanied children in ways that World Relief believes are morally unacceptable. But unlike a partisan bill that has no chance of being signed into law in the current Congress, the bipartisan Dignity Act addresses the policy priorities of both Republicans and Democrats. We urge members of Congress in both parties to take this bill as a starting point for further negotiation, and urge the Biden administration to play a constructive role in convening good-faith negotiations as well.

As a global Christian humanitarian organization with a long history of partnering with evangelical churches to welcome immigrants to the U.S., World Relief encourages Christians to use their voices to advocate for long-overdue immigration reforms. A study by [Lifeway Research](#) last year found that 78% of American evangelicals support proposals that “would both increase border security measures and establish a process so that those immigrants in the U.S. unlawfully could earn permanent legal status and eventually apply for citizenship if they pay a fine, pass a criminal background check, and complete other requirements



during a probationary period.” That represents a 12% increase since 2015. Notably, only 15% of American evangelicals would oppose such a proposal.

“We’ve advocated, mobilized local churches and prayed for many years for many of the policies included within this bill,” **observed Matthew Soerens, Vice President of Advocacy and Policy for World Relief.**

“We’re not naive to the political challenges ahead in forging consensus in a time of deep partisan divides, but we also believe in a God for whom nothing is impossible. We’re both praying and mobilizing for the day when a broad, bipartisan reform, including an earned pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, is signed into law.”

To learn more about World Relief’s programs around the world, visit [worldrelief.org](http://worldrelief.org).

### **About World Relief**

World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization that brings sustainable solutions to the world’s greatest problems – disasters, extreme poverty, violence, oppression, and mass displacement. For over 75 years, we’ve partnered with churches and community leaders in the U.S. and abroad to bring hope, healing and transformation to the most vulnerable.

Learn more at [worldrelief.org](http://worldrelief.org).