

Obama issues rallying cry for immigration reform

Joshua J. McElwee | Oct. 24, 2013 Immigration and the Church
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President Barack Obama issued a rallying cry Thursday to advocates of immigration reform, telling them to press Congress to pass a bill on the issue before the end of the year.

"This is the moment we should finally be able to get the job done," Obama said during a statement at the White House, surrounded by advocates of reform. "It is time. Let's go get it done."

Obama's remarks came as his administration is dealing with the troubled roll-out of the health care law's online insurance exchanges. Protests earlier this month in D.C. for immigration reform -- at which several members of Congress [were arrested](#) [1] in acts of civil disobedience -- also received little attention due to the government shutdown.

Immigration reform has been at the top of the agenda for many Catholic bishops and lobbying groups, who say the country needs to adopt measures that respect the dignity and rights of migrants. While the U.S. Senate passed an immigration reform bill in June by a 68-32 majority, the U.S. House has not taken up the Senate bill.

Obama called Thursday for advocates to push the House to do so, but did not give specifics of a wider plan for action in Congress or detail if he has had negotiations with Republican leaders on the matter.

Among Catholic groups, Colorado's bishops [called Oct. 2](#) [2] for the nation to reform its immigration laws "across the board" and to focus on the rights and dignity of migrants.

"Because of every person's God-given dignity, the Christian response to immigrants should be one of hospitality that rejects all sentiments and manifestations of xenophobia and racism," Colorado's two bishops said in a joint pastoral letter.

In July, Trenton, N.J., Bishop David O'Connell called immigration reform "a moral imperative" in a [similar pastoral letter](#) [3].

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