



Kino Border Initiative
Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera



Joint Statement on the Presidential Declaration of National Emergency

The Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology, Kino Border Initiative, and the Ignatian Solidarity Network condemn President Trump's unwarranted declaration of a national emergency on the U.S.-Mexico border in order to unilaterally secure increased funding for additions to the border wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. This action is both an immoral response to the challenges posed by immigration realities on our southern border and a threat to our democracy.

As Catholics, we believe that people have a right and duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. These are fundamental principles of Catholic social teaching. President Trump's use of emergency powers to circumvent negotiations with another branch of government compromises the ability of citizens and their representatives in the legislative branch to carry out these rights and responsibilities.

Based on firsthand experience accompanying migrants at the border, we can confidently testify that there is no border security crisis. To the contrary, men, women, and children arriving at our border are seeking security from violence in their communities and hoping to provide a better life for their families. Building a longer border wall will not respond to the complex realities of migration, will not respond to the needs of the most vulnerable, and will not make our country safer. Our society is divided and needs more bridges, not more walls. As Pope Francis reminded us during a visit to Latin America in 2016, "A nation which seeks the common good cannot be closed in on itself; societies are strengthened by networks of relationships."

In fabricating an emergency in order to bypass normal constitutional processes, President Trump's declaration erodes the democratic foundations of our country. We call on all members of Congress to use the powers available to them to prevent this declaration from coming into effect. We ask them instead to seek pathways that promote the common good and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and to do so in ways that adhere to the fundamental civic values of representative government.