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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF KNOXVILLE

June 24, 2010

Governor Phil Bredesen
Governor's Office
Tennessee State Capital
Nashville, TN 37243-0001

Dear Governor Bredesen,

Last month I wrote to you regarding a life issue of great importance concerning clemency for Gaile Owens on death row. Today, I write concerning another issue of human dignity regarding our migrant community and legislation that would lend to an unfair profiling of various population groups who continue to be the object of much prejudice.

House Bill 670 and Senate Bill 1141 will soon come before you for signature. It is my prayer that you will preserve a sense of fairness towards our migrant population, and particularly our growing Hispanic community, and veto this measure.

Many are the contributions that our migrant population, documented and undocumented, make to our State and local communities. But by far, they contribute more to the common good than they take.

I always remind myself that the greatest poverty reduction program in the world comes not from foreign aid, but by way of the remittances that foreign workers send back to their families living in so much poverty. This perspective has helped me to better appreciate the far reaching effects that our actions have upon migrants and the families they are trying to support.

In exercising the solemn powers of your office, I pray that you continue to be graced with the gifts needed to govern in all matters as God governs, from whom all authority comes from.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Richard F. Stika
Bishop of Knoxville