

September 6, 2011

Maura Corrigan
Director
Michigan Department of Human Services
3038 W Grand Blvd Ste 5-350
Detroit, MI 48202

Dear Director Corrigan:

I am writing to you today, on behalf of the Leadership Council of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Monroe Michigan, to express great concern about a forthcoming policy change at the Michigan Department of Human Services. According to the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, this new policy would require that any time a client applying for food assistance or State Emergency Relief tells DHS that the client or anyone else in their home is an undocumented immigrant, the undocumented immigrant must be reported to the Department of Homeland Security.

This policy is especially alarming considering that a new State Emergency Relief policy will require applicants to answer questions about the immigration status of all household members, whether or not those household members are applying for benefits. Requiring applicants to provide information about other family members' immigration status and then using that information as a trigger for immigration enforcement contradicts current federal guidelines and raises serious concerns about civil rights and national origin discrimination with respect to the eligible applicants.

The IHM Sisters are committed to working work with others to eradicate the causes of injustice and oppression and to help create structures that will promote justice and peace and bring unity among all peoples. At a time when the social safety net for the most vulnerable in our state is being eroded, policies like this only contribute to further isolation and marginalization of those in need. Therefore, we join with the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center and other immigrant advocacy organizations across the state in calling on you to abandon this policy and to instead conform to current federal guidance and civil rights law on this matter.

Sincerely,

Joan Mumaw, IHM
Interim President
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary