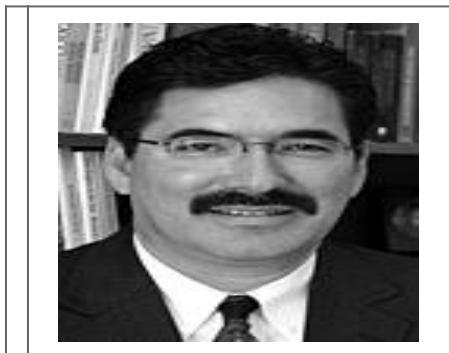


Hispanic Texas Baptist Congreso calls for immigration reform

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Alcides Guajardo (left), president of the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas, and Albert Reyes, president of the Baptist University of the Americas, addressed the Texas Baptist Hispanic Youth and Singles Congreso.

Hispanic Texas Baptist Congreso calls for immigration reform

By Eric Guel

Texas Baptist Communications

HOUSTON—Hispanic Texas Baptist youth and single young adults have called for immigration reform.

Their proclamation, issued April 15, called on government leaders to “pass just and compassionate legislation that addresses stronger border security, respect for the law and a process for citizenship with regard to U.S. undocumented immigrants.”

The proclamation was read to more than 2,500 Hispanic Texas Baptists gathered for a “solemn assembly,” by Alcides Guajardo, president of the Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas. The assembly took place at the end of the Baptist General Convention of Texas-sponsored Texas Baptist Hispanic Youth and Singles Congreso.

The formal announcement focused on Jesus’ ministry to the downtrodden.

“Jesus placed the poor and the oppressed at the center of his mission on earth,” the proclamation states.

Albert Reyes, president of the Baptist University of the Americas and BGCT immediate past president, presided over the assembly.



[Read the text of the proclamation here.](#)

"You have come together today in solemn assembly to pray, to seek God's face and to pray for our nation's leaders," he said. "You have come to seek liberty and justice for all."

The event—juxtaposed against recent school walkouts and massive demonstrations throughout the nation—was tranquil and contemplative.

"I think it's critical for Texas Baptist leadership to demonstrate that, in the midst of crisis, we respond peacefully, in a law-abiding fashion and that we respond by prayer and action," Reyes said.

Some assembly participants or their family members could be undocumented immigrants, Reyes noted, and this issue is pertinent to their lives.

"It's not only about them; it's about us," he said. "It's about how we're going to respond to this issue."

John Sanchez, a graduate student at Baylor University who attended the assembly to show his support for a peaceful resolution to the immigration issue, echoed Reyes' sentiments.

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"My parents were immigrants to this country," he said. "This is an issue

that's very dear to me. I want to see our leaders—Baptist and otherwise—make the right decision on this because it's going to impact the future of this nation for decades to come."

Reyes urged young people at the assembly to seize the moment and take action.

"Do not let this moment die," he said. "Follow the issues, continue to pray for our leaders, encourage your pastors and look for ways God will use you this week to minister to the poor, the prisoner, the blind and the oppressed in your community."

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