

CLC OKs resolution on immigrant children crisis

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DALLAS—The [Christian Life Commission](#) called on Texas Baptists to respond compassionately to the influx of unaccompanied immigrant children and teenagers along the United States' southern border.

✘ In May, Texas Baptist volunteers provided childcare for children detained in Brownsville who entered the United States illegally without a parent. (Texas Baptist Men photo) Commissioners [approved a resolution](#) outlining the current situation involving immigrant minors who are fleeing poverty and violence in Central America. Border Patrol agents have apprehended 46,000 immigrant children since October who crossed the border without documentation, and officials expect up to 90,000 by the end of the year.

The resolution acknowledges “an overburdened immigration court system and a confusing policy framework” in the United States, and it cites the need for proper care and supervision for the unaccompanied minors as they go through the court system.

Children not at fault

It also notes the children “are not at fault either for the circumstances in their home countries or for the confusion created by human smugglers and American policy.”

The CLC encourages Texas Baptists to “remember the many biblical injunctions about caring for the ‘stranger’ or immigrant as reflected in the words of Jesus, ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me.’”

The resolution affirms the work of [Texas Baptist Men](#) and [Baptist Family & Child Services](#) in caring for the children, and it urges Texas Baptists to create welcoming communities in the areas where children are housed.

The resolution suggests churches help in the crisis by identifying secure housing facilities in their communities and identifying bilingual case workers, licensed clinicians, mental health professionals and immigration lawyers to serve two-week stints in facilities.

‘Our hearts are breaking’

“Our hearts are breaking over the situation along the border,” said Ferrell Foster, CLC director of ethics and justice. “These children are victims of poverty and violence, and their families’ desperation has pushed them to this point. These children are our neighbors, and I pray Texas Baptists will lead the way in providing a compassionate response to their need.”

The resolution encourages Texas Baptists to gather in prayer for the people of Central America and for the children who have traveled to the United States.

David Hardage, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, affirmed the resolution, saying, “Texas Baptists have always responded, in Jesus’ name, to the needs of his creation, and we always will.”