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Dear Editor,

As Congress advances new voting restrictions and debates birthright citizenship, Catholics cannot remain silent when policies threaten the dignity and civic participation of immigrants and their families.

We join with our Catholic bishops in affirming that ending birthright citizenship would deny the innate dignity of the human person and inflict harm on vulnerable people. Our faith calls us to evaluate public policy through a moral lens rooted in the dignity of every human person and the right of all people to participate fully in civic life. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that a just society is measured by how it treats the most vulnerable, including immigrants, refugees and their families.

The SAVE Act, H.R. 22, would have required in-person documentary proof of citizenship, such as a passport or birth certificate, to register to vote. Requirements like these increase harmful anti-immigrant rhetoric. They also risk placing disproportionate burdens on many citizens eligible to vote, including U.S.-born children of immigrants and naturalized immigrants and refugees.

Yet the issue is not settled. A new version, H.R. 7296 - the SAVE America Act, has passed the House, continuing to imperil the rights of citizens from immigrant families.

Equally troubling are efforts to eliminate birthright citizenship for certain children born on U.S. soil. The 14th Amendment affirms that those born in the United States are citizens, a powerful expression of equal human dignity. Undermining that protection would create tiers of belonging and punish children for circumstances beyond their control, disproportionately harming immigrant and refugee families.

People of faith must speak clearly in defense of human dignity, immigrant families, and equal citizenship. Our democracy and our moral witness depend on it.

As we celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the contributions of Irish immigrants, we strongly urge our Senators to stand with all immigrants and oppose H.R. 7296 / S.3752 - SAVE America Act. We invite readers to contact their Senators to share their convictions and affirm the promise of the 14th Amendment.

Sincerely,
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