



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up AND Act for Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 16, 2020

#InThisTogether #IncludeAll

Statement by Lawrence E. Couch

Director, National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

It has been quite some time since a hashtag was more accurate than #InThisTogether. As Americans begin to realize what social distancing and self-quarantine mean for themselves, their families and our communities, we must remember that all areas of society have a part to play and must not be forgotten. Not lifting up the vulnerable populations could be our Achilles' heel.

We urge Congress and the President to come together and remember low-income workers and workers in service industries. This crisis should help us recognize the importance of health insurance, increased minimum wages and paid sick leave. Without sufficient paid sick leave, many employees, especially in the service and restaurant industries, may not be able to stay home when they feel sick.

Also, people experiencing homelessness and those living in our prison systems are extremely vulnerable to the spread of Covid-19. Many homeless people may not have heard of the threat or not be able to take necessary safeguards.

Congress and the Administration should work quickly and immediately to protect those incarcerated and those living 'on the streets.' Emergency funding must be released and recommendations must be given. For the homeless, we need more safe, temporary housing options that together or separately take care of sleeping arrangements, regular meals, daytime shelter, and good hygiene opportunities.

This coronavirus has exacerbated our fragile social safety net. We ignore our vulnerable neighbors at our own peril. We truly are in this together.

[The National Advocacy Center](#) educates and advocates on social justice issues for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people reflecting the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. NAC advocates at the Federal level for people living in poverty, immigrants, survivors of human trafficking, survivors of domestic abuse, and other vulnerable populations.

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835 and are in 70 countries on 5 continents and have had a presence in the United States for over 175 years. With a presence in 22 states and 1 U. S. Territory, the Sisters and their Lay Mission Partners have dedicated themselves to serving girls, women and families who experience poverty, exploitation, vulnerability and marginalization.

-30-