

United States Senate

November 12, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

We write today to urge you to include extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and related employment authorizations to current TPS recipients from El Salvador, Haiti, Sudan, Nicaragua, Nepal, and Honduras in the Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations package or next continuing resolution. Hundreds of thousands of TPS recipients, many of whom have lived in the United States for more than 20 years, are facing the pandemic and an economic recession while also fearing the need to leave the United States. An 18 month extension of their status would give TPS recipients a sense of security so they could continue serving their communities as essential workers while taking care of their families during this difficult time, while we work toward our broader goal of providing these longtime residents legal permanent residency.

More than 400,000 TPS recipients currently live in the U.S. These hardworking immigrants are homeowners, business owners, have U.S. citizen children in school, and contribute to their communities in innumerable ways. An estimated 279,000 U.S. citizen children have parents who are TPS recipients from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti.¹ However, over the last three years, the Trump administration has moved to end TPS protections for individuals from El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan, even against the recommendation of the Department of State.² Since then, multiple court cases have challenged the administration's decisions. Multiple cases are currently pending, but TPS holders currently could be forced to leave the country as early as March 2021.³

Months into the coronavirus pandemic, essential workers are clearly vital to our country's response. More than 130,000 TPS recipients from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti are essential workers, serving in positions in the health care, food, transportation, and other sectors that the Department of Homeland Security has labeled "needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and that need to be able to operate resiliently during the COVID-19

¹ Leila Schochet and Nicole Prchal Svajlenka, "How Ending TPS Will Hurt U.S.-Citizen Children," Center for American Progress, February 11, 2019. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2019/02/11/466022/ending-tps-will-hurt-u-s-citizen-children/>

² Nicole Narea, "Exclusive: State Department officials warned Trump not to revoke protections for immigrants," *Vox*, November 7, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/11/7/20950689/trump-tps-temporary-protected-status-el-salvador-haiti-honduras-state-department-report-senate>


³ Nicole Narea, "A federal court ruling could allow Trump to deport 400,000 immigrants next year," *Vox*, September 14, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/9/14/21436633/ninth-circuit-tps-trump-temporary-protected-status>

pandemic response.”⁴ These workers do not have the option to stay at home, and instead are putting their own health and the health of their families at risk in order to serve their communities. Hundreds of thousands of other TPS recipients are facing different challenges during the pandemic, including furloughs, layoffs, reduced hours, and returning to service jobs that could increase their risk of contracting the virus.⁵ These families are just as essential to the fabric of our communities.

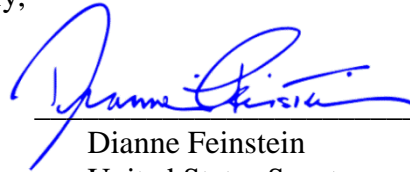
We strongly believe that TPS recipients deserve a path to permanent legal status. That is why we support the Safe Environment from Countries Under Repression and Emergency (SECURE) Act and other legislation that provides legal permanent residency.

TPS recipients and their families should not have to worry that they will be forced to leave the country they call home in the middle of a global pandemic. Extending status and employment authorization will allow them to continue contributing to their communities and their families. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.


Sincerely,



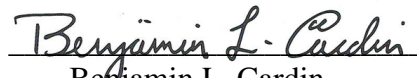
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/ Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

/s/ Mazie Hirono
United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

⁴ Nicole Prchal Svajlenka and Tom Jawetz, “A Demographic Profile of TPS Holders Providing Essential Services During the Coronavirus Crisis,” *Center for American Progress*, April 14, 2020. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/14/483167/demographic-profile-tps-holders-providing-essential-services-coronavirus-crisis/>

⁵ Lisa Maria Garza, “Central Florida immigrant workers in tourism industry grapple with TPS loss, expected layoffs,” *Orlando Sentinel*, Oct. 26, 2020. <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/politics/os-ne-central-florida-tps-holders-20201026-hbxrybawfsbrtn75rtozvh65m4-story.html>

/s/ Jack Reed
United States Senator

/s/ Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

/s/ Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley
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/s/ Gary C. Peters
United States Senator