

November 7, 2017

Acting Secretary Elaine Duke
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

SCANNED/RECEIVED
BY ESEC SEC
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RE: Request to Extend Temporary Protected Status for Haiti

Dear Secretary Duke:

On behalf of the undersigned Massachusetts health care providers and health care consumer advocacy organizations, we respectfully request that you extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians for another 18 months. To allow TPS for Haiti to expire in January will pose a serious risk to the health and safety of Haitian TPS holders if they were to return to the country, and would place unreasonable burdens on the country as it struggles to recover from multiple natural disasters.

The Haitian people have faced a series of public health disasters since the 2010 earthquake which originally led to TPS designation. Haiti has not recovered from the 2010 earthquake, 360,000 people are still homeless as a result of the earthquake and living in camps seven years later. Further, United Nations humanitarian efforts following the earthquake introduced cholera – now the worst cholera epidemic in recent history according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hurricane Matthew struck Haiti in October 2016 which devastated food production, exacerbated the cholera epidemic, and has led to widespread malnutrition.

Allowing Haitian TPS holders to remain safely in the U.S. until Haiti is sufficiently stable is in the national interest. Haitian TPS holders are a self-sufficient and industrious segment of the U.S. economy and are providing invaluable economic support to family members still in Haiti, preventing further destabilization of the country. Here in Massachusetts, Haitians make up an important segment of the health care and direct care work force in Massachusetts caring for elderly, infirm and disabled state residents. There are approximately 4,735 Haitian TPS holders in our state.

Additionally, we ask that you extend TPS for other countries that will be facing re-designation in the coming months – including Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador – which represent an additional 5,000+ individuals in our commonwealth. TPS holders make enormous contributions to our economy and society, and the elimination of the program is projected to result in a \$6.9 billion reduction in Social Security and Medicare contributions and an overall \$45.2 billion reduction in GDP over ten years.

In Massachusetts alone, the projected annual loss in GDP if TPS is terminated for all countries is \$645.8 million, not counting turnover and other business costs associated with the loss of employees. Individuals from TPS countries face similar unstable and unsafe conditions as Haitians would face if forced to return to their home countries, and should be provided an opportunity to remain on TPS.

We ask you to extend TPS and offer our Haitian community members the protection they need, and also support extensions for the other TPS holders, who face similar risks.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Patrick R. Wardell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "P" and "W".

Chief Executive Officer
Cambridge Health Alliance



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

February 14, 2018

Mr. Patrick R. Wardell
Chief Executive Officer
Cambridge Health Alliance
1493 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mr. Wardell:

Thank you for your November 7, 2017 letter. Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

I appreciate your interest in the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations for Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate or redesignate a country for TPS and to extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific criteria. *See* Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

At least 60 days before the current expiration date for a TPS designation, the Secretary must review conditions in the foreign country and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determine whether the statutory conditions for TPS continue to be met. Under the INA, if the Secretary determines that the conditions for designation are no longer met with respect to a country, the Secretary is required to terminate the designation. *See* INA § 244(b)(1), (3).

After considering information from several U.S. Government sources, on November 20, 2017, former Acting Secretary Duke announced the termination of Haiti's TPS designation after determining that the statutory conditions for its designation no longer continued to be met. To allow for an orderly transition, the former Acting Secretary delayed the effective date by 18 months. Accordingly, Haiti's TPS designation will terminate on July 22, 2019. The 18-month period will provide time for individuals with TPS to arrange for their departure or to seek an alternative lawful immigration status in the United States. Additional information on the termination of Haiti TPS can be found on the USCIS website and in a notice that was published in the *Federal Register* on January 18, 2018.

Secretary Nielsen decided to terminate the TPS designation for El Salvador after considering information from several U.S. Government sources, with a delay of 18 months to allow for an orderly transition before the designation terminates on September 9, 2019. DHS is

committed to an orderly transition that will allow time for El Salvador to prepare for the return and reintegration of its citizens. USCIS will work with the State Department and the government of El Salvador to help inform relevant stakeholders in-country and in the United States to ensure an orderly return and reintegration of El Salvador's citizens. Additional details on the Secretary's decision and the process for current El Salvador TPS beneficiaries to renew their work authorization documentation until TPS terminates on September 9, 2019, can be found in the notice that was published in the *Federal Register* on January 18, 2018.

In regards to Honduras, former Acting Secretary Duke did not make a determination by the 60-day deadline for Honduras (November 6, 2017), resulting in an automatic six-month extension of the designation. Details regarding this extension and the process for Honduran TPS beneficiaries to re-register can be found on the USCIS website and in the *Federal Register* notice published on December 15, 2017.

On November 6, 2017, former Acting Secretary Duke announced the termination of Nicaragua's TPS designation after determining that the statutory conditions for designation no longer continued to be met. To allow for an orderly transition, the former Acting Secretary delayed the effective date by 12 months. Accordingly, Nicaragua's TPS designation will terminate on January 5, 2019. The 12-month period will provide time for individuals with TPS to arrange for their departure or to seek an alternative lawful immigration status in the United States. Additional information on the termination of Nicaragua TPS designation can be found on the USCIS website and in a notice that was published in the *Federal Register* on December 15, 2017.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in these important issues. Please feel free to share this information with the cosigners of your letter. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LFC', is positioned above the printed name of the Director.

L. Francis Cissna
Director