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The Honorable Rex Tillerson  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Elaine Duke  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20528

November 2, 2017

Dear Acting Secretary Duke and Secretary Tillerson:

On behalf of the approximately 57,000 Honduran and 2,550 Nicaraguan recipients of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) living in the U.S., we urge you to extend the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Honduras and Nicaragua before it expires on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Our cities stand to lose greatly if TPS designations for Honduras or Nicaragua are terminated. Honduran and Nicaraguan TPS recipients contribute to our communities and economies with the help of TPS. According to a report from the Center for American Progress, the U.S. would lose an estimated \$31.3 billion from its GDP over a decade without Honduran workers who hold TPS. TPS holders are our neighbors, our coworkers, local small business owners, and members of our religious communities. TPS recipients participate in the labor force at high rates, own homes and hold mortgages, and are long-time residents of this country with citizen spouses and children. Indeed, more than half of all TPS recipients have lived here for more than two decades. These productive members of society are also among those that have submitted to the highest levels of security screening and vetting. In order to remain eligible, TPS holders undergo criminal background checks every 18 months.

Moreover, current conditions in Honduras and Nicaragua clearly demonstrate that neither country is in a position to safely absorb thousands of people. We cannot conscientiously send members of our communities to danger. Since 1998, when Hurricane Mitch killed 10,000 individuals across Central America devastating the region and giving rise to TPS designations for Honduras and Nicaragua, these countries have faced successive natural disasters, which have in turn exacerbated public health crises, economic decline, and public safety concerns.

Our Honduran and Nicaraguan communities have called upon us, their local leaders, to help ensure that they and their family members are not forced to return to conditions that will endanger their lives and livelihoods, in countries that simply cannot safely receive them.



## **CITIES *for* ACTION**

As you render a decision on the futures of Honduran and Nicaraguan TPS recipients, we offer a pragmatic perspective informed by our position as local government leaders. The forced departure of tens of thousands of Honduran and Nicaraguan TPS recipients from our communities would deprive us of hardworking, upstanding members of our societies, would needlessly tear apart fathers and mothers from their U.S. born children, and would subject these families to unstable and unsafe conditions in countries that cannot absorb them.

Sincerely,

Ed Pawlowski, Mayor of Allentown, PA

William A. Bell, Mayor of Birmingham, AL

Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston, MA

E. Denise Simmons, Mayor of Cambridge, MA

Lydia E. Lavelle, Mayor of Carrboro, NC

Thomas G. Ambrosino, City Manager of Chelsea, MA

Rahm Emanuel, Mayor of Chicago, IL

Mary Casillas Salas, Mayor of Chula Vista, CA

Clay Jenkins, County Judge of Dallas County, TX

Riley H. Rogers, Mayor of Dolton, IL

William V. "Bill" Bell, Mayor of Durham, NC

Carlo DeMaria, Mayor of Everett, MA

Karen Freeman-Wilson, Mayor of Gary, IN

Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles, CA

Paul R. Soglin, Mayor of Madison, WI

Tomas Regalado, Mayor of Miami, FL

Isiah Leggett, County Executive of Montgomery County, MD

Megan Barry, Mayor of Nashville, TN

Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City, NY

Libby Schaaf, Mayor of Oakland, CA

Buddy Dyer, Mayor of Orlando, FL

Jim Kenney, Mayor of Philadelphia, PA

Adrian O. Mapp, Mayor of Plainfield, NJ



**CITIES for ACTION**

Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive of Prince George's County, MD

Liz Lempert, Mayor of Princeton, NJ

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor of Saint Paul, MN

Ron Nirenberg, Mayor of San Antonio, TX

Ted Winterer, Mayor of Santa Monica, CA

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor of Syracuse, NY

Sarah Eckhardt, County Executive of Travis County, TX

Muriel Bowser, Mayor of Washington, DC

Jim Provenza, County Supervisor of Yolo County, CA



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

NOV 24 2017

The Honorable Ed Pawlowski  
Mayor of Allentown  
c/o Cities for Action  
435 Hamilton Street  
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

Dear Mayor Pawlowski:

Thank you for your November 2, 2017 letter. Acting Secretary Duke asked that I respond on her behalf.

I appreciate your concern and your interest in extending the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations for 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), 8 U.S.C. § 1254a(b). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

Under the INA, for the Acting Secretary to extend the existing TPS designations for Honduras and Nicaragua, she must find that the conditions for the designations continue to exist (*i.e.*, that there has been an environmental disaster resulting in a substantial, but temporary, disruption of the living conditions in the area affected, the foreign country has requested TPS, and the country is temporarily unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals). If the Acting Secretary determines that the conditions for designation continue to be met with respect to each country, the designation must be extended. Conversely, if the Acting Secretary determines that the conditions are no longer met with respect to each country, she is required to terminate the designation. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1254a(b)(1), (3), INA 244(b)(1)(3).

At least 60 days before the current expiration date for a TPS designation, the Secretary of Homeland Security must review conditions in the foreign state and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determine whether the statutory conditions for TPS continue to be met. If the Secretary does not determine that the statutory conditions for the designation are no longer met within this timeframe, an automatic 6-month extension of the designation is triggered.

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

On November 6, the Acting Secretary terminated TPS for Nicaragua because the factors that led to the designation are no longer present. However, to allow for an orderly transition, she delayed the effective date 12 months so it will terminate on January 5, 2019. Additional information on the termination of TPS for Nicaragua can be found in a notice that will be published in the *Federal Register*.

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

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Francis Cissna".

L. Francis Cissna  
Director