

About HIAS

Founded in the 1880s to help resettle Jews fleeing persecution, HIAS is the world's oldest refugee agency. Today, guided by our Jewish values and history, we bring more than 130 years of expertise to our work providing services to all refugees in need of assistance, regardless of their national, ethnic, or religious background.

The Trump administration is slowly phasing out Temporary Protected Status (TPS). This could potentially affect 330,000 individuals who have lived in the United States for years and may otherwise face disease, violence, or other life-threatening conditions in their home countries.

What is TPS and How Does Someone Qualify?

TPS is a **humanitarian immigration status** extended to foreign nationals residing in the United States in the wake of **natural disasters or civil wars** in their home countries.

In order to qualify for TPS, recipients must have been **continuously present in the U.S.** since the effective date their country was designated or re-designated for TPS. Recipients initially come to the United States through a few different routes. Some are in the U.S. on student, employment, or travel visas when a conflict or natural disaster in their home country causes the Secretary of Homeland Security to allow a TPS designation. In some cases, immigrants are here without documentation when a TPS designation is established. Regardless, an applicant must meet certain deadlines, pay associated fees, and pass background checks in order to qualify for TPS protections.

TPS Terminations

In September 2017, **TPS for Sudan** was the first to be terminated under the Trump Administration affecting 450 Sudanese TPS holders in the United States. In November 2017, the Administration eliminated TPS for 2,550 **Nicaraguans** and 50,000 **Haitians**, and in January 2018, the Trump Administration announced termination of TPS for 200,000 **Salvadorans**.

When TPS status is terminated, **recipients must self-deport** by the effective date **or risk forcible deportation**. This is an impossible decision - **to return to a dangerous country or live a life in the United States in fear without legal status**.

Dangerous Conditions

Haitian TPS holders are in the United States as a result of the 2010 **earthquake** that ravaged the country's infrastructure, displaced 1.5 million, and killed at least 220,000. A **cholera epidemic** swiftly followed the earthquake and, exacerbated by Hurricane Matthew in 2016, remains endemic. Additional natural disasters have dampened recovery efforts. The termination of TPS for Haiti has prompted several thousand to [cross the Canadian border](#), where their immigration status is [equally precarious](#).

Nationals from Central American countries comprise approximately 77% of the 330,000 TPS recipients in the United States. TPS was originally granted for three Central American countries - El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua - due to natural disasters. All three Central American countries have since suffered subsequent **natural disasters**, each of which further reduced basic

infrastructure like housing and health care. Exacerbated by persistent poverty, conditions are dire. El Salvador and Honduras additionally experience high levels of [gang and cartel related violence](#) and [extortion](#). They belong to a region which has some of the [world's highest homicide rates](#).

Widespread Economic Impact

TPS holders are legally allowed to work in the United States and their economic contributions to our communities are widespread. TPS recipients have been in the **U.S. for 19 years** on average. [Nearly one third of households](#) of TPS holders from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti have mortgages. **They are parents to more than 275,000 U.S. citizen children.**

They are employed at high rates, [ranging from 69.2% to 83.5%](#) and in a [variety of sectors](#), TPS holders especially contribute to: construction; restaurant and food services; landscaping services; child care; and home health care. The termination of TPS in its entirety would eliminate [\\$45.2 billion from U.S. GDP](#) over a decade, and cause an additional [\\$6.9 billion](#) reduction to Social Security and Medicare over the same period—a significant financial loss of contributions into programs for which TPS holders are not even eligible. These losses would be [most significantly felt](#) in [Florida](#), [New York](#), [Texas](#), Maryland, and Virginia.

The **cost of deporting** TPS holders is estimated at [\\$3.1 billion](#) and would be the [equivalent of deporting the entire population of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania](#).

Legislative Action

Advocates are asking members of Congress to take action and provide a solution for TPS recipients whose lives are in limbo. There are bipartisan efforts underway that would provide TPS holders lawful permanent resident status. Several TPS bills have been introduced in Congress:

- The bipartisan **ESPERER Act of 2017** (H.R. 4184) would provide lawful permanent resident status for TPS holders from Central America and Haiti. Submitted by Rep. Carlos Curbelo (R-FL-26), the ESPERER Act is championed by all of the South Florida representatives.
- Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY-7) introduced the **American Promise Act of 2017** (H.R. 4253) and would allow for lawful permanent status for all TPS holders. The American Promise Act is currently only supported by Democrats.
- The **ASPIRE TPS Act of 2017** (H.R. 4384) would provide an adjustment of status for protection for six-years on a renewable basis with very limited provisions for legal permanent status for all TPS holders. Introduced by Rep. Yvette Clarke (D-NY-9), the ASPIRE TPS Act is currently only supported by Democrats.
- The **TPS Act** (H.R. 4750) in the House would provide an automatic three-year extension for those with TPS status on the date the bill goes into effect; however, unlike the other bills, it would not protect family members of TPS holders. Introduced by Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO), it currently has no co-sponsors.
- The **SECURE Act** (S. 2144) in the Senate, introduced by Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), would allow for all TPS recipients to adjust to legal permanent resident status - including those designated in the future, but is presently only supported by the Democrats.

What Can You Do?

There are a number of ways to support TPS recipients in the United States:

- **Contact your Congressional representatives** and let them know you support a pathway to citizenship for TPS recipients and urge them to find a bipartisan solution to allow TPS holders to remain with their families in the United States.
- You can also help by **spreading the word about TPS**. Use social media to raise awareness and ask your fellow congregants, friends, and family to call their elected officials, too.