

MURIEL BOWSER MAYOR

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

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen Secretary, US Department of Homeland Security 380 Nebraska Avenue NW Washington, DC 20528

January 7, 2018

Dear Secretary Tillerson and Secretary Nielsen:

I urge you to extend the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for El Salvador for 18 months. El Salvador faces expiration of status in March – a development that would have life-threatening consequences for many individuals who call Washington, DC home. We hope that you will take prompt action to avert potential tragedy and extend TPS for El Salvador.

The National Capital Region, which includes Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC, is an economically thriving and diverse region. We welcome residents from all backgrounds, nations, and immigration statuses. Immigrants from TPS designated nations have become integral members of our communities. These residents contribute to our economies, attend our schools and universities, and help our neighborhoods thrive. At over 30,000, our region has the largest population of El Salvadoran TPS recipients in the nation. We know firsthand how these individuals have enriched the culture, diversity, and prosperity of our communities.

Beyond making positive contributions, our residents from El Salvador still lack a safe alternative to the United States and face devastating violence if they are forced to return. If TPS expires for Salvadorans, they will return to communities that cannot accommodate a large influx of residents.

¹ Economic Contributions by Salvadoran, Honduran, and Haitian TPS Holders! The Cost to Taxpayers, GDP, and Businesses of Ending TPS, Amanda Baran and Jose Magaña-Salgado with Tom K. Wong. April 2017. Available < https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017-04-18_economic_contributions_by_salvadoran_honduran_and_haitian_tps_holders.pdf>

As Mayor of Washington, DC, I present to you over 1,000 petition signatures in support of an 18-month extension of TPS for El Salvador. Our residents are committed to the values that have long defined this nation. We hope that you will join us in keeping the American Dream alive, and not turning our backs on those who need our help the most.

Sincerely,

Mayor Muriel Bowser

Washington, DC

Pledge Support for the Extension of Temporary Protected Status for El Salvador

On January 8, 2018, the Trump Administration is issuing a final decision on whether El Salvador should continue to receive the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation. Established two decades ago, TPS allows the nationals of certain countries – countries facing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other conditions of an extraordinary nature – to obtain work permits and continue living here. This program has provided a lifeline to nearly 200,000 Salvadorans nationwide, including over 30,000 Salvadorans in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area.

Our Salvadoran Washingtonians are integral members of our community. If the Trump Administration ends TPS, it would expose these individuals to devastating violence and instability in El Salvador, and undermine the cultural diversity and prosperity of our city, region, and nation.

We are committed to DC Values and the values that have long defined this nation. We call on the Trump Administration not to end TPS designation for El Salvador - and instead extend TPS designation for 18 months.

YES, I am standing up for DC Values and urging the Trump Administration to extend TPS for El Salvador.

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Petitions can be dropped off at the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 332



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March 8, 2018

The Honorable Muriel Bowser Mayor of the District of Columbia 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW #406 Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser:

Thank you for your January 7, 2018 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

I appreciate your interest in the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for El Salvador. The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate a country for TPS and to extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific statutory 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).

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 on the USCIS website and in the notice that was published in the *Federal Register* on January 18, 2018.

The Honorable Muriel Bowser Page 2

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

L. Francis Cissna

Director