



## Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet

Carondelet Center ♦ 11999 Chalon Road ♦ Los Angeles, CA 90049-1524 ♦ 310-889-2100 ♦ Fax 310-476-8735

January 22, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Nielsen,

We, the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, call on you to re-designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Syria to March 31, 2018 and extend the designation for at least another 18 months in order to protect more recently-arrived Syrians from the horrors of war. Those made vulnerable by the violence and tragedies caused by the Syrian war must welcome and protect. We pray that you show compassion in your discernment process. Our backs must not turn on those who have lost so much. As Islamic doctrine teaches us: "They love those who emigrated to them and find not any desire in their hearts of what the emigrants were given, but rather give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. Whoever is protected from the greediness of his own soul, then those will be successful." (Surat Al-Hashr 59:9)

Approximately 5,800 Syrian TPS holders live in the United States today. TPS holders are an integral part of the fabric of our community; they are our neighbors, peacefully living their lives, caring for their families, and contributing to the U.S. economy. Failure to extend TPS for Syria would result in the forcible return of thousands of our neighbors to a country that has been decimated by a war that continues to shock the world's conscience and has produced the largest refugee crisis of our time.

We pray that you heed our call to re-designate TPS for Syria to March 31, 2018 and extend the designation for at least another 18 months. Without an extension, 5,800 Syrians would lose their legal status and face deportation to a nation at war. As people of faith, we are reminded of Leviticus 19:33-34, which tells us: "Any immigrant who lives with you must be treated as if they were one of your citizens. You must love them as yourself, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God." We implore you to think about the moral imperative to love our neighbor and welcome the sojourner, particularly those fleeing violence.

Sincerely,  
The Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet

*Sr. Theresa Kvale*  
Sr. Theresa Kvale, CSJ

*Sr. Suzanne Jabro*  
Sr. Suzanne Jabro, CSJ

*Sr. Angela Faustina*  
Sr. Angela Faustina, CSJ

*Sr. Mary Ann Martin*  
Sr. Mary Ann Martin, CSJ

*Sr. Sandra Williams*  
Sr. Sandra Williams, CSJ

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U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

March 8, 2018

Sister Theresa Kvale  
Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet  
Carondelet Center  
11999 Chalan Road  
Los Angeles, California 90049

Dear Sister Kvale:

Thank you for your January 22, 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 Syria. 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 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).

After carefully considering relevant conditions in Syria and the statutory TPS requirements, Secretary Nielsen decided to extend the TPS designation for Syria for 18 months, through September 30, 2019. Prior to the conclusion of the 18-month extension, the Secretary will review conditions in Syria and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determine whether another extension, a redesignation, or a termination is warranted, in full compliance with the INA. Additional information on the extension of TPS for Syria can be found in Secretary Nielsen's January 31, 2018 announcement of the decision posted on the DHS website, on the USCIS website, and in a notice that will be published in the *Federal Register*.

Sister Theresa Kvale  
Page 2

Thank you again for your letter and interest in these important issues. The co-signers of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. 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". The signature is stylized, with the first name "L." and last name "Cissna" clearly visible.

L. Francis Cissna  
Director