



Senate Judiciary Committee

Hearing “H.R.6, American Dream and Promise Act of 2021”

June 15, 2021

Statement for the record

The Latin America Working Group (LAWG) submits this statement for the record for the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing “H.R.6, American Dream and Promise Act of 2021” on June 15, 2021. As an organization that advocates for more just U.S. policies towards Latin America & the Caribbean and that defends the rights of migrants and refugees, LAWG fully supports H.R.6, American Dream and Promise Act of 2021 and has expressed support for this bill on numerous occasions. With our support and that of many other organizations, H.R. 6 passed the House of Representatives during the 117th Congress.

The importance and urgency of the Senate moving forward its version of H.R.6 cannot be overstated. H.R.6 would provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) beneficiaries. These are members of our communities who have strengthened our society and economy and helped us survive the COVID-19 pandemic. The time to recognize their contributions and their identity as permanent members of our communities is now. H.R. 6 would allow them with a path forward to citizenship and the ability to live and work without fear of deportation.

Under the *Ramos v. Nielsen* and *Bhattarai v. Nielsen* [lawsuits](#), the protection for TPS beneficiaries from Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua has been extended to October 4, 2021. This expiration date is less than six months away. TPS beneficiaries cannot live their lives with uncertainty and fear awaiting the next expiration date of their protections. Congress must act immediately to grant them permanent protections and a pathway to protection urgently. There is no alternative.

Conditions in Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua to which TPS beneficiaries would be returned to if their status expires represent ongoing situations of insecurity, danger, and poverty, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic and two back-to-back hurricanes that devastated the region last year. According to the United Nations, as of June 2021, there were [1.7 million people displaced](#) across the region due to the impacts of Hurricanes Eta and Iota. Governments and international organizations continue to provide humanitarian relief to communities affected by the hurricanes more than six months later, but the assistance is far from what is needed. An estimated [10 million people](#) remain in need of humanitarian assistance across Central America and there are reports from humanitarian organizations that food insecurity will continue to increase. Many [individuals](#) have not yet recovered from the impact of the hurricanes, especially women, girls, and members of Afrodescendant and indigenous communities. The Biden Administration should designate TPS for Guatemala and re-designate it for Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua based on the impacts of the hurricanes but in the meantime, Congress must act to grant permanent protections to TPS beneficiaries.

Dreamers, DED and TPS beneficiaries are essential to this country. They are essential workers, many on the [frontlines during the pandemic](#). They study, run businesses, are homeowners, and are part of the fabric of our communities and our nation. The United States must be a country that lives up to its values of recognizing immigrants as an essential part of our society.



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