

July 22, 2021

President Joseph Biden
Vice President Kamala Harris
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20050

CC: Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas
CC: Secretary of State Antony Blinken

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

The undersigned organizations urge your administration to immediately grant a new Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador and to designate TPS for Guatemala as a consequence of the severe devastation caused by hurricanes Eta and Iota. This letter follows previous petitions from organizations and members of Congress.¹ We acknowledge your administration's decision to grant TPS for other countries including Yemen, Haiti, Burma, and Venezuela, and to raise the importance of providing TPS beneficiaries with a pathway to citizenship. Designating TPS for Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala must be considered as an essential part of the U.S. strategy to address the root causes of migration from Central America. TPS would allow the citizens of these countries to continue living and working in the United States, to support their families in Central America still suffering from the impacts of the hurricanes, and to strengthen those countries' economies --creating positive impacts for communities in the United States and in Central America.

The decision to designate TPS for Guatemala and redesignate TPS for Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua fits squarely within the authority of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State. TPS was created as a statute in 1990 to protect immigrants who are unable to return to their home countries because of situations of armed conflict, extraordinary circumstances which prevent governments from receiving their citizens safely, and natural disasters like the back-to-back hurricanes these countries experienced in November 2020 following a multi-year period of drought. The governments of Guatemala and Honduras have also requested TPS for their citizens due to the impacts of the hurricanes, another necessary condition for the granting of TPS according to U.S. law.

¹ Rep. Velazquez (D-NY) [Letter](#) to DHS Sec. Mayorkas and Sec. of State Blinken, Feb. 2021; Rep. Sires (D-NJ) and Rep. Torres (D-CA) [Letter](#) to President Biden, Jan. 2021; [NGO Letter](#) to President-elect Joseph Biden, Dec. 2020; Senator Kaine, Senator Warner, Senator Cardin, Senator Van Hollen [Letter](#) to Sec. Mayorkas, Dec. 2020

More than six months after the hurricanes, the conditions in Central America including economic damage, loss of homes and livelihoods, widespread and growing food insecurity, and destruction of critical infrastructure, are still more than sufficient to warrant TPS designations. 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.² Governments and international organizations continue to provide humanitarian relief to communities affected by the hurricanes, 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.³ Many individuals have not yet recovered from the impact of the hurricanes, especially women, girls, and members of Afro descendant, and indigenous communities. As a new hurricane season begins, communities that have not yet recovered from hurricanes Eta and Iota will again face the risk of flooding or devastation; indeed, some communities in Honduras have already faced inundation.⁴ A new designation can help stabilize the region while governments and international humanitarian organizations work to provide emergency aid to those harmed by these storms, and already suffering the effects of the pandemic, as well as ongoing violence, poverty, and corruption.

The urgency of granting a new designation for current TPS beneficiaries from Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador in the United States cannot be overstated. 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. Although extending their protections with new designations is not a permanent solution, it will allow TPS beneficiaries to continue to live and work in the United States in the short term and to send remittances to their families, also boosting those countries' economies that have been weakened by the storms and the pandemic. This would also benefit the U.S. economy as the majority of Central American TPS beneficiaries have resided in the United States for at least two decades and represent a strong workforce –many serving as essential workers during the pandemic.⁵

We urge your administration to designate TPS for Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala as soon as possible. While Congress must ultimately act to grant them permanent

² UN OCHA Latin America & the Caribbean Monthly Situation Snapshot, June 8, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2021-06-08%20Monthly%20Situation%20Snapshot%20%28as%20of%208%20June%202021%29.pdf>

³ U.S. AID El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Regional Response, June 3, 2021, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2021_06_03%20El%20Salvador%20Guatemala%20and%20Honduras%20Regional%20Response%20Fact%20Sheet%20%234.pdf

⁴ Bu, Allan and Aguilar, Leonardo, Bordes sin reparar, el preambulo se severas inundaciones en Honduras, Contracorriente, junio 2021, https://contracorriente.red/2021/06/12/bordos-sin-reparar-el-preambulo-de-severas-inundaciones-en-honduras/?utm_campaign=Central%20American%20News&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20newsletter&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=44444444-4444-4444-4444-444444444444

⁵ FWD.us, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) 5 Things to Know, May 26, 2021, <https://www.fwd.us/news/temporary-protected-status-tps-5-things-to-know/>

protections and a pathway to protection, the executive branch can act to extend their protections in the short term. TPS designations must be seen as a part of a more humane and rights-based immigration and foreign policy that you have promised. It can help countries in Central America recover from the back-to-back hurricanes and strengthen immigrant communities in the United States. TPS designations are also critical in the context of increasing climate-related disasters affecting the region. Not extending protections for TPS beneficiaries from Central America would have devastating impacts for TPS beneficiaries, their families, and communities in the United States, and potentially destabilize Central America further.

Signatories

Access Living-Cambiando Vidas
AFL-CIO
African Advocacy Network
African Communities Together
Al Otro Lado
Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Aldea - The People's Justice Center
Alianza Americas
America's Voice
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
American Friends Service Committee
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Amnesty International USA
Arkansas United
Asociación Guatemaltecos sin Fronteras
Asociación Pop No'j
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Augustana Lutheran Church, DC
Beloved Community at Gesu Detroit
Border Kindness
Border Network for Human Rights
Border Workers United
California Sanctuary Campaign
CASA
Casa Alianza de Honduras
Casa de la Cultura El Salvador
Casa Mary Johanna
Casa Yurumein
Catholic Labor Network
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami
Center for Democracy in the Americas
Center for Refugee & Gender Studies
Center for Immigrant Progress

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)
Central American Resource Center CARECEN-SF
Central American Resource Center CARECEN-LA
Central American Resource Center CARECEN-DC
Centreville Immigration Forum
Centro Comunitario CEUS
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
Centro Hispano Riverside Taxes and Insurance
Centro Presente
Centro Romero
Centro San Bonifacio
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America - CRLN
Christ Our Lights Parish
Church World Service
Cielo--Comunidades Indígenas en Liderazgo
Club Francisco Villa
Club Nueva Visión de Cheranastico
Club San Juanico
Club Taji CD Hidalgo
Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans of Virginia
Colectivo Mujeres Transnacionales
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd U.S. Provinces
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
COPAL MN-Communities Organizing Power and Action
Corazon Latino
CRECEN
Detroit Friends Meeting (Quakers)
Diaspora Hondureña International (DHI)
Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Inc.
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Dominican Development Center
Durango Unido
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant (EBSC)
Edu-Futuro
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faith in Public Life
Faith Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Familias Unidas en Acción
Family Action Network Movement
Farmworker Association of Florida
Federacion de Clubes Michoacanos (FEDECMI)
First Lutheran Church Greensboro
First Lutheran Church, Fullerton, CA (ELCA)

Fiscales Indignados
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Gesu Catholic Church Strangers No Longer Circle of Support
Global Crisis Interventions
Global Exchange
Global Labor Justice-International Labor Rights Forum
Haitian Bridge Alliance
HIAS
Hispanic Federation
Hondureños contra el SIDA
Hope Border Institute
Hope CommUnity Center
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Human Rights First
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)
Immigrants Rising
Immigration Hub
Indivisible FL 13
Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI)
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
ISLA: Immigration Services and Legal Advocacy
Jesuit Conference Office of Justice & Ecology
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western MA
Justice in Motion
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Kino Border Initiative / Iniciativa Kino para la Frontera
Latinas enPoder
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)
Latino Commission on AIDS
Latino Policy Forum
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Latinos Progresando
Lawyers for Civil Rights
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Lila LGBTQ Inc.org
Living Hope Wheelchair Association
Louisiana Advocates for Immigrants in Detention
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in PA
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Madison Christian Community
Make the Road New York

Maryland Against ICE Detention (MdAID)
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)
Massachusetts TPS Committee
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
Michigan Refugee Hope
Migrant Center for Human Rights
Mijente
Ministry of Parish Musicians
Minnesota Interfaith Coalition on Immigration
Mission Guatemala USA
Motivation Motivates
Mount Olive Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Movimiento Azul y Blanco New York
Movimiento de Diversidad en Resistencia (MDR)
Multiservicios Hispanos
NAHRA
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Jewish Women
National Day Laborer Organizing Network - NDLO
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Partnership for New Americans
National TPS Alliance
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)
New England ELCA Synod Task Force on Refugees & Migrant
New York Immigration Coalition
Nicaragua Center for Community Action
Nicaraguan American Human Rights Alliance (NAHRA)
Nicaragüenses en el Mundo NEEM
NorCal TPS Coalition
North Texas Dream Team
Office of Latino/Latin America Studies (OLLAS)
ONECA
Oxfam America
Peace Lutheran Church, West Seattle
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Presbyterian Church USA Office of Public Witness
Presente.org
QLatinx
Quixote Center
Racine Interfaith Coalition
Red de Pueblos Transnacionales
Red Jesuita con Migrantes Guatemala

Red Mexicana de Lideres y Organizaciones de Migrantes
Reform Immigration for Texas Alliance
Refugee Immigration Ministry
Refugees International
RITA- Reform Immigration for Texas Alliance
Rural Women's Health Project
Saint Stephen Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, MD
Save the Children
SE Portland Youth Collective
SEIU 32BJ
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Boulder, Colorado
Sierra Pacific Synod
Sister Parish
Sisters of Mary Reparatrix
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team
St. Mary Student Parish
St. Regis Parish Immigration Circle of Support
Ste. Anne de Detroit Strangers No Longer Circle of Support
Strangers No Longer
Sts. Peter and Paul Jesuit Parish-Detroit
The Association of Salvadorans of Los Angeles/ASOSAL
The Chelsea Collaborative
The United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society
The Welcome Immigrant Network
TIRRC- Tennessee Immigrant Refugee Rights
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
UNITE HERE
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United for a Fair Economy
United We Dream Network
University Lutheran Church Social Action
USCRI
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)
WeCount!
Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration
Win Without War
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Witness at the Border
Women Working Together U.S.A
Women's Refugee Commission