

# TPS Basic Facts



Starting in early November, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will decide whether to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to more than 300,000 people who have been living and working legally in the U.S. for years, even decades.

## What is TPS?

TPS is a type of lawful immigration status that provides temporary safe haven to nationals of countries that experience natural disasters, armed conflict, or other extraordinary conditions that make return unsafe. By statute, a country may be designated for up to 18 months at a time, with extensions available so long as unsafe conditions continue. Persons in the U.S. at the time of the original designation are able to apply for TPS and, if they pass criminal and security clearances and meet other requirements, remain and work legally here until the designation expires.

Currently, 10 countries have TPS designations. More than 90 percent of those in the U.S. with TPS are from El Salvador (195,000 people), Honduras (57,000 people), or Haiti (50,000 people). The original designations for these three countries were made many years ago, and have been extended numerous times due to the continuing fragile conditions there. As a result, Haitians with TPS have lived in the U.S. legally for at least 6 years, Salvadorans for at least 16 years, and Hondurans for at least 18 years. *Almost half of TPS recipients from these three countries have lived here more than 2 decades.* By the terms of their most recent extensions, DHS should make a decision whether to again extend TPS for Honduras by November 6th, for Haiti by November 23, and for El Salvador by January 8th.

## Ending TPS is not in our national security interest

Experts agree that conditions in all of the nations that currently are designated for TPS continue to be extremely precarious, and that return of large numbers of their nationals at this time would be destabilizing. Their already-struggling economic health would suffer due to loss of remittances and the returnees would displace current workers, causing an increase in unauthorized migration to the U.S. It is not in the U.S. or regional security interest to increase

instability, depress the economy, and increase unauthorized immigration from these nations. In addition, forcing hundreds of thousands of TPS recipients to return to Central American and other nations will strengthen and further enrich the powerful multinational criminal gangs that prey on returnees. Note that all TPS recipients currently in the U.S. have had to pass an FBI criminal background check every 18 months as part of the renewal process.

## Ending TPS would harm U.S. employers and local economies

Loss of TPS would also be costly for local economies here at home. TPS recipients from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti have a higher labor force participation rate (81 to 88 percent) than the general U.S. population (63 percent). The leading sectors where they work include construction, hotel and restaurant, landscaping, and child care. Large numbers of TPS recipients have worked long enough for their current employers to have developed specialized skills and longstanding relationships. As a result, removing all TPS recipients from the three countries would impose nearly a billion dollars in "turnover costs" and cost about \$45 billion in GDP over a decade. Ending TPS would also put the more than 60,000 mortgages held by TPS recipient families at risk of foreclosure. These costs would be concentrated in the industries and localities where TPS recipients predominate, leading to some dramatic economic losses and consequent loss of revenue to state and local governments. On top of those losses, the federal government would have to pay the cost of arresting, detaining and deporting those who do not leave on their own, estimated to be up to \$3.1 billion.

## Ending TPS would exact a heavy human toll

The human cost would be even more dramatic. TPS recipients from the three countries with the

largest TPS populations have nearly 200,000 U.S. born children, and thousands of U.S. born grandchildren. They provide emotional and financial support to loved ones, and shoulder responsibilities in schools, churches, and civic organizations. More than 1 in 5 were themselves originally brought here as children 15 years old or younger, and have essentially grown up here. Thousands more work caring for children, disabled or elderly adults. No one would benefit if they were now suddenly uprooted and forced to return to countries they left years ago after living and working here legally for such a long time.

## Let them stay

The administration can improve our security, our economy, and our communities by extending TPS, or Congress could do the same by enacting legislation that would permit current TPS recipients to remain. Unfortunately, many people have no idea that their friends, families, employees, neighbors, or constituents may be at risk because the threat to TPS is relatively new.

Campaigns to save TPS by lifting up the voices and highlighting the contributions of TPS recipients are starting to spring up across the nation. TPS recipients are most heavily concentrated in California, Texas, Florida, New York, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Georgia, and Nevada, but there are some TPS recipients in every state. States and local governments can pass resolutions on behalf of their TPS constituents and contact their Representatives and the Administration. Faith groups can do the same on behalf of their members, and businesses on behalf of their workers.

<sup>1</sup>The 10 countries are El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen (Sudan's designation terminates on 11/2/18).



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