



Op-Ed: Why We Must Fight To Save TPS
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What is TPS?

For nearly three decades the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program has provided legal protection to immigrants in the United States fleeing natural disasters, war, and political unrest in their countries of origin. At the end of 2017, the Trump Administration began attacking beneficiaries of the TPS program. In his attacks, President Trump obscenely insulted the TPS beneficiary countries of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Sudan; threatened to terminate the TPS program for all 13 beneficiary countries; and vowed to deport more than 400,000 TPS beneficiaries already living in the United States.

Sadly, these threats were not empty words. President Trump terminated TPS in November 2018, creating a great crisis among families faced with uncertainty about their future. His cancellation of TPS has been challenged but the final outcome is still pending. The administration's actions are nothing less than an unprecedented threat to the American Dream for thousands of immigrants and their children.

The Consequences of Losing TPS

TPS beneficiaries are well integrated into the U.S. economy. They work in local businesses, produce and consume goods, and pay taxes. 50% of them own homes, and many have retirement savings. They are not criminals; in fact, they must pass a rigorous FBI background regularly. If we fail to save TPS, many of these workers, homeowners, and families will return to living in a state of chaos, crisis, and insecurity. The deportation of our TPS community members will not only damage the U.S. economy; family members of immigrants who remain in their home countries will also lose millions of dollars in remittances—money sent from the U.S. to support relatives – causing even more economic instability in countries that people continue to flee.

Families will be separated, including more than 250,000 children born in the U.S. who hold U.S. citizenship. Who will take care of these children? Who will provide them with education and health care? As one U.S. born child of a TPS holder shares, “I’m very proud of my family and feel grateful for how far we’ve come. My parents have worked really hard to get us to where we are today. I feel devastated that my father could be deported at any moment when he has done nothing wrong. Besides our emotional bond, he is the main breadwinner in our family. We would lose our home and wouldn’t be able to continue our education. I don’t know how we would survive without him.”

Beneficiaries of TPS will face dire consequences if they are deported. The 13 TPS beneficiary nations largely suffer from long-lasting civil wars, natural disasters, and repression of the civilian population by militarized governments. Political and economic corruption in many TPS beneficiary

countries creates inescapable poverty as well as daily violence. These are some of the same factors that are forcing the people of Central America to immigrate in caravans today. These immigrants are leaving their countries of origin because they want to seek safety and a better way of life in the United States, with greater opportunity and freedom.

The United States does not gain anything by destroying families with Temporary Protected Status. Beneficiaries have assimilated into the culture of this great country and have achieved the American Dream. They contribute to the vitality of the American economy. Another TPS holder states, “We worked hard for 18 years, raising our children, paying taxes, and even buying our own home – and now the administration wants to take it all away.”

The cancellation of TPS forms one part of a much larger and methodically executed scheme to overhaul the U.S. immigration system, with dangerous consequences for hundreds of thousands of TPS holders and their children who have a legal right to live in the U.S.

A Path to Permanent Residency

For these reasons, organizations that defend the human rights of immigrants have organized to resist the attacks of the Trump Administration, forming alliances at national and regional levels to seek a legal solution that will give TPS beneficiaries a path to permanent residency.

More than 35 TPS committees have been organized at the national level to protect and save the TPS program. At East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, we have organized the TPS Committee Fighting for Our Rights. Our committee will join with hundreds of other TPS holders in Washington, D.C. February 10-12 to meet with legislators and advocate for permanent legal residency for TPS and DACA beneficiaries.

Please join us in pressuring Congress to save TPS by passing the American Promise Act or other legislation that would give a path to permanent residency to all TPS beneficiaries regardless of their origin, race, color, religion or language.

We ask our allies and all those who believe in social justice to:

- DONATE! Make a financial contribution today to help make this campaign possible Donations to EBSC for TPS Campaign: <https://ebsc.nationbuilder.com/>
- Contact your representatives of the House and Senate and ask them to pass the [American Promise Act](#) or other permanent legal remedy for beneficiaries of TPS and DACA.
- **Attend our delegation send-off event and press conference on Thursday, February 7th from 1-2 pm at 2362 Bancroft Way in Berkeley.**
- Share information through phone banks, community forums, faith communities, and social media to educate others about TPS and the need for a permanent legal solution to #KeepFamiliesTogether.