

DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.
11TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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May 11, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Rex Tillerson
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretaries Kelly and Tillerson,

I write you today in support of extending the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Haiti. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) originally designated Haiti for TPS due to “extraordinary and temporary conditions” that prevented Haitians from safely returning home. Returning Haitians prematurely will have a negative impact on both the U.S. and Haitian economies and only increase instability on the island. Renewing TPS for Haiti is in our national interest, and I urge you to renew the designation for an additional 18 months.

On January 12, 2010, Haiti was hit by a devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake, the strongest to hit the country in 200 years. Much of the capital city of Port-au-Prince was destroyed, and the Red Cross estimated that one-third of the population was affected. The United Nations has reported that the earthquake cost Haiti 120% of its GDP.

Less than a year after the earthquake, Haiti was ravaged by a still-unchecked cholera epidemic that has killed approximately 10,000 and affected 900,000. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have called it the “worst [cholera outbreak] in recent history.”

On October 4, 2016, Haiti was hit by the first Category 4 hurricane to make landfall on the island in 52 years. Hurricane Matthew affected more than 2 million Haitians, killing 1,000 people and exacerbating the cholera epidemic. Tens of thousands of homes, schools, crops and livestock were destroyed, causing hunger, malnutrition and deaths in a widely reported food insecurity

crisis. As we approach the 2017 hurricane season, we are deeply concerned that significant weather events will continue to disrupt Haiti's recovery.

Ending TPS for Haiti will hurt the U.S. economy. Haitian TPS holders contribute significantly to our economy, owning small businesses and supporting communities across the nation, especially in New York State, home to the second largest Haitian immigrant community in the country. A recent report issued by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center¹ found that terminating TPS for Haiti would lead to a \$2.8 billion reduction in U.S. GDP over a decade; \$428 million in lost Social Security and Medicare contributions over a decade; \$60 million in turnover costs for businesses; and \$468 million in additional costs to taxpayers in terms of enforcement. Simply put, terminating TPS at a time when our economy needs support runs contrary to our national interest.

In December 2016, both U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of State reviewed country conditions in Haiti and came to the same conclusion: extraordinary and temporary conditions preventing these Haitians from safely returning to the island persist and TPS for Haiti should therefore be renewed. Haiti continues to rebuild from the lingering effects of the 2010 earthquake. Given the continued extremely difficult conditions, including the ongoing cholera epidemic and a food security crisis, I urge you to extend the TPS designation for Haiti for an additional 18 months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dan M. Donovan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
Member of Congress
11th District of New York

¹ See *Economic Contributions by Salvadoran, Honduran, and Haitian TPS Holders*, Immigrant Legal Resource Center (April 2017) at https://www.ilrc.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017-04-18_economic_contributions_by_salvadoran_honduran_and_haitian_tps_holders.pdf.