



Committee on Migration

c/o Migration and Refugee Services, USCCB

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November 9, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, I am pleased to share the following report by the Office of Migration and Refugee Services, entitled "*Haiti's Ongoing Road to Recovery: The Necessity of an Extension of Temporary Protected Status.*"

USCCB's deep concern for individuals with TPS is rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and its experience with welcoming and integrating large populations of immigrants to the U.S. As Catholics, we support justice, the common good, and the human dignity of every person. We are also responding to the call of Pope Francis who exhorts Catholics to act in solidarity with refugees, migrants, and all those seeking safety from the ravages of violence, environmental disasters, and despair.

TPS allows individuals to remain and work lawfully in the U.S. during a period in which it is deemed unsafe for them to return to their home country. Currently, there are an estimated 320,000 individuals living in the U.S. with TPS; many of these individuals have been in the U.S. for years and have careers, home mortgages, and family members with U.S. citizenship. If TPS is not extended, these individuals' lives will be uprooted and their families will face the heartbreaking choice of being separated or returning together to countries where they may suffer protection concerns, intense integration needs, and barriers to success.

For Haiti, one of the several countries designated for TPS, the Administration must make a decision to extend TPS by November 23, 2017. As the following report indicates, while conditions in Haiti are improving, the country is not yet in a position where it can adequately and safely accept return of the estimated 50,000 Haitian nationals who have received TPS. Haiti is still very much in the midst of its recovery and the recent hurricanes have severely compounded the challenges created by the 2010 earthquake. Terminating TPS for Haiti at this time would threaten the safety of those individuals returned, divert already limited resources away from the path to recovery, and undermine the progress that has been made.

We believe our nation has a moral responsibility to provide continued temporary protection until TPS holders' return and reintegration can be safely accomplished. TPS recipients are an integral part of the fabric of our communities. They worship in our churches, they own homes and businesses, and they make important contributions to our economy. Extending TPS for Haiti is both a compassionate and warranted action. It will ensure TPS recipients' continued safety, as well as their ability to legally work and live with dignity. In addition, extending TPS will help facilitate

Haiti's long-term reconstruction as those with TPS will be able to continue to send home remittances to help the country rebuild.

We write in solidarity with Haitians at home and abroad, and we continue to keep these individuals, their families, and all those impacted by natural disaster in our prayers. We ask Catholics and others of goodwill to continue to welcome TPS recipients, along with all immigrants and refugees, into their parishes and communities, recognizing the many contributions of these individuals to our nation. We urge the Administration to provide an 18-month extension of TPS for Haiti to ensure recipients' continued protection while their country rebuilds. Finally, we urge Congress to work in a bipartisan manner to find a legislative solution for TPS recipients who have been in the United States for many years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe S. Vásquez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Most Rev. Joe S. Vásquez
Chairman, USCCB Committee on Migration