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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES CONGRESS TO PROTECT LONG-TIME RESIDENTS FROM HAITI AND EL SALVADOR

Madigan & 18 Other Attorneys General Send Letter to House, Senate Leaders Advocating for Bill to Allow Temporary Protected Status Beneficiaries to Remain

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan, along with 18 other attorneys general, sent a letter urging congressional leaders to protect long-time residents of the United States from being forced to return to dangerous conditions in Haiti, El Salvador and other countries. The letter urges Congress to pass a bill allowing recipients of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) from Haiti, El Salvador and other nations to adjust to permanent resident status.

"Congress must act to protect people who fled extreme hardship and are now contributing to communities across the United States," Madigan said.

Federal law provides for TPS, which offers temporary lawful status to foreign nationals in the United States from countries experiencing armed conflict, natural disaster, or other extraordinary conditions that temporarily prevent their safe return. The Secretary of Homeland Security may designate a particular country for TPS for periods of 6 to 18 months, and can extend these periods if conditions do not improve sufficiently in the designated country.

Recently, the Secretary of Homeland Security decided to terminate TPS designations for Haiti and El Salvador. Haitians were granted TPS status in the wake of the January 2010 earthquake that killed hundreds of thousands of people in Haiti and devastated the nation's already-fragile economy, infrastructure, health system and government. El Salvadorians were granted TPS status in 2001, following a series of natural disasters and ensuing economic and political crises. The designations have been renewed regularly for both groups because previous presidential administrations have found the countries could not ensure sufficient safety for returning nationals.

Madigan and the other attorneys general said thousands of people who were not able to return to their home countries because of natural disasters or armed conflicts live in their states. Over the intervening years, these foreign nationals have become integral members of their communities, having bought homes, started businesses, married, and had children who are U.S. citizens.

"The thousands of TPS beneficiaries who reside in our states are long-time residents who have made substantial contributions to our communities and economies," the letter notes, adding that TPS beneficiaries have more than 275,000 U.S.-born children and contribute more than \$4.5 billion to the United States' gross domestic product.

The termination of TPS for these nations will put hundreds of thousands of people in the difficult position of choosing whether to return to their countries of origin, with or without their children, when their home countries may not be in the position to receive them.

Joining Madigan in sending the letter were the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.

A copy of the letter is [here](#).

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