

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 9, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin,

We write to urge you to extend the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for El Salvador. Not only do the conditions that initially warranted TPS designation for El Salvador in 2001 persist, but serious new humanitarian, economic, and human rights crises compound El Salvador's inability to handle the return of its nationals. The over 200,000 Salvadoran TPS holders currently living in the United States have built deep roots in this country over more than 25 years.¹ Terminating their status would cause immeasurable harm to them, to their U.S.-citizen children and families, and to the American communities and economy they support. Termination of TPS for El Salvador would send these well settled community members to a country beset by documented state-sponsored human rights abuses which does not have the means or capacity to support a diaspora of tens of thousands of people.

If TPS is terminated and there is no legislative or administrative action, Salvadoran TPS holders are at risk of the immediate loss of legal status, deportation, and family separation.

Despite their long-time lawful residence in the United States and strong ties, many Salvadoran TPS holders have no clear path to permanent status. For an individual to adjust their status to become a lawful permanent resident, they must have been admitted or paroled into the U.S. and must also have an immigrant visa available to them, for example through a qualifying relative. Because TPS itself is not considered an "admission," having TPS does not make a person eligible for adjustment of status. In addition, TPS holders who are raising minor U.S. citizen children may not have a qualifying relative, because minor children cannot sponsor their parents for visas. These and other barriers explain why 70% of TPS holders from Honduras, who have been in the United States for just as long as Salvadoran TPS holders, were unable to adjust status before their TPS was terminated last year.²

¹ *Extension of the Designation of El Salvador for Temporary Protected Status*, 90 Fed. Reg. 5953, 5956 (Jan. 17, 2025).

² *Termination of the Designation of Honduras for Temporary Protected Status*, 90 Fed. Reg. 30,089, 30,091 n.24 (Jul. 8, 2025) (estimating that 21,000 out of 72,000 Honduran TPS holders had become lawful permanent residents).

As of March 31, 2025, over 200,000 Salvadorans receive TPS protection in the United States. Many came to the US as minors—approximately 20% of Salvadoran TPS holders arrived in the United States at age 16 or younger.³ They have built small businesses, become skilled workers, and raised children here. Forcing them to leave would mean removal to a country many have never known as adults. More than 150,000 U.S.-citizen children depend on Salvadoran TPS holder parents who are in the U.S. workforce.⁴ The consequences of termination would be devastating for hundreds of thousands of US families.

The economic and social contributions of Salvadoran TPS holders are substantial. 90% are active in the United States workforce, contributing \$5.4 billion to the United States economy annually.⁵ They pay \$1.5 billion annually in combined federal, state, and local taxes, contributing to Social Security and other programs that benefit all Americans.⁶ They work in critical sectors facing chronic labor shortages: construction, building and grounds services, transportation, manufacturing, and food services. Mass detention and deportation of Salvadoran TPS holders would also impose enormous costs on American taxpayers. The Department of Homeland Security estimates the cost of removing an individual to be over \$18,000 per individual meaning the immediate cost of deporting Salvadoran TPS holders would be an estimated \$3 billion.⁷ That is before considering lost tax revenue, reduced workforce productivity, and other unintended consequences for businesses and communities.

The economic foundations in El Salvador are precarious and deteriorating. Maintaining TPS for Salvadorans buffers the economies of both the US and El Salvador. 22.5% of households in El Salvador live in poverty and 7.7% in extreme poverty.⁸ The formal economy currently absorbs only a small fraction of new jobseekers annually. Older deportees who spent their working years in the United States would be effectively ineligible for El Salvador's private retirement pension system, creating a humanitarian crisis within a crisis.

The most urgent basis for TPS extension is the grave human rights situation in El Salvador and the continuing activity of gangs that could put deportees at further risk. Additionally, deporting people to a place where they may face gang related violence may *increase* migratory pressures.

³ See Warren, Robert, et. al., A Statistical and Demographic Profile of the US Temporary Protected Status Populations from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti, *Journal on Migration and Human Security* (2017), available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/233150241700500302>.

⁴ Fwd.us, *TPS Holders from El Salvador Make the U.S. Stronger*, at https://www.fwd.us/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/260408_FWD_TPSforElSalvador-1.pdf.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ See Increasing the Fee for Certain Aliens Ordered Removed in Absentia, 91 Fed. Reg. 29,380 (May 20, 2026) (estimating cost of deportation at \$18,042 per person).

⁸ In brief: *El Salvador poverty levels drop to pre-pandemic levels*, LatinNews Daily (Apr. 2, 2026), at <https://www.latinnews.com/component/k2/item/109552.html>.

- Since March 2022, El Salvador has operated under a state of exception that suspends fundamental constitutional protections and allows for the disappearance of individuals with no due process.⁹ El Salvador now has one of the highest incarceration rates in the world, with over 90,000 people detained and a total prison population of more than 130,000 in severely overcrowded facilities.¹⁰ Documented abuses under the state of exception include: mass arbitrary detentions based on tattoos, forced disappearances; mass trials; detention of more than 3,000 children; and over 500 deaths in custody since 2022.¹¹ President Bukele has himself acknowledged that approximately 8,000 detainees were innocent, while civil society organizations believe the true figure of arbitrary detentions is far higher.¹²
- Critically, deportees from the United States are at direct and documented risk. A Human Rights Watch analysis found that of the more than 9,000 Salvadorans deported from the U.S. between January 2025 and early 2026, only about 10.5% were convicted of a violent or potentially violent crime in the United States. Independent reports document that deported migrants are commonly incarcerated upon arrival in El Salvador without judicial review or due process.¹³
- The international community has consistently condemned the human rights situation in El Salvador. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission have all called for an end to the state of exception and documented the systematic nature of the abuses.¹⁴

The TPS designation for El Salvador expires September 9th, 2026. The statutory standard for TPS stipulates that TPS must be extended if the designated country is unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals.¹⁵ El Salvador clearly meets that standard today. Ongoing state-sponsored human rights violations, a state of exception with no end in sight, economic fragility, collapsed public services, and documented patterns of detaining and disappearing deportees all confirm that El Salvador cannot handle the return of its nationals at this time.

⁹ See Human Rights Watch, World Report 2026, at <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/el-salvador>.

¹⁰ See IACHR continues to monitor the effects of the state of emergency on human rights in El Salvador, at https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/media_center/preleases/2026/066.asp.

¹¹ See Human Rights Watch World Report, *supra* n. 9; IACHR, *supra* n. 10.

¹² See GIPES, *El Salvador at the crossroads: Crimes against humanity in the framework of public security policy* (March 2026), at <https://dplf.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/El-Salvador-at-the-Crossroads-Crimes-against-Humanity-under-the-Public-Security-Policy-Executive-Summary-GIPES-1.pdf>.

¹³ See Human Rights Watch, *US/El Salvador: Deportees Forcibly Disappeared* (March 16, 2026), at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/03/16/us/el-salvador-deportees-forcibly-disappeared>.

¹⁴ See Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, *The State of Exception in El Salvador: Year Five*, at <https://humanrightscommission.house.gov/events/hearings/state-exception-el-salvador-year-five>.

¹⁵ 8 U.S.C. §§ 1254a(b)(1)(B), (b)(3)(C).

We therefore respectfully urge you to extend the TPS designation for El Salvador. Doing so will protect over 200,000 people and preserve American families and communities across the United States by upholding America's commitment to protecting vulnerable individuals from danger.

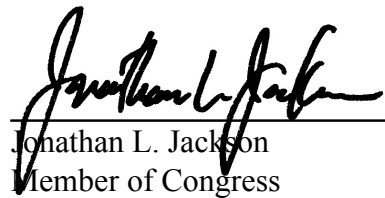
Sincerely,



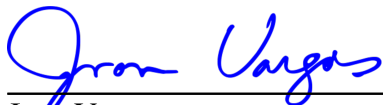
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Member of Congress



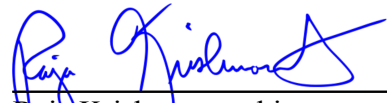
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



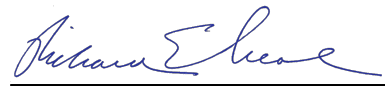
Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



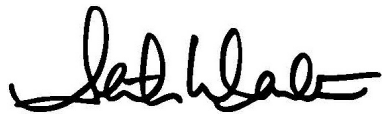
Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



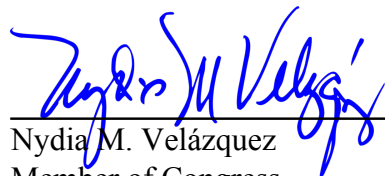
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



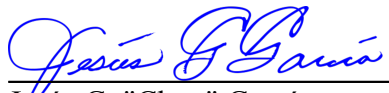
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



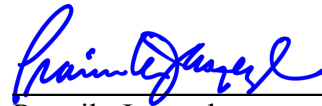
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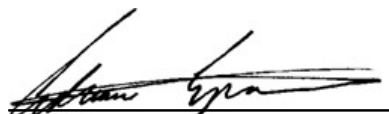
Pramila Jayapal
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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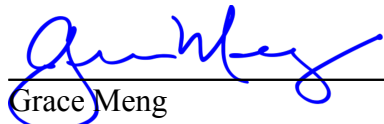
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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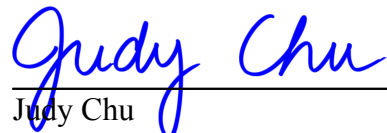
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Judy Chu
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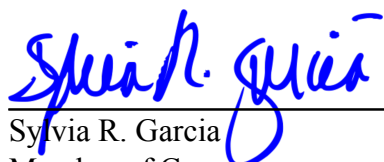
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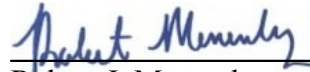
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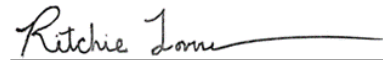
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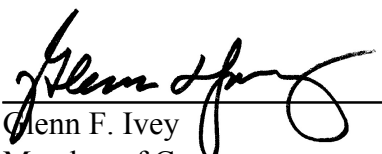
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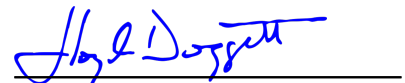
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Adelita S. Grijalva
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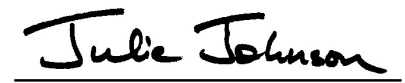
Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



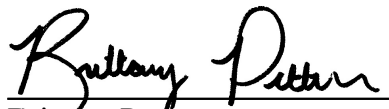
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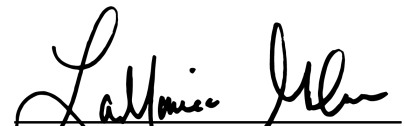
Jamie Raskin
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Patrick Ryan
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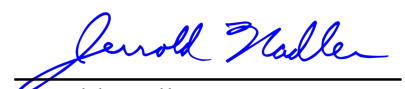
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LaMonica McIver
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Luz M. Rivas
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Jerrold Nadler
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Dina Titus
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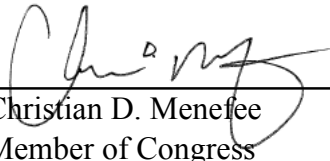
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



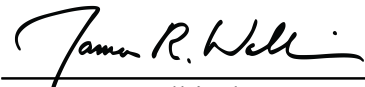
Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



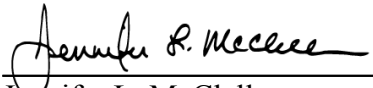
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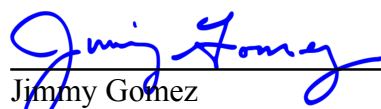
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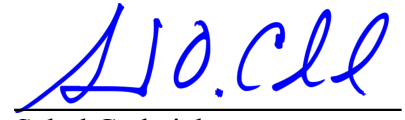
Jimmy Gomez
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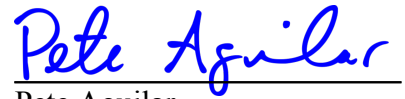
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Pete Aguilar
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Greg Stanton
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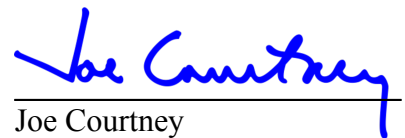
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress




Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



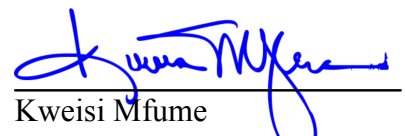
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Kweisi Mfume
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