

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA



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**Statement by Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory Regarding
an Extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
for Persons from Haiti, El Salvador and Honduras**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has long advocated for the reform of our nation's immigration system. The discussions these days about immigration are often difficult, but the Church continues to remind us all that when we speak about immigrants, we are speaking about children of God, made in His image, and thus, also, our brothers and sisters.

There are many parts of our current immigration system that require remediation. The Catholic Bishops have drawn attention to these and have made recommendations to our nation's political leaders accordingly. Today, I want to bring attention to one aspect of our immigration system that requires immediate attention, and that is the program that offers Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to persons from nations facing particular hardships. This program was created as a generous response from the United States to suffering neighbors.

Currently, there are several hundred thousand TPS holders. They are in our country legally. They are authorized to work. They pay taxes and contribute to our communities, our businesses, our parishes. Many have children who are United States citizens. Sadly, for many of them, as our Bishops' Conference reminds us, conditions are such that "they cannot return safely to their home country at this time," and to add to this, the TPS programs for these countries are about to expire. A recent released report from the USCCB raises a serious concern for persons from Honduras and El Salvador and urges extension of the TPS program. The Bishops' Conference is also completing an onsite visit to Haiti, which still suffers the effects of a catastrophic earthquake. Our Conference is forwarding these reports to our government officials. We believe that conditions in Haiti are not favorable at this time, and again urge the extension of this program.

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At this time, I want to add my voice to that of my brother Catholic Bishops in urging President Trump and our Department of Homeland Security to take measures to extend TPS for these countries for another 18 months. I urge the President and the Congress to find a more permanent solution for those hundreds of thousands of TPS holders, who are raising their families here and who have become productive members of our communities.

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