

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

November 8, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Duke  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Duke:

I am writing to request that the Administration grant an 18-month extension of the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Haiti, which expires on January 22, 2018.

Established by statute in 1990, TPS permits the United States to offer temporary humanitarian protection to foreign nationals who are unable to return to safe conditions in their homeland. In the aftermath of Haiti's catastrophic 2010 earthquake, which left more than 220,000 dead and more than 1.5 million displaced, approximately 58,000 Haitian nationals qualified for TPS.

Although Haiti has made important strides towards reconstruction, its capacity to effectively manage repatriation efforts have faced substantial setbacks, including the continuing cholera epidemic and devastating hurricane in late 2016. Additionally, conditions in Haiti were further compounded by the two category five hurricanes – Irma and Maria – that struck in September.

When the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) granted a six-month extension of the TPS designation for Haiti in June, then DHS Secretary Kelly stated that a new extension may not be necessary if Haiti continued its pace of recovery. However, as noted in a recent letter from Haiti's Ambassador to the United States to Acting Secretary Duke, "the unforeseen natural disasters, including Hurricanes Irma and Maria, have significantly delayed the Government's ability to adequately maintain the pace of recovery." The Ambassador's letter also documented that Hurricanes Irma and Maria caused significant damage to Haiti's agriculture sector and related flooding displaced communities throughout the country.

These recent developments exacerbate already fragile conditions in Haiti. As the Department of Homeland Security's own internal memorandum from April 2017 outlined, an estimated 30 percent of the population – approximately 3.2 million people – suffer from food insecurity and 40 percent of the population lacks access to fundamental health and nutrition services. Given the ongoing complications in Haiti, an extension of TPS is fully warranted.

In closing, I urge you to grant an 18-month extension of the TPS designation for Haiti. Thank you for attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Cardin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Benjamin L. Cardin  
Ranking Member

CC: The Honorable Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State