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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen
Secretary,
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
650 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

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BY EXEC SEC
2018 MAY -1 AM 7:25

Dear Secretary Nielsen,

As you approach the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) expiration date for the people of Honduras, we urge the administration to take the extraordinary crisis in Honduras into account and renew its TPS designation for the maximum eighteen months.

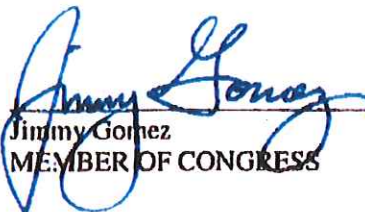
As you know, in 1998, the people of Honduras faced a series of natural disasters that left their country devastated. Hurricane Mitch caused extensive damage that destroyed roads, bridges, and agricultural plantations vital to the economy. It claimed the lives of over 10,000 people and the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch setback the country for more than 50 years¹. In addition, basic social infrastructure systems such as the health, water, and sanitation services were severely damaged and have yet to recover.

Despite substantial efforts made by the United States and the international community to improve conditions in Honduras, the damage of these cataclysmic events compounded by the residual effects of disease, violence, and poverty have resulted in a stagnant recovery. Conditions simply have not sufficiently improved to safely and productively reintegrate TPS recipients in their home communities.

In fact, conditions have substantially worsened in recent months. Well-documented irregularities in Honduras' November 26, 2017 presidential election led to massive street protests, and the government responded with excessive use of force. According to the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Honduran security forces killed sixteen protesters. Unfortunately, the government's failure to resolve post-election crisis has only increased the instability that continues to plague the country.

Honduran TPS recipients are hardworking contributors to the American economy and do not represent a risk to public safety. Giving Honduras more time to rebuild and recover from the extraordinary events will protect the lives of vulnerable people and strengthen our local communities. We urge you to consider these factors as you make a decision in renewing TPS for Honduras and await your response.

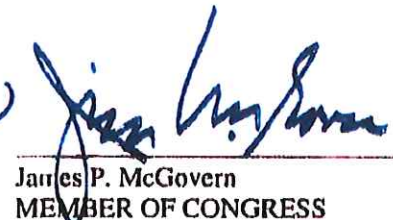
Sincerely,



Jimmy Gomez
MEMBER OF CONGRESS




Norma J. Torres
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

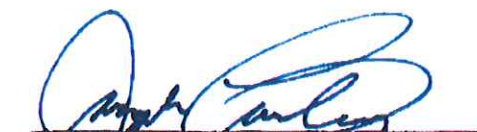


James P. McGovern
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

¹ Christian Aid, *In debt to disaster: What happened to Honduras after Hurricane Mitch*, October 31, 1999,
<https://reliefweb.int/report/honduras/debt-disaster-what-happened-honduras-after-hurricane-mitch>

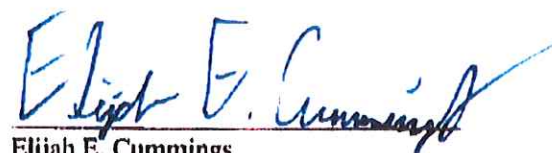

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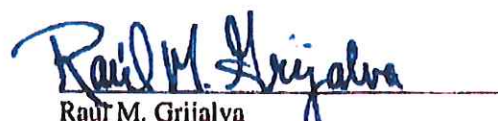

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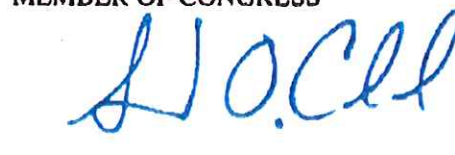

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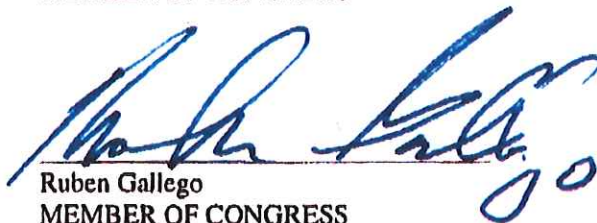
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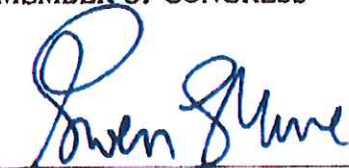
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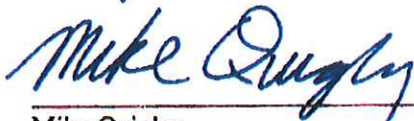
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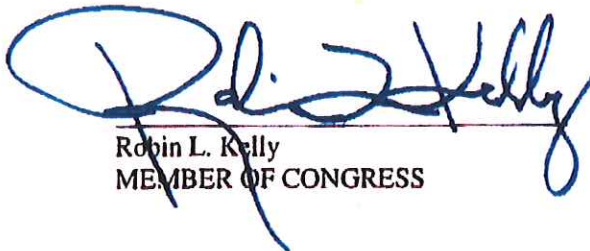
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

June 7, 2018

The Honorable Jimmy Gomez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gomez:

Thank you for your April 30, 2018 letter. Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate a country for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and to extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific statutory criteria. *See* Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

Prior to the current expiration date for an existing TPS designation, the Secretary of Homeland Security reviews conditions in the foreign country and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determines whether the statutory conditions for TPS continue to be met. Under the INA, if the Secretary determines that the conditions for designation continue to be met with respect to a given country, the Secretary extends the designation. But if the Secretary determines that the conditions are no longer met with respect to that country, she is required to terminate the designation. Additional information regarding TPS designations is available in the *Federal Register* and on the USCIS website. Recent TPS decisions are the subject of ongoing litigation; therefore, we are unable to comment further.

Thank you again for your letter and for your interest in this important matter. The co-signers of your letter will receive separate, identical responses. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LFC", written over a horizontal line.

L. Francis Cissna
Director