

Journey for Justice Protect TPS

President Trump's decision to end Temporary Protected Status for hundreds of thousands of lawfully-present migrants poses a threat. It will separate families and devastate communities where we have put down deep roots. And it threatens unknown consequences for our home countries of El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, and Sudan.

But the crisis also presents an opportunity. TPS holders who have lived in immigration purgatory in America for years are now fighting to remain in their adopted country. They are fighting for political equality, self-determination and even citizenship. And as they defend themselves and their families, they are leading the way in a struggle that could transform the landscape for immigrant rights in the United States.

TPS holders have launched a historic campaign to elevate our voices, to rally support, and to build political power. We call it the Journey for Justice.

What is the Journey for Justice?

The Journey for Justice is a voyage across U.S. by more than 50 TPS holders and our families, members and leaders of the National TPS Alliance. We are fathers, mothers, children, drivers, construction workers, homeowners, service industry workers and others.

Beginning this summer, we will lift our voices against the termination of TPS, the cruel dehumanization of families at the southern border, and against the criminalization of immigrants throughout the United States. We will remind our adopted land that we are vital to the life of this country — that we belong here and deserve to stay.

For over two months, TPS families will ride a bus across the country and on our way, we will stop to participate in vigils, community assemblies, know-your-rights workshops, forums, roundtable discussions, concerts, demonstrations, leadership-development activities and meetings with political candidates and elected officials.

The justice riders will visit small towns and large cities and traverse deserts, valleys and mountains, sharing their stories and speaking truth to power.

Why the Journey for Justice?

The riders work every day to make a more prosperous and perfect union. We stand against the cruel separation of children and parents at the border and beyond. We believe that if we allow the Trump administration's illegal termination of TPS to go unchallenged, all of its immigration policies foreshadow a disastrous future for our families and our country.

Our families face an imminent threat. We live under multiple dimensions of uncertainty. We have witnessed the barbaric, cruel and inhumane separation of kids from their moms and dads, and we know that our families are next. But rather than succumbing to fear, we are raising our voices — not just for ourselves, but for all those who suffer. We ride not only to save TPS, but for our undocumented spouses, our DACA-mented children, our U.S.-born children, and our extended families who continue to migrate here, despite the risks, out of necessity and violence.

We ride for a future with a path to equality for everyone. A future of shared prosperity. And we fight to save the soul of the country.

If we cannot protect well-established, documented immigrants with TPS and DACA, we will have a hard time winning protections for anyone else. Trump and his Attorney General Jeff Sessions are leading the country down a slippery slope. They are nakedly pursuing a strategy that seeks to make life in the United States dangerous, miserable and ultimately impossible for those who are non-white and foreign-born.

The fight for TPS is fundamental if we are to keep beating heart of immigrant America alive.

TPS reflects our country's highest values. It reflects the best it can be, when we extend a lifeline to migrants who cannot return to their home countries because of war, political turmoil, natural disasters or other reasons. TPS is a precious opportunity — a chance to live and work in our country without fear of arrest or deportation.

The fight for TPS is also a test of American values. The reasons people come to the United States are not always the reasons they deserve to remain. Circumstances change. As people integrate themselves into the social, economic and cultural fabric of our country, establishing roots and mixed-status families, they gain the right to enjoy the fruits of their labor, and the right to have a voice about their families' future. If those values professed by this country are true, then the illegal termination of TPS cannot stand.

Why Save TPS?

Xenophobes and bigots have long claimed that migrants don't pay taxes, commit more crimes and are a burden to society. These are myths belied by study after study showing that migrants are hard-working, economy-boosting, tax-paying workers who commit less crime than the native-born and don't burden social-welfare programs because they are largely ineligible for benefits. In fact, [studies show](#) that TPS holders contribute \$690 million each year into Social Security and that our country would lose about \$4.5 billion each year in gross domestic product if TPS holders are deported.

TPS recipients have done everything society has asked of them. We undergo a criminal background check every 18 months. We pay taxes and hold jobs, go to school and church and raise beautiful and strong families. We are fully integrated into our communities and have become an essential part of the vibrant tapestry of the United States. We represent no threat to anyone.

And yet we have come under attack by the Trump Administration. The administration ignored warnings from its own embassies about the dangers for TPS recipients in their home countries. It overlooked the fact that cities like Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula and San Salvador have the highest murder rates in the hemisphere. It disregarded the assessments by governments in these countries about the harm that mass deportations of TPS recipients would do to safety and their economies. Furthermore, this administration has shamelessly disregarded and marginalized over 270,000 citizens who are the children of TPS parents. The separation of 2,300 children from their parents has caused so much turmoil and devastation to families and to the soul of our country. Now imagine 270,000 torn from their parents.

Why Should ALL immigrants Support the Journey for Justice?

The attacks against people with TPS — the TPSianos — are part of a broad war of attrition against non-white migrants in the United States. President Trump is now working to make life miserable for all migrants of color, including those with lawful status or mixed family homes.

No immigrant is safe in our country anymore, and no person of color is safe from being treated as if she doesn't belong. This is the nativists' strategy. First they said they only wanted to attack and deport so-called "criminals." This framing cast a cloud of suspicion on all immigrants. After they normalized the idea that all criminals must be deported, they began to expand the definition of "criminal" to include more and more people. Then they went after the undocumented, then the DACA and TPS recipients. Then it was legal permanent residents, and now they are preparing to attack naturalized citizens.

But here is the good news. This strategy only works if we succumb to it. We must tell our adversaries that we don't hate them and we don't fear them either. To defend ourselves effectively, fear must be overcome. And this is what we intend to do with our Journey for Justice. Fear dissipates when we are together and when we understand that an attack against one is an attack against everyone. And at the same time, we will liberate America from its fear of immigrants.

We recognize that our political context is defensive in nature. With the realities of Congress, the president, and now the changing supreme court, amnesty and legalization for all 11 million undocumented people is highly unlikely. In order to be ready for that future fight, we will hold this line, and defend TPS, DACA, family unity, Sanctuary, the right to Asylum. By defending the ground won by the communities of activists that came before us, we will hold the ground from which we will continue to fight for the real solutions we all deserve.

What Part of Temporary Don't You Understand?

For the last 20 years, the federal government has regularly examined whether conditions in home countries of TPS holders justified extending their protected status. TPS for Hondurans has been reviewed 14 times since it began after Hurricane Mitch in 1999. Thirteen reviews for El Salvador have taken place since the earthquakes of 2001. And Haitian TPS has been reviewed four times following the worst earthquake in the country's history in 2010.

All the governments of countries with TPS beneficiaries have stated that they cannot adequately handle a sudden surge of deportations. They cannot guarantee safety and prosperity for TPS deportees and their families. And the TPS provision of the 1990 Immigration Act does not indicate that it is OK for the government to deport TPS holders even when the governments of those countries are saying that the forced removal would further destabilize the economy and safety for everyone.

After renewing TPS, in some cases for more than 20 years, it is no longer temporary. In fact, the lives of human beings are not temporary. People grow roots in the places where they live and work. And the reasons why we left our countries are no longer the only reasons why we want to stay in our adopted homeland. We invite you to support our efforts to stay.

The Rights of TPS Holders Are Worker Rights

Before being migrants or TPSianos, we are workers. Our participation in the labor force ranges from 81 to 88 percent, well above the rate for the total US population (63 percent) and the foreign-born population (66 percent). The TPS workforce is pivotal for five leading industries: construction (51,700), restaurants and other food services (32,400), landscaping services (15,800), child day care services (10,000), and grocery stores (9,200). We are also entrepreneurs: About 27,000, or 11 percent, of those in the labor force are self-employed. We create jobs for ourselves and r others.

The U.S. enjoys the fruits of TPSiano labor. Many of us TPS holders are union members. We have fought alongside US-born workers for living wages, representation in workplaces and safe and healthy working conditions. Without TPS, unions stand to lose thousands of members.

We, the TPS workers do not accept the idea that the rights of U.S. workers are in tension with the rights of migrants. We reject the idea that to make things better for some, other must be miserable. This is why the Journey for Justice will seek to lift the value of labor and workers' rights for everyone.

America First, or Shared Prosperity?

Even though our countries of origin face immense challenges, and cannot guarantee safety and prosperity for everyone, they are NOT, despite what Trump says, "shithole countries." Our children and grandchildren must understand this, because the message sent by President Trump is meant to inflict damage on the self-esteem of an entire people. We hope that one day migration will be a choice and not the only alternative to escape violence and extreme poverty. Prosperity requires investment, more jobs with better wages and working conditions, strong institutions to administer justice, the end of corruption and exploitation, and better education and job training. It also demands precisely what Trump seeks to expel: a strong, powerful, and vibrant diaspora community living in the United States that is capable of building mutually beneficial international ties to the betterment of the entire region.

The TPS disaster reflects a shared failure that implicates not just the countries of origin, but also the United States. Political violence in El Salvador was long perpetrated by the powerful classes there — but subsidized by the U.S. government. MS-13 is not a Salvadoran gang; it is a U.S.-born criminal enterprise.

Because all governments have failed TPS holders and other migrants, they should work together to protect and integrate the families that have fallen victim to their disastrous policies. The solution to global migration is shared prosperity. The America-first approach will not encourage democracy, prosperity and safety. Ending TPS will only exacerbate the cycle of poverty, violence and migration. TPS families want to see a prosperous, just, dignifying and free América. We already contribute to the economic well-being of our adopted homeland and countries of origin. We simply ask that all governments emulate our example.