



EL CENTRO
De Igualdad Y Derechos



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Department of Homeland Security Announces Termination of Program that Protects Thousands of Immigrants

Over 2,500 Nicaraguans have been given 14 months to leave the United States, while another 300,000 immigrants anxiously await DHS' announcement to determine their fate.

Albuquerque, N.M. - Department of Homeland Security announced late Monday, that it will not renew Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 2,500 Nicaraguans, and deferred a decision for 57,000 Hondurans.

TPS protects over 300,000 Central American and Haitian immigrants who have lived and contributed to the U.S. for decades.

DHS announced the cancellation of TPS for Nicaraguans, who came to the country unlawfully after Hurricane Mitch devastated Central America in 1998, after Secretary of

State Rex Tillerson sent a letter stating protection for these immigrant was no longer needed.

A decision for 57,000 Hondurans was deferred to no later than November 23, stating “that additional information is necessary” to determine whether conditions that necessitated TPS are still existent. Administration officials did not mention the 200,000 Salvadorans and 50,000 Haitians whose TPS status is set to expire early next year.

TPS was enacted by the Immigration Act of 1990 as a way to provide immigration relief to foreign nationals whose country was plagued with natural disasters or armed conflict.

Martha Laura Garcia Equal Justice Works Attorney Fellow for New Mexico Immigrant Law Center

It is because of programs like TPS that many of our clients are able to start fresh in a place where they feel safe, welcome, and supported. It is through these types of programs that we are able to serve and advise our clients. The termination of TPS for Honduras and Nicaragua, to us, demonstrates, that the Administration is no longer considered international safety and stability a priority. While we will continue to fight with our clients, we hope that this decision, and the other recent changes to immigration policy, serve as a wake-up call for immigrant rights activist nationwide and ultimately lead to a comprehensive policy reform which truly represents the welcoming values upon which this country was created.

María José Ramos Villagra Communications Organizer at El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos

“Since the beginning of his administration, Trump has sent the message that he aligns with a White Supremacist agenda. This decision is yet another attack on our immigrant and refugee communities. My family escaped El Salvador during the civil war and were able to set roots, contribute to our communities and economy thanks to TPS. Families like mine left their home countries because of humanitarian crises and settled into our new communities in the United States. We will continue fighting in DC and locally to protect and defend the rights of all New Mexicans, regardless of their country of origin or their immigration status. We will make sure that our families have all the tools to exercise our rights to protect our loved ones.”

Gabriela Hernandez, executive director for NM Dream Team and southwest organizer for United We Dream, said,

“Last night’s decision was another anti-immigrant attack that will impact thousands of Nicaraguans who have relied on this protection to safeguard them from being deported to a country that is still experiencing extreme violence and instability. The termination of the TPS program takes away the legal stay of people with deep rooted ties in the United States economically and socially as its recipients are parents to 275,000 U.S. Citizen children.

“The decision ignored recommendations from US Chamber of Commerce [request](#) to extend the program citing the strong economic impact TPS recipients have in the workforce and economy and how the termination of the program will [cost](#) employers nearly \$1 billion in immediate turnover costs. The decision by DHS was made on the grounds of a white-supremacist agenda that works against the self-interest of the United States and deeply impacts and disrupts global economies.”

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Listo NM, is an Albuquerque-based collaborative of nonprofit organizations– including [El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos](#), [NM Dream Team \(NMDT\)](#), [Encuentro](#), and the [New Mexico Immigrant Law Center \(NMILC\)](#)– focused on supporting immigrant integration statewide and related support programs, services and advocacy, ensuring low-income immigrants have access to social and legal services for Immigration and Administrative Relief, to foster leadership development and to promote economic and civic engagement in immigrant communities.