The undersigned Cities for Action (C4A) mayors and county executives urge your administration to redesignate and extend the eligibility period for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Venezuela, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Cameroon, and Nepal and designate TPS for Guatemala, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritania, and Nigeria.

As you know, these countries are facing severe political and security emergencies, exacerbating a variety of conditions previously wrought by natural disasters, extreme political unrest, armed conflicts, and other crises. Indeed, the conditions in these countries are well documented, including in the U.S. Department of State’s most recent 2022 Human Rights Reports. These extraordinary circumstances have increased the number of immigrants escaping these life-threatening conditions and now living in our communities who need the vital temporary relief that TPS provides. That relief allows recipients to live safely and securely; keeps families together; and, through work authorization, provides immigrants the opportunity to sustain themselves, their families, and their communities back in their home countries.

As you know, TPS is designed to protect individuals from being deported to countries where they would be in danger, but it also has the benefit of helping those countries recover. Work authorization contributes to keeping remittances high, while also avoiding the destabilizing impact of forced returns of large numbers of its nationals at a time of heightened vulnerability. Meanwhile, TPS redesignations and designations contribute to the broader regional migration strategy, in part by ensuring that those seeking protections in the U.S. have their claims heard expeditiously. This helps to clear the years-long asylum case backlog as individuals transition to TPS and those with open court cases close them faster. In this way, TPS is an important tool toward reducing years-long wait times that some experts have argued has been a pull factor.

TPS redesignations and designations for these countries are also good for our communities and our nation as a whole. Extending TPS protections with new designations will allow TPS beneficiaries to continue to live and work in the U.S., which would also benefit the U.S. economy. TPS protections would add eligible workers to the workforce at a time of tight labor markets across the country and take pressure off the social safety net by allowing beneficiaries the ability to more fully provide for themselves and their families.
We also cannot forget that current TPS beneficiaries and other immigrants have worked to ensure access to essential services that keep the economy moving, including recently during the COVID-19 pandemic. Immigrants have a significant presence in vital sectors of the economy, including healthcare, construction, manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture. They fill crucial gaps in the workforce, creating greater economic activity and productivity, which helps our communities grow. TPS will be key to this continued growth as it ensures that our immigrant residents feel secure in their ability to work and to continue living together with their families.

Moreover, TPS is a powerful tool in working toward racial justice in our communities. We commend the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to advancing racial equity in the U.S., and urge you to examine the ways in which TPS designations could address some of our current immigration system’s racially inequitable outcomes. Immigrants of color are disproportionately detained, receive higher bond costs, face racist treatment within detention centers, and are more likely to be subject to deportation. As a result, immigrants of color are often hesitant to utilize public benefits for which they are eligible or even to seek out immigration legal services for fear that doing so could lead to negative immigration consequences. TPS would begin to improve these disparities by the sheer fact that it would protect beneficiaries from detention and deportation.

As city and county leaders, the safety and wellbeing of our residents is of utmost importance. We recognize that TPS is one way the Biden-Harris Administration can protect many well-established residents with deep ties to our communities through their families, jobs, and homes as well as help newer arrivals establish themselves and find economic independence. We ask you to recognize the extraordinary hardship that forcing individuals to return to their home countries would cause as well as the social and fiscal impacts that result from separating families and removing workers in our communities during a time of a historic labor shortage. We also encourage you to consider the worsening humanitarian crises in countries not yet designated for TPS. Therefore, we urge the Biden-Harris Administration to redesignate and extend the eligibility period for TPS for Venezuela, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Cameroon, and Nepal and designate TPS for Guatemala, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritania, and Nigeria. Thank you for your partnership and we look forward to working with you on these issues.

Sincerely,

1. Mayor Eric Adams, New York, NY
2. Mayor Brandon Johnson, Chicago, IL
3. Mayor Todd Gloria, San Diego, CA
4. Mayor Michelle Wu, Boston, MA
5. Mayor Damon Seils, Carrboro, NC
6. Mayor Tim Kelly, Chattanooga, TN
7. Mayor Patti Garrett, Decatur, GA
8. Mayor Mike Johnston, Denver, CO
9. Mayor John J. Bauters, Emeryville, CA
10. Mayor Joseph V. Schember, Erie, PA
11. Mayor Lioneld Jordan, Fayetteville, AR
12. Mayor Laura Lewis, Ithaca, NY
13. Mayor Karen Bass, Los Angeles, CA
14. Mayor Craig Greenberg, Louisville, KY
15. Mayor Jacob Frey, Minneapolis, MN
16. Mayor Wayne Messam, Miramar, FL
17. Mayor Ras J. Baraka, Newark, NJ
18. Mayor Alix Desulme, North Miami, FL
19. County Executive David Coulter, Oakland County, MI
20. Mayor Frank C. Ortis, Pembroke Pines, FL
21. Mayor Jim Kenney, Philadelphia, PA
22. Mayor Ed Gainey, Pittsburgh, PA
23. Mayor Eduardo Martinez, Richmond, CA
24. Mayor Melvin Carter, Saint Paul, MN
25. Mayor Erin Mendenhall, Salt Lake City, UT
26. Mayor Matt Mahan, San Jose, CA
27. Mayor Alan Webber, Santa Fe, NM
28. Mayor Gleam Davis, Santa Monica, CA
29. Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Somerville, MA
30. Mayor Mike Ryan, Sunrise, FL
31. Mayor Katie Rosenberg, Wausau, WI
32. Mayor Michael T. Foley, Westbrook, ME
33. Supervisor Jim Provenza, Yolo County, CA