



May 16, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Rex Tillerson
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretaries Kelly and Tillerson,

As an employer of Haitian immigrants, I am writing to support the extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for over 50,000 Haitians living in the U.S. since the 2010 earthquake, including the over 4,000 who reside in Massachusetts. My skilled nursing facility, Bethany Health Care Center, depends every day on the hard work of Haitian immigrants, who not only make up 6% of our dedicated workforce, but are also our friends, neighbors, and colleagues. Losing these staff members would have harmful impacts on our facility, our community, and health care facilities across the state of Massachusetts. We strongly urge you to renew TPS for Haitians, especially in light of the ongoing humanitarian emergency in the country.

Our long-term care facility provides high quality care for 169 elderly, frail residents, and we are dependent on our devoted staff to provide this care and keep our residents safe. If the TPS program is allowed to expire on July 22nd our health care facility will lose essential staff members, whose work authorization would lapse immediately. We would have to devote scarce time and resources to re-hiring for these and would lose individuals whose skills and dedication we have relied on for years. We have dependable, full-time staff members who start their work day in our facility at 4:30am. They never call-out from work and always maintain a cheerful disposition. We would also lose 5 skilled Certified Nurse Aides. Massachusetts is experiencing a severe shortage of qualified nurse aides for all of its long-term care and home care organizations across the state, and we would not be able to immediately or even quickly replace the loss of these 5 Aides. Per the Massachusetts Senior Care Employment Survey of October 2016, there are more than 2,900 vacant CNA positions in long-term care facilities across the state of MA. We have had unfilled CNA positions in our facility for over one year. Losing our Haitian CNAs at this time puts the safety of our elderly, frail residents at risk.

For my employees losing TPS and their families, the consequences would be even more dire. At least 83% of the Haitian TPS employees working at our facility pay a significant amount of support for relatives. Terminating these employees and sending them back to Haiti where they do not have homes or jobs would just be placing more families at risk of living in poverty.

We were also dismayed to learn recently that, instead of highlighting stories from employers and community members like us who count on Haitian immigrants, DHS is now collecting statistics on crimes committed by Haitian TPS holders. We know that this does not reflect our experience of working alongside Haitian immigrants every day. It targets only one nationality in a discriminatory way and fuels unjust stereotypes against our neighbors. Our Haitian employees, friends, and neighbors are not dangerous people who drain public resources – they contribute to all of our social wellbeing. They are co-workers, tax-payers, and important members of our health care family.

We ask you to take our experiences into account when you decide whether or not to renew TPS for Haiti, and that you please not make a decision that will result in such grave losses to our economy, our businesses, and our communities.

Sincerely,



Sr. Jacquelyn McCarthy, CSJ

CEO/Administrator

Bethany Health Care Center / Bethany At Home

A Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston