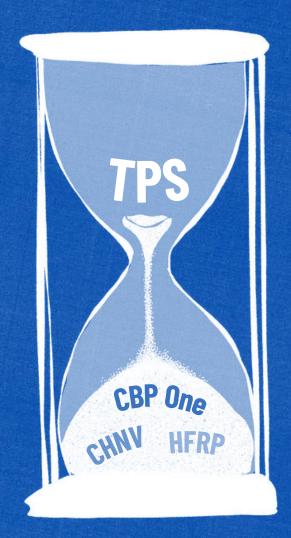
# A CRITICAL HOUR FOR HAITIAN IMMIGRANT JUSTICE:



Community Testimony and Policy Solutions
Amid Relentless Racist Attacks on TPS
and Humanitarian Parole





# **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**



Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees ("HWHR") was founded in 1992 to respond to the refugee crisis faced by Haitian immigrants in the U.S. and Guantanamo Bay. Over the years, HWHR has provided support to thousands of families who sought asylum in the U.S. after being persecuted in Haiti. With a transnational approach, the organization has promoted climate justice and engages individuals and communities in various solidarity response projects, including the Birthright Campaign in the Dominican Republic to combat anti-Haitianism and statelessness, water justice to address increased droughts in Haiti, and relief for Haitian victims during and in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters. Currently, HWHR provides culturally competent programs that include immigration-related screenings and referrals, community education, supportive services, and healing-centered community organizing. Through education, community organizing, leadership development, and collective action, HWHR members empower themselves as they struggle for social, economic, and racial justice. HWHR members engage in collective efforts and movement work to combat exclusion, oppression, and institutionalized racism that impacts their lives.



**TakeRoot Justice ("TakeRoot")** partnered with HWHR to conduct this research. TakeRoot provides legal, participatory research and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic, and social oppression. TakeRoot's Participatory Research and Policy team partners with and provides strategic support to grassroots community organizations to build the power of their organizing and advocacy work. TakeRoot utilizes a participatory action research model in which low-income and excluded communities are central to the design and development of research and policy.

# A NOTE ON OUR LANGUAGE

In our work, Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees uses the term refugee as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention to refer to someone who is unable to return to their country of origin due to warranted fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political belief or membership of a particular social group. We emphasize that our use of the term refugee is intentionally different from that of U.S. federal agencies, which use the term as a narrow legal status that limits the rights of global refugees.

Further, we reject the sole use of the term migrant as an umbrella term as it has long been used by the U.S. government, because of the deliberate use of this term to minimize the extent to which people are forced to leave their homes, especially populations from specific countries. As used by the U.S., migrant is a strategic legal term that ultimately narrows the scope of asylum eligibility of refugees by suggesting that migrants are not eligible for asylum. In this report, we use the phrase refugee, asylum seeker and migrant, which is meant to avoid any confusion when discussing immigration policy while being inclusive and illustrative of the breadth and dignity of the refugee experience and rejecting the brutality of institutionalized racism and its strategic verbiage.



# INTRODUCTION

Haitian refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the United States are being subjected to a catastrophe manufactured by the federal government. The Trump administration has sought to strip Haitians of immigration statuses and protections they applied for, were granted and rely on. To eliminate their right to work. To impose fear and extreme precarity in their lives from one day to the next. To strip them away from their families, homes and communities in the United States and to a country in which they face certain, extreme danger: a country this same administration identifies as dangerous and unsafe.

The administration eliminated the CHNV Parole Program, a humanitarian parole program established to allow citizens from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela to seek humanitarian relief in the United States. The administration also terminated the Haitian Family Reunification Parole program, which had been designed to facilitate family reunification, instead threatening to separate families and forcing parents to make impossible decisions about leaving U.S. citizen children behind. They also terminated the use of the CBP One app, which had allowed people to schedule appointments to enter the United States at the southern border, transforming it instead into a self-deportation mechanism that capitalizes on the vulnerabilities created by their fearmongering. Eliminating these programs abruptly terminated access to apply for work permits and stripped legal status from hundreds of thousands of people.

The administration attempted to abruptly cut short Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti, despite the ongoing conditions in Haiti that make returning unsafe, with Human Rights Watch saying that "[p]eople should not be deported or otherwise returned to Haiti, where overlapping humanitarian, security, and public health crises endanger lives, and where they face a high risk of violence with no effective access to protection or justice." The administration sought to end TPS on August 3, 2025, six months short of an extension that the Biden administration had granted. Even though successfully blocked, the administration's initial pronouncements about ending TPS early created confusion and delays, causing irreparable harm. And, while early termination was blocked, on November 28, 2025, the administration officially announced plans to terminate TPS for Haiti effective February 3, 2026. More than 500,000 Haitians in the United States will be impacted: more than 350,000 current Haitian TPS holders stand to lose status, the right to work, and protection from deportation, and at least 200,000 more who are eligible but have not yet received the status due to USCIS delays and other barriers will no longer be able to receive TPS.

Following the announcement that TPS will be terminated, the administration also announced they would stop processing applications for green cards, citizenship and asylum applications for Haiti and 18 other countries against which the administration had already issued a travel ban. These collective decisions emphasize the government's deliberate and cruel racist attacks against these Black and brown immigrants, and the double standard in its decision to terminate TPS.

The administration has demonstrated disparate treatment of refugees of different ethnicities. For example: Ukrainians were recently redesignated for TPS because of armed conflict, while

Haiti is struggling with instability, armed conflict, and violence that would warrant TPS.\* The administration has also dramatically curtailed refugee admissions, letting in primarily white South Africans.\*i

These rollbacks of status and rights happen in the context of open and extreme racism and xenophobia against Haitians, amplified at the highest levels of government within the Trump administration, past and present.\*\*ii During his first term, officials referenced Haiti as a "shithole country,"xiii said that Haitians "all have AIDS,"xiv and attempted to terminate TPS in 2018.\*\*v During this presidential election, his campaign began targeting Haitians again and spreading the overtly racist lie that Haitians in Springfield, Ohio were eating pets.\*\*vi

Efforts to strip status and access to work for Haitians began almost immediately after Inauguration Day, in a torrent of escalations by the Trump administration against Haitians and other refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Through Executive Orders and announcements by the Homeland Security Department, the administration has sought to dismantle programs like CHNV and TPS, and to initiate an overtly aggressive and threatening deportation campaign. The speed of new announcements and shifting landscape caused confusion, layoffs, and fear even as community organizing and court challenges pushed back on some aspects of the changes. And each time it was challenged, the administration sought to find new ways to curtail status and rights.

Cruelty towards Haitian refugees, asylum seekers and migrants is not new. In fact, it is a hallmark of U.S. immigration policy. Anti-Black racism has shaped U.S. immigration policy, manifesting explicitly as anti-Haitianism, as well as setting a foundation for deeply inhumane policies applied to all refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. This can be traced back to the anti-Haitian political policies following the remarkable and successful uprising of the Haitian Revolution (1803), and through the mass migration from Haiti during the brutal Duvalier regimes (1957- 1986), in response to which the U.S. administration developed new and cruel tactics targeted specifically at Haitians, such as the search of boats at sea or the imprisonment of asylum seekers. Such tactics eventually became standard practice in an increasingly cruel and inhumane immigration system which aims to punish and criminalize asylum seekers rather than treat them with compassion and human dignity.\*

But, even against this historical backdrop, the current attempts to strip Haitians of status and right to work are shocking in their cruelty.

The impacts ripple outwards: children who go hungry when parents cannot work; families forced to grapple with the agonizing prospect of being torn apart; neighbors who lose neighbors; school communities who lose students and friends; workers who lose colleagues. Entire communities feel the devastation of such losses. As do major industries in the labor market, and our economy as a whole.

This calls for action. For Haitians, for other refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, and for the stability of our communities and our economy.

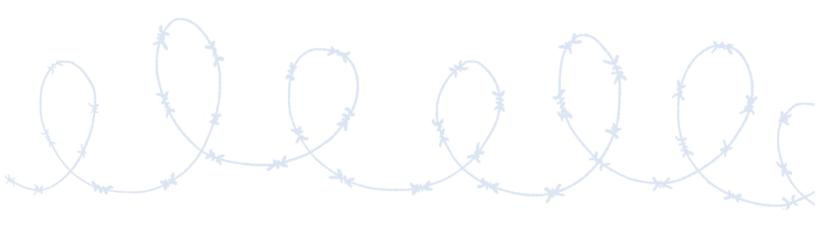
#### Highlights from this report include:

- Haitian TPS holders and CHNV recipients have been major contributors to the U.S. economy and play integral roles in major industries.
- Repeated attempts to strip away access to legal status for Haitians in the United States, against a backdrop of racism and xenophobia, are part of a long history of bullying: efforts to dehumanize Haitian people, create confusion and instill fear of detention and deportation.
- Conditions in Haiti necessitate the redesignation of TPS.
- Our interviews with directly impacted Haitian community members show the devastating impact of cancelations of humanitarian parole programs and the threat of cancelation of TPS, a continuation of the legacy of racist attacks against the Haitian community, felt deeply at individual, family and community levels:
  - The loss of work authorization through the cancelation of CHNV and other programs leaves people unable to work or care for their families.
  - The prospect of losing TPS is devastating. Interviewees expressed despair, and not seeing a path forward without TPS.
  - Without TPS, interviewees would not be able to meet basic financial responsibilities or care for their families.
  - The Haitian community is resilient and powerful in the face of enormous challenges.

#### Urgent policy solutions are necessary:

- An immediate extension and redesignation of TPS for Haiti.
- Lifting the pause on asylum applications for Haitians and other affected countries.
- Creating a path to permanent residency for all TPS recipients.

These solutions and more are included in the policy demands section of this report.



# RECENT EFFORTS TO STRIP STATUS FOR HAITIAN REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND MIGRANTS

The timelines of recent events with respect to CBP One, the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program, CHNV, and TPS demonstrate how highly convoluted and rapidly shifting the landscape has been. This is important to note because, even at times when CHNV and TPS recipients were still technically protected, we know from experience that levels of confusion, uncertainty, and fear led to substantial harm, including issues with processing employment authorization and layoffs from jobs.

#### **CBP** One

CBP One was a mobile application created in October 2020 for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that allowed refugees arriving at the southern border to have access to certain CBP functions and schedule appointments before their arrival in the U.S. It was later expanded to be the primary way that refugees and asylum seekers could be processed, and served to limit asylum claims and entries without inspection. Once processed and screened, many refugees and asylum seekers received humanitarian parole and an I-94 Record of Arrival/Departure to enter and pursue their legal cases while living in the US.\*\*

#### January 20, 2025

Trump issues two Executive Orders ending the processing of pending applications for parole-based programs.\*\*

Scheduling feature on CBP One App is deactivated, and all pending asylum screenings and interviews are canceled.\*\*

#### February 2025

Immediately after the announcement that CBP One has been deactivated, HWHR members and clients of partner organizations begin receiving correspondence from DHS pressuring them to "self-deport" or be subject to potential law enforcement actions, criminal prosecution, and civil fines and penalties.

#### March 10, 2025

The Department of Homeland Security repurposes the CBP One app and launches CBP Home as a part of their "Stay Out and Leave Now" campaign, with a self-deportation reporting feature for refugees to schedule their departure.xxi

April 2025 - June 2025

The Department of Homeland Security continues to send notices to refugees demanding that they leave immediately.\*\*

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

#### 04/11/2025

#### **Notice of Termination of Parole**

It is time for you to leave the United States.

You are currently here because the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) paroled you into the United States for a limited period. Pursuant to 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A) and 8 C.F.R. § 212.5(e), DHS is now exercising its discretion to terminate your parole. Unless it expires sooner, your parole will terminate 7 days from the date of this notice.

If you do not depart the United States *immediately* you will be subject to potential law enforcement actions that will result in your removal from the United States — unless you have otherwise obtained a lawful basis to remain here. Any benefits you receive in the United States connected with your parole — such as work authorization — will also terminate. You will be subject to potential criminal prosecution, civil fines, and penalties, and any other lawful options available to the federal government.

DHS encourages you to leave immediately on your own. You can use the CBP Home mobile app on your phone to make arrangements for your departure. If you are departing the United States via land, you should report your departure once outside the United States via that same app. If you are having trouble reporting your departure via land, visit <a href="https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/home">https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/home</a> for more information about voluntarily reporting your departure.

Again, DHS is terminating your parole. Do not attempt to remain in the United States - the federal government will find you. Please depart the United States immediately.

DHS notice received by impacted community member

#### Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program (HFRP)

The Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program was created in 2014 to provide a petition process by which eligible U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents could apply for family members to enter the country with humanitarian parole while they awaited their visa priority dates. This was to lessen the strain of family separation during the excessively long wait times for family-based immigrant visas.\*

#### Timeline of recent events:

#### August 2019

The Department of Homeland Security under the first Trump administration moved to terminate HRFP citing that recipients were "bypassing the proper channels established by Congress." xxiv

#### June 2022

The Biden administration reinstates Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program along with similar parole programs for other nationals.\*\*\*

#### August 2023

The Department of Homeland Security modernizes the parole program with the use of a secure online application process. xxvi

#### January 20, 2025

Trump pauses the processing of forms required for the Haitian Family Reunification Parole program, pausing the program in the same order that the administration terminates CHNV and CBP One.\*\*

#### December 15, 2025

The Department of Homeland Security issues a Federal Register Notice that HFRP along with six other family reunification parole processes will end as of December 15, 2025, with all currently valid parole periods ended on January 14, 2026. \*\*xviii\*



#### **CHNV**

The CHNV Parole Program was designed as a two-year humanitarian parole program for eligible residents of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Since the program's inception in 2023, more than 500,000 immigrants from those four countries were able to seek this humanitarian relief and to apply for work permits in the United States.\*\* As discussed later in the report, CHNV recipients have been substantial contributors to key sectors and the economy overall.

#### Timeline of recent events:

January 20, 2025:

President Trump issues two Executive Orders ending the processing of pending applications for parole-based programs, including CHNV.\*\*\*

February 28, 2025:

**Svitlana Doe v. Noem filed,** claiming that, as summarized by Refugees International, "both the administration's narrow interpretation of the parole authority and its refusal to adjudicate applications for immigration benefits by parolees violate immigration law." xxxi

March 24, 2025:

CHIRLA v. Noem filed, challenging the use of expedited removal against people who have entered the country through parole. XXXIII

March 25, 2025:

A Notice of Termination of CHNV is published in the Federal Register. \*\*xxiii

April 14, 2025:

- Federal Judge in Massachusetts issues a preliminary injunction temporarily blocking the revocation of CHNV status and work permits, in response to Doe. V. Noem. \*\*xxiv
- Unfortunately, this victory is short lived

May 5, 2025

Appeals court denies the Trump administration's request to stay the district court decision in Doe v. Noem.\*\*\*

#### May 30, 2025

The Supreme Court grants the Trump administration's request for a stay which lifts the injunction and allows the government to proceed with terminating CHNV while lawsuit is ongoing.

#### August 2025:

D.C. District Court issues a stay on the use of expedited removal for those who entered the U.S. on parole, in response to CHIRLA v. Noem.xxxvi

#### September 2025:

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia
   Circuit preserves the August ruling protecting those
   who entered the U.S. parole from expedited removal,
   denying the government's request to stay the court
   order, in an additional ruling on CHIRLA v. Noem.
   Continued appeals by the government will progress in
   the Court of Appeals.xxxvii
- Appeals court rules in favor of Trump administration in Doe v. Noem, allowing for revoking work authorization and status from parole beneficiaries.xxxviii

#### Current status of CHNV, and impact on status and work authorization:

The CHNV program has been terminated. Hundreds of thousands of CHNV recipients have lost legal status and the right to work. If they have not been able to secure a different legal status, they are at risk of detention and deportation. \*\*xxix\*



#### **Temporary Protected Status:**

Temporary Protected Status ("TPS") is a government protection granted to people who cannot return to their home countries safely, for reasons such as environmental disaster, armed conflict or other extraordinary conditions. TPS recipients can apply for an Employment Authorization Document ("EAD") which authorizes them to work in the United States. As discussed later in this report, Haitian TPS recipients are substantial contributors to key sectors and the economy overall.

Haiti was first designated for TPS in 2010, after a devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake.xl It has since been extended and renewed multiple times in the subsequent years, due to conditions which prevented Haitians from safely returning.xli

#### Timeline of recent events:

June 2024:

The Biden administration extends TPS for Haiti for an 18-month period, from August 4, 2024 to February 3, 2026. xlii

February 20, 2025:

Trump administration rescinds the 18-month extension, announcing that TPS would now end on August 3, 2025 instead of February 3, 2026. xiiii

March 3, 2025:

**Haitian Americans United Inc. v. Trump** is filed challenging the termination of TPS for Haitians and Venezuelans.\*\*

March 14, 2025:

**HECA**, **32BJ**, **et al. v Trump et al. filed**, challenging the cut back of TPS extension for Haitians, stating that it violated the procedures of immigration law, happened without proper review, and was fueled by racial animus. \*IV

March 20, 2025:

NTPSA v. Noem I, which had been filed on February 19, 2025 to challenge the recission of TPS for Venezuela, is amended to add Haitian TPS holders. xlvi

June 27, 2025:

Trump administration makes an announcement that they are canceling TPS effective Sept 2, 2025. xlvii

#### July 1, 2025:

Federal judge in Eastern District of New York presiding over HECA, 32BJ, et al. v Trump et al., blocks the attempt to end TPS early for Haitians, winning back the 6 months for Haitians, with a reinstatement of the February 3, 2026 date. xiviii

#### July 22, 2025

A court conference is held in the Eastern District of New York after DHS refused to issue a Federal Register notice based on the federal judge decision. DHS instead updated their website with incredibly passive aggressive and defiant language.

- "ALERT: After reviewing country conditions and consulting with the appropriate U.S. government agencies, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem determined that Haiti no longer meets the conditions for its designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). See Termination of the Designation of Haiti for Temporary Protected Status, 90 Fed. Reg. 28760 (July 1, 2025). Haiti's TPS designation and related benefits were slated to terminate on Sept. 2, 2025. However, on July 15, 2025, a single judge in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York issued a final judgement in Haitian Evangelical Clergy Ass'n v. Trump, No. 25-cv-1464 (E.D.N.Y.), that makes the effective date of any termination no earlier than Feb. 3, 2026. The judge did so even though the Department of Homeland Security recently prevailed in the U.S. Supreme Court, 8-1, in a similar case. The Department of Homeland Security vehemently disagrees with this ruling and is working to determine next steps."xlix
- The decision not to issue a federal register notice is consequential in the lives of Haitian TPS holders, because a notice from the federal register is used to help clarify for employers that a worker's EAD is valid.
- After court conference, Judge Cogan responds to the plaintiffs' request for an amended order with clear language that TPS holders have EADs and protection against deportation until February 3, 2026.

#### July 30, 2025

Fritz Emmanuel Lesly Miot, Rudolph Civil, et al. v. Trump is filed in Washington DC, a class action lawsuit by five TPS holders against the unlawful termination of TPS for Haiti.

#### September 5, 2025:

Judge Chen in California rules on NTPSA v. Noem, saying that ending TPS early is unlawful.

#### November 28, 2025

Department of Homeland Security issues a Federal Register Notice that TPS designation for Haiti will be terminated on February 3, 2026.

#### Current status of TPS for Haiti:



- We know from our members that the attempts by the administration to terminate TPS early, and their refusal to issue a Federal Register notice, has caused fear, confusion, delays and layoffs.
- TPS is set to end on February 3, 2026, pending decisions made in ongoing litigation or the reversal of the Department of Homeland Security's decision. If TPS is not redesignated, current TPS holders who do not receive another form of status, such as asylum, prior to February 2026, will lose legal status, protection against deportation, and work authorization.





#### Interviews with directly impacted Haitians

HWHR conducted eight semi-structured interviews with directly impacted Haitian community members, including those who previously had Humanitarian Parole as well as TPS applicants and recipients. Of those interviewees who were currently or recently employed: two worked in home health care, two in elder care, one as a college assistant and one in the entertainment industry. One interviewee was a current college student. These interviews were conducted in Haitian Creole and then transcribed, translated and anonymized.

#### Legal and background research

HWHR and TakeRoot Justice conducted background and legal research on issues related to CBP One, HFRP, CHNV, TPS and the overall landscape and treatment of Haitian refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the United States.

# **FINDINGS**

Haitian TPS holders and CHNV recipients have contributed substantially to key industries and to the economy as a whole

Haitians living in the United States contribute substantially to the U.S. economy, through participation in the work force across a variety of sectors, their spending, and their tax payments.

Numerous sources, including economists and labor market experts, liv labor unions, lv elected officials, lvi and business leaders, lvii have raised the alarm that terminating CHNV and failing to redesignate TPS will harm key industries and the economy at large.

Haitian TPS holders contribute approximately \$5.8 billion to the U.S. economy annually and pay \$1.5 billion in taxes. CHNV recipients (of all four nationalities) contribute an additional estimated \$5.5 billion to the U.S. economy annually through spending alone. A 2023 survey found that CHNV recipients were "largely self-sufficient," with only 3% relying on organizations or local government for assistance.

CHNV recipients and TPS holders have been integral contributors in a range of critical industries, which face the prospect of substantial labor shortages without them. These foundational industries include (but are not limited to), healthcare and home healthcare, lxi construction, lxii hospitality, lxiii automotive industry, lxiv meatpacking, lxv and large retailers such as Amazon. lxvi

Eliminating CHNV and failing to redesignate TPS are not just devastating in the lives of individuals, their families and communities, but also for the labor sectors which have relied on them and for the economy as a whole.

# Major retailers in Ohio begin firing Haitians as administration ends immigration programs

Walmart, Sam's Club and Amazon tell Haitians 'You can't work here' after June 30, triggering new round of deportation fears

# Boca Raton immigrant workers fired, told to self-deport amid Trump immigration

'Losing them will create an entire huge gaping hole in the service indu Florida', said Rachel Blumberg

# Haitians in Minnesota lose jobs, weigh options after Trump cancels immigration programs

Haitian Minnesotans are losing important legal status and the right to work in the ofter President Donald Trump's administration canceled humanitarian

# DeWine warns of economic impacts if Haitians in Springfield lose immigration status

Updated: Dec. 11, 2025, 4:04 p.m. | Published: Dec. 11, 2025, 3:02 p.m.

Home / Local Coverage



As legal status is set to end for many Haitians, Mass. health care sector braces for staffing shortages

For references for press clippings, see note. |xvii

#### **Interview Findings**

Announcements by the administration about the termination of TPS, and associated delays in processing work permits, have a negative impact on employment, even in instances when the attempt to terminate the program was successfully challenged in court.

- "Before the announcement, things were going well. With TPS, I knew my job was secure... My workplace was calling me nonstop every day asking for another legal document so I could continue working. This caused me a lot of panic."

—Impacted Community Member 3

- "Before they announced they were suspending TPS, everything was normal. The conditions at work were fine. There were no changes. Sometimes they even gave me more hours....
   I felt good, because I was working normally....Now I can't work because employers don't accept the pending application receipt [from USCIS]. I have not been working since
   September 2025 because my work permit expired." —Impacted Community Member 5
- "I had already applied for TPS, but I hadn't yet applied for the work permit under TPS. Up to now, I still haven't received those documents...[my employer] told me that since my work permit was about to expire and I hadn't received the new one yet, they had to stop me from working immediately, without any questions"

   Impacted Community Member 2
- "The announcement and the delays have made everything harder. Without a valid work permit, it is very difficult to find work. Sometimes I go to interviews, and they say they will call me, but they never do. They never tell me why. The last time I worked was in early 2025. It has been over five months waiting for USCIS to approve my TPS."

-Impacted Community Member 8

# The loss of work authorization through the cancelation of CHNV and other programs leaves people unable to work or care for their families.

• "I had a status, which was parole, and it came with a work permit under it for 2 years. I was still looking for work, and I couldn't find a job even though I hoped that as long as I had the work permit card, I would eventually find work. Then, all of a sudden, I heard the government issued a decree where they canceled the status I had, and then the work permit was cut. That really affected me because all my hope was in that work permit so I could find a job, because I have responsibilities in Haiti. I have family that depends on me. It has really affected me. Everywhere I look for work, I can't find any, and people ask me if I have a valid work permit. And I don't have a valid work permit — it's been cut.

It really impacts the community in general, because when you look around you see that people who didn't have lawful permanent residence, the only thing they had was the work permit under the program. And now, one morning, they are at work... Suddenly the work permit gets cut. They have responsibilities — to pay school fees in Haiti, for their children, for their family. It gets cut suddenly. It really affects our whole community.

If my work permit were valid, I could still go look for work. But now I have to stay home waiting, watching ICE, hoping the president might reverse the decision. Up to now, I haven't seen any hope."

— Impacted Community Member 1

- "It was difficult, because they always asked for a work permit in order for me to apply"
   —Impacted Community Member 4
- "I couldn't find [new work] because my work documents had expired. I know they won't give me a job without papers....My life has become more difficult since I am not working. I could not meet all my financial needs. It has made my family reflect on all the impacts this has on us. There are things we can't buy or do anymore. It has put my family in difficulty. Even the family we have in Haiti whom we used to help when we could, we cannot help them anymore."
- "Those of us who came through the CHNV program used to send help to our families back in Haiti, but we can't anymore. Now they're left on their own during this very difficult time in Haiti.
   —Impacted Community Member 2



- "If TPS ends, I wouldn't be able to work, pay rent, buy what my child needs...It will affect where I sleep, what I eat, taking care of my child, and my family. If I don't work, how am I going to take care of the child I have? Even though the child was born here, it's by working that I take care of him. If I don't work, it's hard to take care of him. It really affects me... If I can't work in this country, I won't be able to take care of myself, my child, and my mother who is sick and depends on me. I send money for hospital visits, medication, food. [My mother] has a condition where she can have seizures and lose consciousness. She needs someone to help her. I'm the one who pays someone to take care of her because I can't be there. If I can't work, how will that be possible?" —Impacted Community Member 4
- "[Terminating TPS] affects... all aspects of my life: paying rent, food, taking care of myself.
   I'm a student, so this makes things even harder." —Impacted Community Member 2
- "[TPS ending] impacts everything, especially my healthcare....and my medical insurance, which they cut off. I currently have been diagnosed with liver cancer. This has kept me from receiving normal care."

   Impacted Community Member 5
- "What affects me the most is not having a work permit. Without it, I cannot get a job. Now it is much harder. I'm working less, and that makes me feel bad mentally and emotionally. Not being able to work affects my family too. If you can't work, you can't feel well...I feel bad because I cannot provide like I used to, and that affects me and my family. Everything requires money: food, healthcare, rent."

   Impacted Community Member 8
- "If they stop TPS my parents won't be able to work anymore, so that will affect me in how my parents will pay their bills. We'll be forced to find a close friend to stay at their house. My parents won't have the freedom to offer me or buy what they want. I'll even be forced to not continue school anymore if I don't receive financial aid."
  - Impacted Community Member 6
- "It's the insecurity that's the worst in Haiti now. No security at all. Poor people can't walk in the street, they can't move around. There's no safe place. People sleep standing up, they can't sleep. [My three children,] they have no peace in Haiti, people have no peace, they cannot breathe... And I myself over here, I cannot sleep, I cannot eat... And I have no one over there to look after them, if I don't send money, they have nothing. I'm still working [at 70 years old]. I'm not retired, I've never retired. I'm afraid that if I retire I won't have money to send for the children to eat.
  - It affects me paying rent, it affects me sending money to my kids, it affects me... I can't pay my phone bill, all these bills: phone bill, food for myself, paying for the bus, four bus cards I need, and sending money to the kids in Haiti. There's no life for me."
    - Impacted Community Member 7

#### Fear of losing TPS causes enormous emotional distress.

• "After hearing that TPS might be terminated, I felt extremely unwell and worried because I knew that if TPS ended, I would no longer be able to work again and that terrified me.... If TPS is terminated, I will lose my job. Also, I could be stopped by police or ICE while just walking on the street since they go out looking for people without legal status. I could be detained and deported. This would affect me deeply, causing enormous stress and harming my mental well-being. This situation has affected me physically and emotionally...If I cannot work, I cannot take care of myself or the people who depend on me. I panic all the time. Even when I walk outside, I am afraid of what will happen if I lose my job. Without work, I cannot pay my rent, and I cannot be on the street. This stress has harmed my health and emotional well-being.

My family is also scared for me. We constantly talk about what might happen in the future if something goes wrong with me. This creates a lot of fear and panic for all of us.

Many people I know are panicking as well. Some of my friends feel depressed when we talk about it. They are scared to go outside, and they can't eat well, and I know this level of fear can cause even more health problems both physical and mental."

— Impacted Community Member 3

- "Terminating TPS will affect me because there's no other option right now to adjust your status. You arrived with legal status, and now you'll become undocumented again because they decided not to renew the program. The impact is deeper because when you come to the U.S., you build a new life"

   Impacted Community Member 2
- "My mind is always clouded, I'm always troubled, always...In my family life, when they heard TPS might end, my kids got sick, they had fevers. The kids say, 'What will mom do? What are we going to do? What will mom send us?'"

— Impacted Community Member7

- "It has put me in a situation where you become depressed. You're always thinking,
   reflecting. It affects me mentally." Impacted Community Member 5
- "My morale has become very low. I don't like constantly thinking about stress and hardship. My biggest problem is not having my TPS work permit...This affects me emotionally. I walk with fear; I sleep with fear. It has caused me a lot of stress."

— Impacted Community Member 8



• "That decision [to terminate TPS] first affected me mentally because if my mom and dad can't work, if they cut their work permits, then they won't be able to pay for their house, they won't be able to pay their bills, and we don't have anyone here with us. And we came here to have a better life, we came here to escape stress, and with this we ended up having the same stressful experience that we already had.

It affects me first academically, it keeps me from being able to concentrate fully on my school activities because I have to think about several things. Think about a potential future where I won't be able to continue school anymore. Think about a potential future where I might decide to take another migration route so they can offer us a future. And the difficulties I'll have adapting to a new system and not being able to continue school despite all the aspirations I have for my future.

[O]ne of the rights that allows social mobility for everyone is the right to education. And stopping support like TPS for the Haitian community and for other communities too is a first attack on the right to education for children, but also an attack that ruins all the dreams people had— and the American dream. It means hurting their dreams, ruining their dreams, destroying their dreams. Destroying all the hope they could have for a better life.

It makes a lot of people have a lot of fear, we're not living fully. I have a lot of family or friends who are scared to go out, who are afraid to do things they used to do normally. For example, I myself have a lot of activities where I feel restrained or I feel like I don't want to participate in them out of fear that someone could take me."

Impacted Community Member 6

# The prospect of losing TPS is devastating. Interviewees expressed despair, and not seeing a path forward without TPS.

- "If TPS ends...how can I say this? It would affect me more than anything. I don't see how I would manage."
   — Impacted Community Member 4
- "If they end TPS for Haitians, it's as if we are dead. It would be like a disguised death for Haitians. We live but we are dead. Our lives would be over. It would be like a disaster for me because we won't have papers to do anything, we won't have papers to go to the hospital. We won't be able to get any services. It's the worst thing that could happen to us as immigrants."

   Impacted Community Member 5
- "If Haiti is no longer qualified for TPS, I will not be able to work. I would be at risk of being sent back home, and I cannot go back because people in Haiti are already living in danger, being attacked or raped."

   Impacted Community Member 3
- "Terminating TPS will affect me because there's no other option right now to adjust your status. You arrived with legal status, and now you'll become undocumented again because they decided not to renew the program. The impact is deeper because when you come to the U.S., you build a new life....I know many people in the same situation it's really difficult. They can't find work, obviously, because they don't have a work permit. They don't know

what will happen, they're uncertain. Some people are becoming almost sick because they have no control over their future they don't know what to do."

— Impacted Community Member 2

• "If Mr. Trump ends TPS, we're finished, life is over...If he ends TPS for me, well, I might as well say I'm in a hole, in a hole, because I won't be able to support my family."

Impacted Community Member 7

Community members interviewed emphasize that the conditions in Haiti prohibit returning, and necessitate the redesignation and extension of TPS.

- "Haiti isn't ready to help anyone—not the people living there, nor the people outside. The way things are going—the situation isn't good. Political problems, kidnapping, killings, rape... all these problems are why we can't stay there. They're still happening, even worse. How can they say people shouldn't qualify for TPS? If things aren't stable, how are we supposed to return? People love their country, but the situation doesn't allow us to live there."

   Impacted Community Member 4
- "Haiti's situation right now is extremely bad. Every day, the news reports more violence.
   People are constantly running for their lives, being killed, forced to flee their homes, and live in hiding. There is widespread violence and [mass] rape. Gangs enter people's homes, steal from them, and assault them. Things are getting worse. Even on the street is dangerous."

   Impacted Community Member 3
- "I feel that [the government saying Haitians should no longer qualify for TPS] is abnormal because insecurity in Haiti grows every day. And Haitians' lives are deteriorating. The economic situation is getting worse every single day. There is no transportation, no social [institutions] are functioning in Haiti. It's a country that is sick all over. They should continue to keep Haitians on TPS. They should continue TPS as protection so we can work while we are here."

   Impacted Community Member 5
- "I think the situation in Haiti is getting worse and will keep getting worse. We never have elections...I know that 90% of the capital is controlled by gangs. Right now, people are being killed, gangs are causing destruction, innocent people are being shot. It's not only physical insecurity but also food insecurity and economic insecurity. Young people have no prospects for their future. When you live with constant uncertainty, you develop mental health problems, stress, etc. The situation is extremely difficult. Even flights aren't going to Haiti. If we return, many of us have a high chance of dying because so many people are losing their lives right now due to insecurity, violence, etc."

Impacted Community Member 2



• "Conditions in Haiti are not good at all. If things were good, people would not try to leave the country. Everyone knows the problem of gang violence and the lack of a functioning government. When I hear talk about ending TPS, I do not feel good at all."

— Impacted Community Member 8

"[My family] left Haiti first after my dad was kidnapped. And after they kidnapped my dad, they said we're coming here for a better life. Since our departure, Haiti got even worse. Actually, the school I used to attend— I won't say the name— was forced to move to a different area because gangs invaded that area. So Haiti became worse than it was before. And if there was ever a moment Haitians needed support like TPS, they need it more now than they ever needed it before."

— Impacted Community Member 6

# Community members interviewed emphasize the necessity and urgency of redesignating and extending TPS.

•	"All I can say is that the people making the decisions should think about us. We really nee
	TPS. Without it, I don't see how I can move forward."

- Impacted Community Member 4

- "The government should give us the same opportunity to have access to a work permit. TPS protects us in the U.S. and gives us a temporary legal status so we can work and support ourselves and family."

   Impacted Community Member 3
- "[T]hey need to renew TPS so we can continue rebuilding our lives and help ourselves and our families."
   Impacted Community Member 2
- "[Ending TPS] won't be good for us, won't be good for anyone. Not for the community, not for me, not for my children, not for my family, not for anybody. [President Trump] must continue TPS for us...[My children said] Mom, I hope the President, Mr. Trump, doesn't end TPS for Haitians, because Haitians are suffering, they're in misery. There's no life in Haiti, insecurity, insecurity, so many problems. People are being killed, people don't know where to go."
- "I know the government makes the decisions, but I would like them to extend TPS so we can continue living and working safely. People came here to work, for a better life, and to help others."

   Impacted Community Member 8
- "It is very imperative right now for Haitians to receive TPS. Because before it had a significant impact, and we still had TPS, but now things got worse; people have nowhere to go, gangs are trying to take over neighboring areas too—meaning the provinces. So it's worse now, and this is the most important time for Haitians to be able to receive TPS. They should renew TPS for Haitians, put another program in place to support Haitians."

— Impacted Community Member 6

# The Haitian community is resilient and powerful in the face of enormous challenges

•	"As for the Haitian community—we	go through a lot, but we keep fighting. We don't give
	up. We keep moving forward."	— Impacted Community Member 4

•	"We need	to unite,	support,	protect,	love, and	encourage	each other."
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—Interviewee 3

- "The community must stay united, always work hand in hand, so that we can face the difficulties. That is the goal... to work together" Impacted Community Member 5
- I think if there are three communities in the world that have more resilience, that are more resistant, that can stand despite all the odds— Haitians would be in the top three and they wouldn't be third. We withstand a lot; we fight a lot. Look at our country, how it is, but we still hold on to hope for a better life. And that's actually the reason why we came here. To look for a better life. It's a chance they're supposed to give people because the people here aren't the ones responsible for their country being like that. And I think if the country were doing well, people wouldn't want to come here..."

— Impacted Community Member 6

• "We are a strong community. We are very resilient, and we are not afraid of hard work. Since we arrived, we haven't stayed idle we look for work, we adapt quickly, and we contribute to the country's economy...We share what we have with each other, we stay connected, and we share our struggles together."

— Impacted Community Member 2



### WHY TPS MUST BE REDESIGNATED FOR HAITI

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Homeland Security posted a notice to the Federal Register announcing that TPS for Haiti would be terminated effective February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026. This follows their prior, unsuccessful attempts to cancel the program even earlier.

The administration's stated reasons for terminating TPS do not align with the reality of the situation. The facts clearly uphold the necessity of redesignating TPS for Haiti.

#### **Conditions in Haiti**

The administration claims that there are "no extraordinary and temporary conditions in Haiti that prevent Haitian nationals (or aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in Haiti) from returning in safety." They call the life-threatening conditions in Haiti merely "concerning," despite acknowledging that "gangs that are terrorizing communities [and] extorting families," and make claims that defy logic, such as saying that the fact that 1.3 million people have been forced to relocate internally within Haiti is evidence that "parts of the country are suitable to return to." Ixx

The reality is that extraordinary conditions in Haiti clearly necessitate the redesignation of TPS. Many of these conditions have been caused and exacerbated by the policies and actions of the United States. The United States has long made efforts to undermine Haitian sovereignty, including suppression of its early independence, interference in Haiti's elections, multiple military occupations, and the promotion of exploitative economic policies with devastating consequences. <sup>Ixxi</sup>

Today, Haiti is roiled by political unrest and gang activity sponsored by Haitian oligarchs and foreign forces. The country is experiencing forced migration, mass rape, lxxiii arms trafficking and foreign intervention. Commercial flights have ceased to the Port-au-Prince International Airport for over a year, lxxiv and deportation flights have taken people to Cap-Haitien, returning them to the north with a nominal amount of cash. As a result, some are forced to travel through the country with insufficient funds, and are often subjected to extortion and violence by gangs en route. Ixxv Haiti is, according to Human Rights Watch, facing a "deep political, humanitarian, and security crisis." Ixxvi To return people to Haiti when then the probability of assault or death is so high is a deeply inhumane and profoundly cruel act that shows this administration's blatant disregard for human life.



A significant number of HWHR's members are survivors of sexual assault who were on the front lines of organizing against gender-based violence. Many had to flee Haiti due to the violence and retaliation they faced after speaking out. The idea of returning refugees and asylum seekers to Haiti when the prevalence of gender-based violence and femicide have

reached disturbingly high rates due to the political instability, widespread gang violence, and a persistent culture of impunity is deplorable. || |

According to Human Rights Watch, "[p]eople should not be deported or otherwise returned to Haiti, where overlapping humanitarian, security, and public health crises endanger lives, and where they face a high risk of violence with no effective access to protection or justice."

The administrations' claim that conditions in Haiti have improved sufficiently to support an early end to TPS is sharply contradicted by these realities. In a September 2025 ruling, U.S. District Judge Edward Chen points out that, in attempting to revoke TPS for Haitians and Venezuelans, the administration to send them "back to conditions that are so dangerous that even the State Department advises against travel to their home countries." beginning to be be because the state of the state o

#### **National Interest**

TPS holders are woven into the fabric of the United States. They are a part of mixed status families, social organizations, and cultural institutions. They are a part of faith centers, centers of learning, and an essential part of the workforce. The administration claims that "it is contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit Haitian nationals (or aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in Haiti) to remain temporarily in the United States." This is directly contradictory to the calls from employers, labor leaders, economists and community members that make clear that it is very much in the U.S. national interest to allow Haitian TPS holders to remain and retain work status. TPS holders have high employment rates loxxii and have made significant contributions to the country's economy, loxxii driving key sectors such as health care, food production, shipping, manufacturing, many of which otherwise struggle to find workers.

After the administration's initial attempt to cut TPS short, nine Haitian TPS holders, along with the Haitian Evangelical Clergy Association and the labor union SEIU-32BJ, were successful in suing to prevent the early termination of TPS. In their case, they asserted that the administration, in addition to violating the procedural aspects of the law as they apply to TPS, also displayed "racial animus towards non-white immigrants." Such racial animus in immigration policies continues to be demonstrated, such as the recently announced decision by the administration to limit refugee admissions to 7,500, a mere fraction of the prior year's 125,000, and that most of those admitted will be white South Africans. In attempting to end TPS for Haiti, such racial animus certainly appears to be on display again. The past and present racist sentiments shared by the Trump administration indicate plainly and clearly their desire to control and shape the demographics of this country by simultaneously increasing ICE raids and stripping Black and brown immigrants of their rights and protections to entrap, detain, and deport them.

# GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS AND RELATED PROPOSALS ARE NOT A VIABLE SOLUTION TO THIS CRISIS

Guestworker programs provide temporary visas to migrant workers. These programs are rife with opportunities to exploit workers. The U.S. has several guestworker programs including H-2A for temporary agricultural jobs and H-2B for temporary non-agricultural jobs. Ixxxvi Under the H-2B program, visas tie migrant workers to a single sponsor: their employer. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, "this makes the worker's ability to obtain and retain status in the United States entirely dependent on their remaining on good terms with their employer."Ixxxviii Guestworker programs also enable employers to treat workers as commodities: "using the labor and then tossing the worker away" if they were to complain about the work, inform other workers about their rights or refuse to comply with their employer's demands. Ixxxviii

Guestworker programs also put workers in danger in their home country; they often carry "huge debts paid to recruiters" that come with high interest rates set by nefarious lenders, making workers fearful of returning to their countries. Incentivized to collect exorbitant fees from migrants seeking dignified work, recruiters often lie about the conditions of employment. Making matters even worse, the U.S. government does not require recruiters to "register or even agree to follow U.S law, resulting in a lack of accountability for recruiters and recourse for workers."\*c

Guestworker programs should not be considered solutions to this manufactured crisis. It is deeply cruel to create a void in the workforce by stripping TPS holders of their status and moving to detain and deport them, only to fill that gap by recruiting more workers from abroad through a process that is rife with exploitation and may create another generation of undocumented workers. TPS holders have established work histories, extensive training, assets, and equity, and should be allowed to remain and continue their work and lives in our communities, rather than facing the cruelty of detention and family separation and the fear of return to a country in which they would face certain, extreme danger. Gender-based violence and femicide have escalated to unprecedented rates, rampant gang violence disproportionately affects young girls and women, forced migration and internal displacement is now the norm, and political instability has contributed to the collapse of economic and judicial systems.

In July 2025, The DIGNIDAD (Dignity) Act was introduced, which trades "increased enforcement (primarily at the border) for changes to the legal immigration system and a path to legal status for undocumented immigrants who are long-time residents of the country." Unlike other attempts at reform, the Act would provide a path to legal status, but importantly, would *not* provide a path to lawful permanent residence or citizenship, for undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. since December 2020.

Eligibility for the program requires passing a background check, paying a thousand dollar fee and submitting an application. Once approved, the individual can remain in the U.S. for seven years, the length of the Dignity Program, during which they have to report to DHS every two

years and pay an additional six thousand dollars. From there, they would transition to "Dignity Status," a form of "non-immigrant status which lasts for seven years and can be renewed indefinitely" and allows individuals to travel outside the U.S. and work legally.

Introducing a "solution" which is not only a band aid, but also introduces additional costs and barriers, fails to confer full rights to people, and situates them in an indefinite lesser status without access to the rights and protections of permanent residency or citizenship, is deeply insulting and contrary to the ideals which the United States purports to uphold. Under such a policy, someone could live the rest of their life in the United States in a state of limbo: working, paying taxes and raising a family, while perpetually having to reapply and pay for this partial status, never able to vote or receive federal benefits, and with no path to citizenship. This is not dignity, but in fact further denigration.

Genuine, permanent solutions would provide a pathway to citizenship.

# **POLICY DEMANDS**

There is an urgent need to implement immediate policy solutions to the crises caused by the curtailment of status and rights for Haitians in the United States. Our policy demands focus on the redesignation of TPS, lifting of the pause in asylum and other applications, and providing a pathway to permanent residency. An alternative humane measure is to grant Deferred Enforced Departure which would prevent Haitian nationals from being forcibly returned without restricting the possibility of future pathways to permanent residency.

- 1. Extend and Redesignate Temporary Protected Status for Haiti.
  - Immediately auto-extend the Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) of all current TPS holders.
  - Expedite the processing of pending TPS and EAD applications.
- 2. Implement automatic renewals of Employment Authorization Documents.
  - Automatic renewals would ensure that recipients will not fall out of status while waiting for their renewals in the heavily backlogged system.
- 3. Lift the pause on asylum applications for Haitians and other affected countries.
  - Ensure equitable practices and prompt processing for TPS, asylum, green card and citizenship applications which have been delayed.
  - Return to the policy and practice of five-year EADs for asylum applicants.
- 4. Establish an online portal for all USCIS applications, accessible to migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and their legal representatives.
  - This portal should show the case status, including the reasons for any delays in processing paperwork, and should include definitions for any terms used to describe case status.
- 5. Create a path to permanent residency for all TPS recipients.

# **CALL TO ACTION**

Haitian refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the United States have been plunged into crisis by unchecked and relentless efforts to strip them of their status and right to work. Hundreds of thousands have already been impacted by these efforts, and hundreds of thousands more face the prospect of the same.

Community members who are deeply rooted and interwoven into the fabric of families, communities and the economy in the United States are suddenly unable to work and are faced with the prospect of detention, deportation and family separation. The racism and xenophobia of the administration's policies and rhetoric dehumanize an entire community.

Forced return to Haiti would be catastrophic. Community members, human rights experts, media reports and even the government itself acknowledge the severity of the safety conditions in Haiti.

Recent policy decisions enact cruelty in the lives of these community members, their families and those who love them. They also threaten critical labor sectors and the economy as a whole.

It is imperative that immediate action is taken to redesignate and extend TPS, lift the pause on asylum applications, and create a pathway to permanent residency.



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- **CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS**
- **☐** SPEAK OUT IN YOUR LABOR UNIONS
- **ORGANIZE DIRECT ACTIONS**
- **□** JOIN RAPID RESPONSE NETWORKS

